

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE  
ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF THE CONFLICT  
IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO  
WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
TRACK ONE DIPLOMACY**

**BY**

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Magister Artium (International Relations)

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July 2007



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## **ABSTRACT**

The economic dimension of conflicts has enjoyed increasing attention in research dealing with the dynamics of contemporary conflict. The nexus between natural resources, economics and conflict has played a defining role in a number of Africa's most intractable conflicts during the 1990s and early 2000s. The underlying assumption of this study is that the economic dimension of conflict can be hugely informative in terms of an understanding as to why peace agreements fail and in that sense can contribute to the resolution of conflicts if taken into account during the formulation of peace agreements. This study explores the ways in which conflict theory has dealt with the conflict-economics nexus, analyzing the extent to which theory illuminates the conflict reality in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during the period August 1998 to August 2004. It determines to what degree peace agreements in the DRC have taken the economic dimension and insights gained from the academic exploration of this topic into account during the negotiation and formulation of these agreements. In conclusion the study proposes a number of recommendations in terms of the peace process in the DRC with possible wider application for other peace agreements.

## **KEY TERMS**

Conflict Theory

Conflict Resolution

Conflict Analysis

Economy

Natural Resources

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Peace

Economic Dimension

Policy

Recommendations

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## AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to the following people for the role they played during the completion of this study:

- Prof. Maxi Schoeman for her patience and guidance, which has undoubtedly elevated the quality of this study.
- My family in South Africa for all their help and support particularly with the final printing and binding of the thesis.
- Miles, my husband, who serves as a constant source of inspiration.
- Koba, my daughter, who was born during the final stages of my studies – her smile reminded me of the reasons why I undertook this study.



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1. RESEARCH THEME

It can be argued that theory is born from observation. In accordance with this argument one can make the case that it is possible to draw parallels between new trends observed in the political reality and the formulation of hypotheses and resulting theories which attempt to provide an academic account for the observations made. It is important to mention one caveat, namely that observation is at times hamstrung by the metaphorical 'blindness' imposed by dominant theories.

The correlation between observation and theory seems, for the most part, also to apply with regards to the theoretical exploration of conflict. Conflict is arguably the concept that has enjoyed the most attention in the academic discipline of International Relations. The specific focus within the analysis of conflict has shifted as new issues have increased in prominence. One of the issues that have come to the forefront of conflict analysis is the economic dimension of conflicts (Nest 2006, p.11). "The emergence of political economy of civil war as a research agenda resulted from a convergence of political factors, policy concerns, and academic interests in the early to mid-1990s." (Malone and Nitzschke 2005, p.1). The increase in academic and policy attention to the economic dimension of conflict does not imply that it is a more recent feature of conflicts but rather that this element of conflict has just become particularly pronounced in more recent wars. The lack of academic and policy attention to the economic dimension of conflict prior to the 1990s can be attributed to the impact of 'theoretical blindness', as mentioned before.

The increasing extent to which economic considerations have been perceived as a motivation for the continuation of conflict has served to shift the spotlight of analysis from the political to the economic dimension. More specifically, the role of natural resources in the economic dimension of conflict has also become a topic of interest for scholars interested in conflict dynamics. The nexus between natural resources, economics and conflict has played a defining role in a number of Africa's most intractable conflicts during the 1990s and early 2000s. The conflicts in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are specific examples of conflicts where natural resources and the economic dimension of these conflicts have become a specifically important consideration in conflict analysis and conflict resolution (Nest 2006, p.11).

## **1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The DRC is a central African country rich in natural resources, which has been tormented with conflict since after colonialism. The current phase of this protracted conflict was ignited in August 1998 with the invasion of the DRC by Rwandan and Ugandan troops (Institute for Security Studies 2006). An estimated 3.3 million people have died as a result of the conflict in the DRC between August 1998 and October 2003 (Shah 2003). More recent figures suggest a death toll of 3.5 million and an estimated 4 million displaced people (IRIN 2006). A number of formal conflict resolution initiatives have been launched in an attempt to bring an end to the conflict (Institute for Security Studies 2006; Institute for Security Studies 1999). Despite the signing of a myriad of agreements, peace remains illusive as events in the eastern regions of the country underscore.

While the role of the economic dimension in conflicts has been explored and conceptual frameworks developed, little research had been devoted to the interface between the economic dimensions of armed conflict and conflict resolution initiatives. The aim of this study is to redress this gap between

conflict analysis and peace agreements. The underlying assumption of this study is that the economic dimension of conflict can be hugely informative in terms of an understanding as to why peace agreements fail and in that sense can contribute to the resolution of conflicts if taken into account during the formulation of peace agreements. It is believed that the objective of the study can be achieved by exploring the ways in which theory has dealt with the conflict-economics nexus, analyzing the extent to which theory accounts for the conflict reality in the DRC and finally, determining to what degree peace agreements in the DRC have during their formulation taken the economic dimension and insights gained from the academic exploration of this topic into account. The study will subsequently propose a number of recommendations in terms of the peace process in the DRC with possible wider application for other peace agreements.

More specifically, this study will address a number of key research questions, including: In what respect can we view contemporary conflict theories as a response to the changing conflict context and a departure from previous conflict theories? Does an analysis of the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC support the findings of contemporary conflict theories? If so, should the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC be taken into consideration during the formulation of peace agreements? Is it possible that a lack of attention to the economic dimension in peace agreements represents the Achilles heel of the peace process in the DRC? The study will thus evaluate the extent to which the economic dimension of conflict has been taken into account in peace agreements in the DRC and justify why it is considered to be important to include the economic dimension. Building on the analysis of the above questions, it is the objective of this study to make practical and, to a lesser extent, theoretical recommendations for conflict resolution initiatives. It is hypothesized that an analysis of the economic dimension of conflict will illuminate the extent to which the economic agendas of belligerents represent obstacles to the resolution of armed conflict and are not adequately taken into account by track one initiatives in the DRC. The

objective of this study is not to provide a definite and universally conclusive answer as to whether belligerents are primarily motivated by political or economic considerations but rather to illuminate the presence of an influential economic dimension in conflict and argue for its inclusion in peace agreements.

A number of parameters need to be established for this study. This study can be positioned within the discipline of International Relations and more specifically International Political Economy as a sub-field of this discipline. The positioning of the study arises from the mode of analysis, which will not only focus on economic agendas and interests of the various actors involved in a conflict but also associated political agendas and interests. The study further falls within the ambit of Conflict Analysis, Conflict Resolution and Strategic Studies as sub-fields within International Relations. In terms of scope, the study will be limited to the consideration of conflict in the DRC when considering the relevance of theoretical responses to the economic dimension of conflict. As far as the temporal dimension is concerned, the study will be limited to the period between the 2nd of August 1998 and August 2004. The reason for this demarcation is twofold. Firstly, the temporal distribution of formal conflict resolution initiatives warrants the inclusion of the period between 1998 and 2003. Secondly, the 2nd of August 1998 marks the beginning of the Second Rebellion and in the light of the *coup* attempt on 11 June 2004 the timeframe has been extended to include this event, as well as an additional month in which the initial ramifications of the attempted coup can be observed. The conflict resolution initiatives, which will be taken into account in this study, are limited to Track One diplomacy initiatives based on the distinction made by Joseph Montville in 1982 between Track One diplomacy (official, governmental action) and Track Two diplomacy (unofficial, nongovernmental action) (McDonald 2003).

In short, this study will introduce a number of frameworks for interpreting conflict and emphasize major areas of theoretical interest and contention,

with particular focus on the economic dimension. The study will further link the importance of integrating theory, research and practice.

### **1.3. LITERATURE SURVEY**

Ballentine and Nitzsche (2003a), Ballentine and Nitzsche (2003b) as well as Ballentine and Sherman eds. (2003) are amongst the sources related to the research theme that were available upon submission of the research proposal. These sources indicated gaps in the body of research on the theme of this study. Ballentine and Nitzschke's (2003a) article made note of the fact that efforts to translate research on the political economy of civil wars into a comprehensive policy framework were still in its embryonic phase. Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003a) further pointed at the growing recognition of the analytical limits of a 'greed' approach to conflict.

Based on the provisional literature survey done in 2003, the observation could be made that only a handful of sources took note of the economic dimension's impact on conflict resolution and that the treatment of this issue was usually confined to a passing remark. In their book, Ballentine and Nest (2004) contended that there was paucity in research on the 'meaning' of the economic dimension of conflict for peace making. The editors aspired to amend this insufficiency of research by focusing on the operational challenges posed by the war economy for policy makers and practitioners in the DRC. One chapter in the book is devoted to the 'Legacies of the War Economy: Challenges for Peace Making'. The focal point of this chapter, however, slightly differs from the scope of this study.

The focus of Michael Nest's *et al.* (2006) research displays some similarity to the research question addressed in this study. This study strives to make a unique contribution to the understanding of the role of natural resources as a feature of the economic dimension in the DRC during the search for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Despite the increase in research attention

between the onset of this study and its conclusion this specific topic remains a relatively less explored issue within the broader body of academic research on conflict.

The linchpin of the academic debate around the economic causes of contemporary armed conflict is the greed versus grievance dichotomy. Prominent sources contributing to this debate include: Renner (2002), Collier and Hoeffler (2001), Le Billon (2001a), Berdal and Malone eds. (2000), Reno (1998), Wolfson (1999) as well as Berdal and Keen (1997). In the same vein, Naidoo (2000) explores the role of 'war economies' in understanding contemporary conflicts in Africa. Research on the interface between the economic dimension of conflict and prospects for peace have yielded publications such as Addison, Le Billon and Murshed (2001). This source develops a mathematics-based model accounting for the interplay between the level of conflict and interests in conflict in order to predict the possibility for peaceful behaviour. Collier (2000b), as well as Collier and Hoeffler (2000) also developed models of this kind. Further qualitative research on this relationship includes Nitzschke (2003) and Collier (1999).

As far as African case studies are concerned, research in 2003 had been concentrated on Angola (Malaquias 2001, Reno 2000 and Cilliers & Dietrich 2000), Sierra Leone (Reno 2003) and the DRC (Moore 2003; Amnesty International 2003; Moyroud & Katunga 2002; Global Witness 2002b; Cuvelier & Raeymaekers 2002; Vlassenroot 2002; Ndikumana and Emizet 2002; Essick 2001). Research on the DRC was limited to the nature and manifestations of the 'war economy' and did not go as far as establishing direct links to conflict resolution initiatives or making specific recommendations. The proposed study thus ventured into what, at that point, was a largely unexplored aspect of the dynamics between economics, conflict and peace while building on a firm foundation of previous research done in terms of theory and case studies.

## **1.4. METHODOLOGY**

The study of the economic dimension of conflict and the particular role of natural resources has been approached methodologically in a number of different ways with each method of analysis contributing to the understanding of different nuances of the subject. Some of the earliest studies of this subject made use of an econometric method of analysis. Two of the most influential contributors to research on this subject have been Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler. Collier and Hoeffler's quantitative research based on an econometric methodology gave rise to the 'greed thesis' of civil conflict, which spurred an academic debate polarized around the 'greed versus grievance' dichotomy (Malone and Nitzschke 2005, p.4). The economic dimension of conflict has also been explored by means of a number of case studies such as those conducted by, amongst others, Le Billon (2001a), Raeymaekers and Cuvalier (2002) and researchers affiliated with Global Witness (2002a, 2002b, 2002c). The latter adopted more of a systematic field-based research approach and added a qualitative dimension, which has complimented earlier quantitative research.

Both the quantitative and qualitative approaches pose their own challenges and shortcomings. Quantitative research on the topic requires the development of a comprehensive dataset and the development of econometric models, which requires the researcher to have a background in economic modelling and/or statistics. By virtue of its statistical methodology, quantitative research on the subject is in a sense more objective. However, assuming the objective nature of quantitative research embodies one of the most salient caveats about the acceptance of research based on a quantitative methodology. This caveat pertains to the hidden nature of the bias of such studies. Even though the research employs statistical and econometric models for analysis, subjective criteria come into play in the selection of items to be included in the dataset as well as the underlying theoretical assumptions that will be built into the models. Furthermore,

studies of this nature are hamstrung in terms of accuracy by the amount of the statistical data available.

For instance, when analyzing civil conflicts in African countries with weak state systems, official economic data is frequently unavailable, grossly inaccurate or have to be inferred from other data available. David Malone and Heiko Nitzschke (2005, p.15) also argue that the value of quantitative studies that test theories by academics have limited utility in terms of policy relevance given their frequently contradictory conclusions. However, they contend that there is a need for more systematic field-based research on the political economy of armed conflict. They specifically point towards a paucity of systematic field-based research on the dynamics of conflict that could suggest entry points for more effective policy actions.

Systematic field-based research is dependent upon a researcher with the time, means, opportunity, and funding to conduct the required field-research. Field-research is also highly dependant on the conflict situation in the country – unexpected increases in the level of violent conflict can seriously hamper the ability to conduct field-research. Field-based research provides indispensable information that is impossible to obtain by any other means. In addition, field-based research adds a quantitative dimension to research.

This study will not employ a quantitative method of analysis since the plethora of statistical information and analyses based on quantitative methods would make such an exercise somewhat redundant. Field-research has also been ruled out as an option for gathering information. The aim of this study is to make a contribution by using both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from primary as well as secondary sources in the form of already published research. The theories extrapolated from quantitative research findings will be employed as the foundation of this study and will be supplemented with qualitative data from field-research to make recommendations that will be most applicable in terms of Track One conflict



resolution initiatives. In that sense this study will draw upon quantitative and qualitative methodologies but will primarily rely on the interpretation and analysis of primary and secondary sources.

## **1.5. STRUCTURE**

### **Chapter Two – Theoretical Foundation**

The question underlying Chapter Two is: *In what respect can we view contemporary conflict theories as a response to the changing conflict context and a departure from previous conflict theories?* The discussion will provide a broad overview of the evolution of thinking concerning conflict with the objective of identifying 'generations' of scholars and shifts in ideas. The ultimate aim of this chapter is to contextualize the theories concerning the economic causes of conflict and the role of natural resources in the eruption and duration of conflict since theories that fall within this 'generation' of thinking are most relevant for the study at hand.

The first sections will deal with seminal theories and concepts at the root of theorizing about conflict and its causes. It is considered important to address these theories and concepts since they form the foundation of more contemporary approaches. The discussion will also illustrate that, although more pronounced in more recent research, the economy-conflict nexus has roots that stretch much further than research done in the 1990s.

The subsequent discussion will examine a number of more contemporary theories pertaining to the causes of conflict. The chapter will grapple with the theoretical responses to the economy-conflict nexus. The discussion will also illuminate the extent to which elements of earlier 'generations' of conflict thinking were incorporated into or used as a point of departure for later theories.

### **Chapter Three - Conflict Background**

This chapter will serve as the foundation for the discussion in Chapter Four by means of providing an overview of the geographical and historical context in which the conflict in the DRC is rooted.

### **Chapter Four - The Economic Dimension of Conflict**

Chapter Four will aim to address the following two research questions: *Does an analysis of the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC support the findings of contemporary conflict theories? If so, should the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC be taken into consideration during the formulation of peace agreements?* These two research questions will be addressed by means of analyzing four salient issues within the context of the conflict in the DRC. The four issues selected for discussion, correlates with the issues identified in Chapter Two as representing important dimensions, which increased in prominence and has served to direct more recent conflict analysis. The issues identified in Chapter Two in section 2.3.1. under the heading “The Context of Contemporary Conflict Theories” are: The Self-financing Nature of Conflicts, Features of Conflict Economies, New Actors in Conflict, and The State and Conflict. Chapter Four will explore the following issues in as much as they pertain to the situation in the DRC and the broader conflict systems in which it is imbedded: The State; Actors, Motivations and Conflict Dynamics; Conflict Economy, and Natural Resources. Natural resources, although not specifically dealt with in Chapter Two in terms of the context of contemporary conflict theories, does enjoy attention in a later section in Chapter Two.

Chapter Two thus represents the exploration of theoretical responses to the aforementioned issues, while Chapter Four deals with the manifestation of these issues within the DRC with the ultimate goal of evaluating how well theory and reality mesh as far as the conflict in the DRC is concerned. If it is

established that many of the conflict dynamics postulated in theory does apply to the conflict reality in the DRC, the next step will be to address the second research question pertaining to whether the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC should be taken into consideration in terms of the formulation of peace agreements.

## **Chapter Five – Peace Agreements and the Economic Dimension**

Chapter Five will be address the following research question: *Does a lack of attention to the economic dimension in peace agreements represent the Achilles heel of the peace process in the DRC?* The chapter will commence by providing an overview of the pertinent formal peace agreements, which fall within the parameters of the research. Only peace agreements, which can be considered to be part of Track One diplomacy effort and that were concluded between 2 August 1998 and August 2004 will be included in this chapter. The chapter will then address the extent to which the peace agreements deal with, respectively, the State, Actors (with reference to the Civil War- and Transnational dimensions of the conflict), the Conflict Economy (which will encapsulate the issue of self-financing of conflicts) and the role of natural resources in the conflict. Chapter Five will thus follow the model of Chapter Two and Chapter Four in the sense that it will address the same issues. The concluding section of Chapter Five will address the central research question and will serve as a bridge to Chapter Six.

## **Chapter Six – Conclusion**

This chapter aims to make recommendations concerning more effective strategies for conflict resolution in the DRC. Additional issues to be addressed and actors to involve in the peace process might be included in the recommendations. Recommendations will be made on manners of incorporating insights on the protracted nature of conflicts into the larger body of knowledge dealing with conflict analysis and conflict resolution.

# CHAPTER TWO

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

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### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

“For the most part, the causes of war remain as obscure as ever. Modern research has left a trail of uncertainty, partial clues, contradiction, and continued mystery” (Porto 2002, p.1). Despite the vast amount of research that has been done on the subject, the identification of a universally applicable and precise set of conflict causes have remained a widely debated and illusive area of research. Scholars have approached the analysis of conflict and the factors at the root of the eruption of conflict in a number of different ways. Two broad approaches to conflict can, however, be identified: approaches that are comprehensive and take a myriad of factors into account as well as others, which are more reductionist in nature and distill their explanation of the eruption of conflict down to a single factor.

Michael Howard (1983, p.13) cites Bernard Brodie as a scholar who adopts a more comprehensive approach to the causes of conflict. Howard quotes Brodie as saying that “Any theory of the causes of war in general or any war in particular that is not inherently eclectic and comprehensive...is bound for that very reason to be wrong.” In the same vein, Holsti (cited in Porto 2002, p.1) comments that, “There is no single cause of a conflict. Nor is there often any single precondition for sustainable peace. Different factors vary in importance, and reinforce or neutralize each other. The analysis of the situation must therefore include the relative importance of the different indicators and their inter-relationship.” Geoffrey Blainey (cited in Porto 2002, p.1), on the other hand, subscribes to a more reductionist school of thought as far as the causes of conflict are concerned and in that sense falls prey to what proponents of a more comprehensive approach to the analysis of

conflict causes refer to as the 'tyranny of the single-cause'. Blainey (cited in Porto 2002, p.1) frames all causes of war as being "...simply varieties of power. The vanity of nationalism, the will to spread an ideology, the protection of kinsmen in an adjacent land, the desire for more territory...all these represent power in different wrappings. The conflicting aims of rival nations are always conflicts of power."

An additional school of thought recognizes the value of both these approaches to the analysis of the causes of conflict. Howard (1983, p.12-13), for instance, concurs with Brodie in as much as he is skeptical of the notion that there is one single explanation of conflict between states and points to the fact that such reductionist approaches are revealed to be weak once subjected to critical examination. Howard, nonetheless, acknowledges the theoretical value of reductionist approaches to the study of conflict. Howard's observation that reductionist approaches to the analysis of the causes of conflict prove to be weak once subjected to critical examination raises the question of evaluating the theoretical strength and analytical value of approaches to the study of conflict causes.

When addressing the question of the evaluation of theories it has to be mentioned from the onset that the theories and research employed in natural science with great success do not effectively translate into the study of social sciences. One of the reasons for the awkward fit of natural science methodology in the realm of the social sciences is the impossibility of keeping variables constant when analyzing social sciences. This stems from the nature of the 'laboratory' (i.e. society) in which social science research has to be conducted. The object of investigation (i.e. human behavior) is also extremely unpredictable. The result is a field of research, which requires theories and methods capable of accounting for the challenges associated with the very nature of the subject of research. This does not imply that methods and theories employed in the social sciences do not have to stand up to the same type of critical evaluation and scrutiny as those employed in the natural

sciences but merely that we need to keep the aforementioned characteristics inherent to the subject matter of social science in mind.

According to Nye (1989, p.4) the evaluation of "...the explanatory power of a theory is a...complex concept and involves two dimensions often at odds with each other: parsimony and descriptive fit." Parsimony is encapsulated in Ockham's razor, often expressed in Latin as the *lex parsimoniae* (law of succinctness). Ockham's razor holds that "All things being equal, the simplest solution tends to be the best one." (Hiroshi 2007). In short, the principle of parsimony accepts the explanation based on the evidence available, which adopts the least amount of assumptions. Parsimony, however, does not necessarily lead to a sound theory and for this reason descriptive fit also needs to be considered. Nye (1989, p.4) is of the opinion that parsimonious explanations for the eruption of conflict often fall short when evaluated on the basis of descriptive fit. "Explanatory power requires accounting for behavior with few anomalies. Since theory (by definition) is not pure description, there will always be problems of descriptive fit and some anomalies are inevitable. The most powerful theories are the least procrustean in their treatment of anomalies. They also encompass more corroborated empirical content than their alternatives. Successful prediction is one sign of a powerful theory, but determining success is often ambiguous. When theories predict general categories of behavior rather than specific events, there is room for interpretation of how successful (or unsuccessful) a theory has been." (Nye 1989, p. 4)

The subsequent discussion will examine a number of theories pertaining to the dynamics of conflict. The discussion is not aimed at exploring all the possible causes of conflict proposed by analysts but rather to provide a broad overview of the evolution of thinking concerning conflict with the objective of identifying 'generations' of scholars and shifts in ideas on the causes of conflict. The ultimate aim of this chapter is to contextualize the theories concerning the economic causes of conflict and the role of natural resources

in the eruption and duration of conflict. Theories that fall within this 'generation' of thinking are most relevant for the study at hand. The discussion will also illuminate the extent to which elements of earlier "generations-of-conflict-thinking" appear in later theories, whether incorporated into the theory or used as the basis for departure from such theories.

## **2.2. SEMINAL CONFLICT THEORIES**

### **2.2.1. Human Nature and Conflict**

Many early political philosophers have traced the origins of conflict back to human nature. Machiavelli had a view of human nature that was fundamentally pessimistic and described men as "selfish, greedy, and cowardly opportunists, who will never willingly do anything that does not further their own interests. They are status hungry, disposed to quarrel at the slightest opportunity, and do not emphasize or identify with others. As a consequence, they are atomistic individuals who live in permanent latent (if not open) conflict with each other..." (Freyberg-Inan 2004, p.58) Thomas Hobbes' work displays many similarities to Machiavelli's judgment of human nature. Central to Hobbes' thought is his perception of human beings "in explicit agreement with the Athenian thesis". Hobbes proposes three salient emotions that form the basis that spawn the three salient causes of conflict. According to Hobbes, human beings are primarily motivated by desire, fear and pride. These three basal emotions feed into the desire for gain (particularly material gain), diffidence and the yearning for glory. These three emotions are also at the root of mankind's perpetual state of competition as well as his longing for safety and reputation. The combination of these three strong emotions feed into the desire for the expansion of man's sphere of power, which causes humans to clash (Freyberg-Inan 2004, p.60). Hobbes argues that "even if people are moderate in their ambitions and generally good natured, a rational assessment of how they can best preserve

themselves in a state of nature will inevitably propel them towards a state of war.” (Morrow 2005, p.35) In short, both “Machiavelli and Hobbes believe that human beings are inherently independent, atomistic, selfish, untrusting, and untrustworthy. Both believe that human beings are inherently self-interested and that their basic motives lead them to pursue power, which in turn, causes constant conflict among them...” (Freyberg-Inan 2004, p.61).

### **2.2.2. Rationality and Conflict**

“In general men have fought during the past two hundred years neither because they are aggressive nor because they are acquisitive animals, but because they are reasoning ones; because they discern, or believe that they can discern, dangers before they become immediate, the possibility of threats before they are made” (Howard 1983, p.15). The notion that conflict is caused by rational assessments of situations forms the foundation of theories based on the expectation of rational behavior and choices. Donald Green and Ian Shapiro (1994) highlight the assumptions, which in their opinion are generally shared by rational choice theorists. Rational behavior involves the maximization of an actor’s utility. In other words, actors are assumed to choose the course of action they believe will lead to the most desirable outcome. Behavior is rational if objectives are pursued by means that seem efficient and effective for achieving specific objectives, based on the information available and the actor’s beliefs (Freyberg-Inan 2004, p.80; Plano *et al.* 1973, p.316).

Howard stresses the importance of the rationality of human nature as a cause of conflicts and juxtaposes two views on the causes of conflict namely that conflict results from human being’s innate aggressive nature - as explored in the section dealing with human nature as a cause of conflict - and that conflict has its roots in rational thought. The link between rationality and conflict is not completely novel and has been hinted at by Hobbes and Machiavelli. As noted above Hobbes argues that even if humans were not



propelled towards conflict by virtue of their innately aggressive nature, conflict would still be a constant feature of human interaction since rational assessment and the desire for self-preservation would also lead to conflict (Morrow 2005, p.35).

Howard (1983, p.7) disagrees with the socio-biological notion that war is the result of man's innate aggressiveness. "The conflicts between states which have usually led to war have normally arisen, not from any irrational and emotive drives, but from almost a supra-abundance of analytical rationality." (Howard 1983, p.14) Also, illustrating the argument that conflict evolves from rationality, Howard (1983, p.18) states that: "The causes of war remain rooted, as much as they were in the pre-industrial age, in perceptions by statesmen of the growth of hostile power and the fears for the restriction, if not the extinction, of their own." Rationality implies that "...wars begin with conscious and reasoned decisions based on the calculation, made by both parties that they can achieve more by going to war than by remaining at peace." (Howard 1983, p.22) The recognition of the role of rationality in the eruption of conflict has spurred further arguments such as those put forth in Nye (1989, p.10). Bueno de Mesquita (cited in Nye 1989) provides, what Nye describes as, a commonsensical explanation on the eruption of conflict founded on an expected utility theory; positing that states go to war when they expect to do better than by remaining at peace. Nye (1989) specifically points out that this assumption should be differentiated from the statement that "states go to war when they expect to win". Thus, it could imply that states go to war based on the potential benefits of what could be merely a modest prospect of victory. The rationality in such actions is that in that particular situation the modest prospect of victory outweighs the certain disadvantages associated with certain defeat (Nye 1989, p.6-12).

The identification of rational thought as a driving element in the eruption of conflict has crystallized in Rationalism. Rationalism in turn constitutes the foundation of additional, more specialized theories such as Rational Choice

Theory, Utility Theory and even to some extent Realism. Rational choice also represents an umbrella concept that encompasses Public Choice Theory, Social Choice Theory and Game Theory. Rational choice theory imitates economic theory in terms of the methodology it applies by building models based upon procedural rules. These procedural rules usually pertain to the rationally self-interested behavior of individuals (Haywood 2000, p.103).

### **2.2.3. Power and Conflict**

Thucydides, the historian who captured the events surrounding the conflict between Athens and Sparta between 431-404 BC, emphasized the role of power as a cause of war when addressing the topic in *History of the Peloponnesian War*. The central role of power politics is evident in the *Melian Dialogue*, in which the Athenian leaders essentially assert the principle that “the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept” (Kemos 2007). Thomas Hobbes drew from Thucydides’ emphasis of the role of power when theorizing on the subject. The focus on power subsequently spawned a school of thought among modern European scholars, which stressed the “fundamentally anarchic nature of the international system and the struggles and balances of power among states that result” (Porto 2002).

This worldview forms one of the fundamental tenants of the Realist tradition that became dominant in the United States after 1945. Hans Morgenthau (1948) in *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, his most influential work on the subject, emphasized the extent to which international politics is driven by an endless struggle for power. Morgenthau (1948) depicted power as rooted in human nature and was among the theorists who came to represent a new generation of thinkers on international relations. This new generation of scholars discarded the idealism and isolationism that, in their view, brought about World War II. They advocated Realism, which explained the eruption of conflict in terms of the search for the balance of

power necessitated by the modalities of the anarchic international system (Baylis and Smith *eds.* 1998, p.110-113 & Porto 2002).

Realism can be captured by three core elements, namely statism, survival and self-help. In accordance with Realism, power is vested in the state as the key actor in the anarchical international system and the legitimate representative of the collective will. The primary priority of state leaders in accordance with Realism is to ensure the survival of the state and the principle of self-help is employed as the primary mode of action to ensure survival in the absence of a global government (Baylis and Smith *eds.* 1998, p.110). The role of power is also prominent in the latter two elements in as much as survival is often determined by relative power and self-help also relies on the power to be independent. Realism's theoretical prominence led to the emergence of a number of theories, which essentially represented a variance on the Realist theme.

Neorealist theory represents such a variation on the realist theme by retaining the emphasis of the role of power in conflict but framing it in a different manner. Realism describes power as a goal deeply rooted in human nature while Neorealism views power as a means employed to achieve other goals. Neorealism, for instance, "...predicts that states will act to balance the power of others in order to preserve their independence under the anarchic situation in which they find themselves" (Nye 1989, p.6-12). Collective action theory is another example of such a variation and is explained in the work of Charles Tilly (cited in Porto 2002, p.12). Tilly's approach to conflict is embodied in the belief that conflict is the result of a continuous power struggle between those who have decision-making power, and those who don't. Tilly views this power struggle to be at the base of political action.

#### **2.2.4. Preliminary Conclusions**

Throughout history humankind has theorized on the roots of conflict and over time has come to emphasize different elements, which in their opinion represent the origin of conflicts. The preceding section has served to highlight three causes of conflict namely human nature, rationality and power. These causes in themselves represent essentially reductionist explanations of the origin of conflicts but have also respectively served as central tenants of more comprehensive theories of international relations. Machiavelli and Hobbes explain all conflicts in terms of human nature. They argue that human beings are self-interested and their basic motives lead them to pursue power, which causes war. Although mention is made of the pursuit of power, Machiavelli and Hobbes do not view power as the basis for conflict but rather human nature, which is characterized by greed, desire and rationality. Machiavelli and Hobbes contend that human beings will always be in conflict with one another by virtue of their very nature, which predisposes them to conflicting behavior.

Theorists, who point to the centrality of rationality in conflict, build on Machiavelli and Hobbes' work but come to a different conclusion. These scholars accept rationality as part of human nature but contend that it is not man's innate aggressiveness brought about by it's nature as a whole but rather man's ability to rationalize situations, which leads him to conclude that conflict will be the most beneficial course of action. In short, man is a rational being at the core and in accordance with this rationality will always choose the course of action that will produce the most desirable outcome. One could also argue that a central difference between theories that view human nature and rationality as the basis of conflict is that rationality leaves room for the possibility of peace. In other words, according to human nature man will always be embroiled in conflict whereas a rational evaluation could conceivably lead man to conclude that pursuing peace will lead to the most desirable outcome. One of the shortcomings of rationality, however, is the

absence of perfect information. This represents the Achilles heel of rationality since a true rational evaluation of the most desirable outcome can only be made if all possible facts are available, leading decisions made based on rational evaluation to seem irrational in hindsight. Rationality will also come into play in a later discussion about theories concerning the impact of the economic dimension on conflict as well as in the discussion dealing with ways of securing peace.

The last origin of conflict, which was discussed above, was power. The discussion proposes that power, as a concept is central to Realist theory, which has become an extremely influential theory in the realm of international relations. Realism views international relations as a power struggle between states within an anarchic international system devoid of any form of central governance. It is conceivable that Realism could also apply in the same way to civil conflicts if the actors are not limited to states. Especially in collapsed states, relations might be depicted as a power struggle between actors within an anarchic domestic system.

By highlighting certain basal elements of conflict theory, this section dealing with seminal conflict theories can be viewed as a means of contextualizing the discussion dealing with contemporary theories. The subsequent section will aim to illuminate the extent to which contemporary conflict theories have built on seminal conflict theories but also serve to provide an alternative conceptualization with increased explanatory power given the changes in the nature of conflict.

### **2.3. CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT THEORIES**

Scholarly attention within the field of International Relations and Strategic Studies during the Cold War was characterized by a focus on systemic, global or world wars. The 'Cold War' mode of analysis, influenced by Realism, framed armed conflicts and wars in terms of a bipolar model. Smaller conflicts

were seen as 'proxy wars', 'small wars' or 'low intensity conflicts', which were to a large extent a product and creation of bipolarity (Porto 2002, p.2). Thus, trapped in a 'Clausewitzian Universe' of interstate wars driven by bipolar power struggle, academia and policy-making circles in the West were largely unprepared for the task of explaining a new breed of 'societal conflicts', which came to the fore with the end of the Cold War. The tools of strategic and war studies employed during the Cold War proved increasingly incapable of explaining newly identified issues of increasing importance in conflict. Such issues include ethno-nationalism, religious militancy, environmental degradation, resource scarcity, preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping or humanitarian intervention (Porto 2002, p.4).

The 'Cold War' conflict vocabulary was also proven to be inadequate in capturing new developments in terms of conflict. Among the terms, which have been created to describe this new breed of post-Cold War conflicts, are 'internal conflicts' (Brown *ed.* 1996), 'new wars' (Kaldor 1999), 'small wars' (Harding cited in Porto 2002, p.4), 'civil wars' (King cited in Porto 2002, p.4), 'ethnic conflicts' (Stavenhagen cited in Porto 2002, p.4), 'conflict in post-colonial states' (Van de Goor *et al.* cited in Porto 2002, p.4) as well as various expressions used by humanitarian and development NGOs and international agencies, such as 'complex human emergencies' and 'complex political emergencies' (Porto 2002, p.4).

Post-Cold War conflict analysis also required a shift in focus. Analysts and policy makers turned to groups, as opposed to states, in conflict and their claims in an attempt to determine the causes of conflicts. This represented a paradigm shift from the systemic level as analysis began to focus on local actors and local situations to better understand the reasons behind claims for self-determination. New concepts do not only denote a shift in the level of analysis from the systemic and inter-state level to the intra-state level but also a distinct change in the profile of wars. "This shift in focus strongly influenced the development of conflict types by analysts seeking to clarify the

nature of the issues in conflict. Conflict causes have in fact become the 'most frequently invoked typology' and within these, as Singer points out, 'all the usual suspects are found: territory, ideology, dynastic legitimacy, religion, language, ethnicity, self-determination, resources, markets, dominance, equality, and, of course, revenge'. At opposite sides of the aestiological spectrum, two recent examples have included the development of an 'ethnic conflict' type and a 'resource war' type. 'Ethnic conflict' became in the beginning of the 1990s 'the most fashionable term and last resort to explain contemporary social conflicts'" (Holsti cited in Porto 2002, p.6-7). This section will primarily concern itself with the economic dimensions of conflict, which links to resources as a cause of conflict and resource wars as a type of conflict.

"During the period of superpower Cold War rivalry, many wars and tensions in Africa were often encouraged by the United States and the Soviet Union (as evidenced by the proxy wars in Namibia, Angola, and Mozambique). With the departure of the Soviets from the world's scene and from the African continent, the Western powers of the United States, France, and Great Britain have concomitantly retreated from Africa and lowered the importance of Africa's geo-strategic role" (Laremont 2002, p.3-4). Despite the withdrawal of superpower involvement in conflicts on the African continent, the number of conflicts in Africa has increased after the Cold War. Since 1970 more than thirty wars of which the majority with intrastate origins have taken place on African soil. Sixteen of these wars took place between 1990 and 1997 - fourteen were intrastate conflicts (Algeria, Angola, Chad, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, Western Sahara, and Zaire); only two were interstate (Chad/Libya and Rwanda/Uganda). These wars are responsible for the deaths of millions and more than eight million refugees and internally displaced persons (Laremont 2002, p.3). The UN deployed thirty-two peacekeeping missions during the 1990s alone. Thirteen of the thirty-two UN peacekeeping missions were

deployed in Africa. "Superpower intervention and rivalries, therefore, cannot continue to be claimed for warfare in Africa." (Laremont 2002, p.6)

In short, new developments on the conflict front forced analysts to look at conflict differently and also coin new concepts to explain the phenomenon they were witnessing. The end of the Cold War or other worldwide developments such as globalization brought many of the new developments about. It is important to point this out since it explains the theoretical departure in terms of context. It is also of particular importance for Africa since many of these developments were particularly pronounced on the African continent and served to mould African conflicts. Conflict dynamics on the African continent is especially relevant within the context of this study due to its particular focus on the DRC. The discussion to follow will address salient aspects of conflicts, which have served as the context for the emergence of a new 'generation' of conflict scholars.

### **2.3.1. The Context of Contemporary Conflict Theories**

#### **2.3.1.1. *The Self-financing Nature of Conflicts***

During the Cold War the military endeavors of both governments and rebel groups embroiled in civil conflict in developing countries were bankrolled by superpowers and/or proxy regional powers. This financial assistance was justified by the fact that factions in civil wars were co-opted as pawns in the bigger ideological conflict (Bannon and Collier 2003, p.3). According to a report from the World Policy Institute (cited in Shah 2004), the United States provided \$1.5 billion worth of arms to African proxy wars during the Cold War. This provides an indication of the amount of capital required to sustain the civil wars in Africa (Bannon and Collier 2003, p.3). In the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War, warring factions in developing countries experienced the abrupt retraction of superpower patronage. Governments and guerilla groups alike were left to their own devices to finance their



military campaigns and the result was the development of innovative means of 'self-financing' (Pauwels 2003, p.4).

After the end of the Cold War conflicts, especially in Africa and other developing countries, had to function within a vastly different arena. Actors had to adapt the manner in which they perceived and conducted war. One of the problems actors were faced with in this new arena was the problem of sustaining war efforts amidst the absence of superpower funding (Tshitereke 2003). Combatants adapted to this by utilizing commercial activities to generate funds to sustain their military campaigns. New features in the conflict arena also in some ways facilitated newly adopted strategies. For instance, self-financing by means of commercial activities was greatly facilitated by globalization. Economic globalization increased opportunities to trade illegally produced goods in the global market. Globalization also eased the flow of capital and information required to produce commodities. At the same time, the trend towards a more universal acceptance of neo-liberal economic policies decreased the extent to which states intervened in trade and narrowed the state mandate on the ownership of assets and resources (Nest 2006, p.11). Self-financing was therefore facilitated by access to regional and global networks of licit and illicit trade and finance as well as Diaspora remittances (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003a). Imbedded in the economic dimension of contemporary intrastate conflicts is thus a network of regional and even global linkages (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003a and Cater 2002, p.3). The process of globalization is both uneven and contradictory in its effects – globalization has helped to spread the benefits of development but it has also increased the risk of protracted violence in some cases. In countries beset by armed conflict, the opportunities made available by globalized trade and investment, have encouraged the rapacious exploitation of natural resource endowments (Guaqueta 2002, p.2).

The central role of financial and other resources in the continuation of conflict, has long underscored the analysis of conflict. These factors have,

however, been overshadowed by conflict analysis that placed the emphasis on superpower competition or ethno-national insurgencies, which characterized the Cold War. After the end of the Cold War the single most influential observation, which gave rise to an increased focus on the economic aspects of violent conflict, was the noticeable increase in the self-financing nature of combatant activities in intrastate or civil wars. Observations based on the 'self-financing' phenomenon drew attention to novel sources of finance, additional actors, and customized economic processes influencing the conflict arena in contemporary conflicts. In the late 1990's there was an increase in scholarly attention to the economic dimensions of contemporary armed conflict. Research on this topic was conducted under the rubric of 'War Economies', 'Economic Agendas in Civil Wars', 'Political Economies of Civil Wars' or 'Resource Wars'. Furthermore, trends in contemporary conflicts spurred a revision of discourses on war. According to the traditional notion of warfare, war can be described as "the continuation of politics by other means". Contemporary discourse reverses views on war and point to the evolution of war into the "continuation of economics by other means".

A further body of research was spawned by the analytical shift from a consideration of resource scarcity to resource abundance (Ballentine and Sherman eds. 2003, p.1). Since the late 1990s an observable increase in the self-financing nature of combatant activities in countries such as Angola, Sierra Leone, Sudan and the DRC has sparked scholarly and policy attention to the conflict-promoting properties of natural resource abundance. Studies of the link between natural resource endowment and the continuation of conflict revealed profit-based interests in continued warfare, which stretch beyond arms traders and encompass warring parties, private companies and political and military leaders. Analysis of this phenomenon required a paradigm shift - economic interests could no longer be viewed as an unavoidable side effect of conflict but rather as an explanatory factor *per se* (Samset 2002, p.465 and Ballentine & Sherman eds. 2003, p.1). This leads to the conclusion that the

extent to which the economic dimension permeates war is debatable, but not the inclusion thereof in conflict analysis.

### **2.3.1.2. Features of Conflict Economies**

We have established that self-financing of conflicts brought about by the retraction of superpower financial support of conflicts increased the prominence of economic factors as contributing factors to conflict. This section will focus on the economies, which simultaneously represent the breeding ground for the self-financing phenomenon but is also brought about by the means employed for self-financing. 'War economy' is one of the concepts that have been coined to describe the economies underlying conflicts, which have become self-financing. War economies are distinguished from 'healthy' economies mainly by the extent to which economic life is militarized as well as the mobilization of economic assets and activity with the aim of financing the war effort. Additional research have provided further resolution to the concept by identifying certain features that are unique to civil war economies thereby distinguishing them from war economies in general. These features include:

- Civil war economies are parasitic – they are dominated by rent seeking and the extraction and trade of primary resources as opposed to value adding economic activities.
- Civil war economies are illicit – they operate primarily within black, grey and 'shadow' markets, which fall outside the realm of legal and formal economic activity.
- Civil war economies are predatory – "they are based on the deliberate and systematic use of violence to acquire assets, control trade, and exploit labor."
- Civil war economies are highly dependent on external financial and commodity networks, which facilitate access to the global marketplace.
- In contrast to traditional intrastate wars, civil war economies seldom make a contribution to state capacity or economic development.

- Civil war economies have also resulted in an expansion of purposes and targets of violence. It has become as important to capture natural resources and areas where they are found as attacking and gaining control over capitals and military installations.

The issues around which combatants mobilize has also shifted from political, community and security issues to economic objectives with erstwhile foes collaborating in a businesslike manner with the objective of making money (Ballentine & Sherman eds. 2003, p.2-3). The concept 'war economy' captures certain of the newly identified aspects sprouting from the observation of the self-financing nature of combatant activities, which have a bearing on the conflict arena. The most important assumption woven into the 'war economy' approach is the idea that "the goal of the conflict is not necessarily the defeat of the enemy in battle, but the continuation of fighting and the institutionalization of violence for profit". This central assumption is linked to the 'self-financing' phenomenon, but imposes limitations in terms of interpreting the duration of conflict.

The economic activities associated with armed conflict are characterized by "anarchic exploitation", "criminalized transactions", and "militarized production" (Guaqueta 2002, p. 1). Pre-existing shadow economies and informal cross-border trade networks are often captured and integrated into the global criminal economy. This allows insurgents to transform illegally exploited natural resources as well as Diaspora remittances into military capacity (Ballentine & Nitzschke 2003a, p. 17). The reverse is also possible as is evident from the fact that civil wars are often fought with arms produced from areas outside a region, and in particular by industrialized nations who dominate the global arms supply. Once arms make their way into a region marked by conflict, they become an element of regional smuggling and trade networks characterized by flexibility and resilience (Studdard 2004, p.4).

A shortcoming of the 'war economy' approach is that it addresses only one dimension of the self-financing nature of contemporary intrastate conflicts. It is crucial to point out that the profit derived from continued conflict can be channeled in one of two different ways: into the pockets of individuals and companies for self-enrichment or pumped back into the war effort thus feeding into the cycle of conflict. Those who personally benefit from conflict as well as those who apply profit to fuel conflict for a political cause, have an interest in the continuation of conflict. In accordance with the 'war economy' approach, both of these groups profit from the "continuation of fighting and the institutionalization of violence". This is noteworthy since the channeling of profits from the war economy will influence the trajectory of the conflict and the prospects for resolution in different manners.

The 'political economy of war' approach illuminates the role of actors who channel profits into continued warfare by examining not only the economic agendas and interests of the various actors involved in the conflict but also their political agendas and interests. This approach is specifically concerned with the manner in which agendas and interests are defined as well as the material ramifications of the actions engendered by them (Dunn 2001, p.55). In this regard, it is important to be cognizant of the fact that not all economic activities in conflict zones fuel violence and different forms of economic behavior fuel conflict in different ways (Guaqueta 2002, p.3). Rebel leaders and state leaders give direction to economic activities that sustain war by articulating political goals that resonate among their followers (Guaqueta 2002, p.5).

#### **2.3.1.3. *New Actors in Conflict***

The actors' involved in the economic dimension of contemporary civil wars stretch across the entire spectrum - warlords, rebel groups, private sector actors, government officials, and ordinary citizens (Guaqueta 2002, p.4). The methods employed by these groups are often very similar and shows a

resemblance with criminal activity. In this regard, William and Picarelli (cited in Ballentine & Nitzschke 2003a, p.17) note that combatants pursue the same economic activities and employ the same methods as criminal organizations while the purposes for which these activities are undertaken might differ. It has been observed that rebel groups have been necessitated to become business organizations, irrespective of the motivation of the rebellion (Bannon & Collier 2003, p.3). There is, however, a tendency to frame rebel and warlord economic activities as illegal despite the similarities with government or private sector actors' economic activities. Cater (2002) problematizes this approach in as much as it labels "insurgency as criminality", therefore providing *de facto* legitimacy to the state regardless of behavior. Taylor (2002, p. 9) also emphasizes the role of private companies in war economies by stating that companies, which included companies of a relatively small size but who operate internationally, use armed conflict as a façade for "more or less anarchic exploitation". These companies have connections with the leaders of rebel groups or repressive governments and profit from continued fighting. Connections with these companies are also often crucial to the prosperity and survival of these powers.

As discussed above, academic and policy research has drawn attention to the rise in combatant self-financing. Globalization has facilitated the growth of international, regional, and national networks among political and economic elites (Sherman 2001b, p.25). Today's warlords, governments and non-state actors alike, make use of global financial and commodity markets to transform control over natural resources into war fighting capacity (Taylor 2002, p.7). True to its nature, globalization has provided opportunities for self financing while simultaneously rendering actors more vulnerable to international pressure – more than would have been possible when rebellions constituted proxy wars of the superpowers (Bannon & Collier 2003, p.11). Pre-existing shadow economies and informal cross-border trade networks are often captured and integrated into the global criminal economy. This allows insurgents to transform illegally exploited natural resources as well as

Diaspora remittances into military capacity (Ballentine & Nitzschke 2003, p.17). The reverse is also possible as is evident from the fact that civil wars are often fought with arms produced from areas outside a region, and in particular by industrialized nations who dominate the global arms supply. Once arms make their way into a region marked by conflict, they become an element of regional smuggling and trade networks characterized by flexibility and resilience (Studdard 2004, p.4).

#### **2.3.1.4. The State and Conflict**

*"In many African countries the city limits mark the effective borders of the state. Outside the city official life evaporates: within is the favored area, the place where all the money goes, the place where the entire educated community insists on living. It is the one lump of earth out of the whole inheritance which the fragile governments can make more than a pretence of governing."* (Marnham cited in Cornwell 1991, p.69)

*"...the modern state structure in Africa often forms little more than a thin carapace over the living social organism,...the vital activity often takes place in the largely hidden realms of the informal economy and its companion polity. It is here that most of Africa's population struggle to make sense of and to survive in a world in which crisis has become a state of being."*

(Cornwell 1991, p.62)

This narration of the African state correlates with the common perception of the African state. This is not true for all African states but is indeed an accurate portrayal of the sphere of effective governance in quite a number of African states. The observation that many states, especially after the end of the Cold War, failed to fit within the parameters of the generally accepted definition of the state as a concept has led analysts to identify a number of emerging state characteristics and accompanying processes. This section will first grapple with what is considered to be the generally accepted definition of

the state and then move on to a discussion of the deviations from this conceptual norm with particular reference to the patterns evident in African states.

The state as a concept and an everyday reality conjures up vastly different images and experiences for different people. Despite these diverging conceptions of the state it is possible to extrapolate a core of characteristics usually included in definitions of the state. The transfer of political legitimacy from monarchs to the populace is frequently considered to be the event, which marks the transition to statehood (Jackson & Rosberg 1984, p.177). Migdal and Skinner (cited in Jackson 2003, p.38) argue that states exist in the form of a 'hegemonic idea'; sanctioned by the population to the extent that they "consider the state as natural as the landscape around them; they cannot imagine their lives without it". This points to the perception of the state as a subjectively experienced reality, which permeates every aspect of people's daily lives. There are also analysts who do not look much further than the units identified on a political map for the basis of a definition of the state resulting in a more objective and in a sense, 'distanced' conception of the state. These descriptions of the state only scratch the surface of a much more convoluted concept.

The two perspectives on the state mentioned above link to the juridical conception of the state as well as an approach that draws attention to the empirical attributes of the state (Jackson & Rosberg 1984, p.3). A juridical definition of the state provides a more legal and international perspective of the state focusing on the state's position in the international arena – implying that states possess sole jurisdiction over their internal affairs not to be impinged upon by external role players. Empirical criteria for statehood point towards the domestic dimension of the state and focuses on state-society relations. Issues such as the government monopoly on force, the presence of a definite population, territory and boundaries therefore play a role in terms of an empirical definition of the state.



Northledge (cited in Halliday 1994, p.78) focuses on the juridical requirements of statehood when he defines the state as: "...a territorial association of people recognized for purposes of law and diplomacy as a legally equal member of the system of states. It is in reality a means of organizing people for the purpose of their participation in the international system." The idea of a 'demarcated territory' and 'permanent population' are two of the most reoccurring characteristics highlighted in definitions of the state (Northledge cited in Halliday 1994, p.78; Ojo 1985, p.28; Ranney 1987, p.35-36). Danziger (1998, p.106) concurs with Northledge, Ojo and Ranney when describing the state as "a territorially bound sovereign entity". Bull (cited in Halliday 1994) describes the state as a 'political community', whereas Waltz (cited in Halliday 1994) views the state as in practice coextensive with the nation – hence the reference to 'nation-state'. Ojo (1985, p.28) and Ranney (1987, p.35-36) also highlight this aspect of statehood by respectively including the existence of a political culture and a sense of national identity in their list of salient features of the state.

**Table 1:** Juridical and Empirical Requirements of Statehood

<b>Juridical Features</b>	<b>Empirical Features</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition as a Legally Equal Member of the International Community of States</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Territory</li> <li>• A Permanent Population</li> <li>• A Recognizable Government</li> <li>• Some Form of Socio-political Cohesion</li> <li>• Legitimate Authority sanctioned by the Population of the State</li> <li>• Formal Independence or Sovereignty</li> </ul>

Source: Brownlie (cited in Jackson & Rosberg 1982, p.3)

The state did not naturally evolve in Africa; rather it was forcefully grafted on top of existing forms of political organization within Africa. Certain central aspects of colonial state theory were also omitted in applying the state idea to Africa. The result has been an uneasy fit of statehood with its characteristics within the African context as well as unwanted spin-offs resulting from the particular political culture cultivated under colonial rule. These consequences have played a role in the African state's deviation from the 'strong state' ideal. In an attempt to prevent the fuelling of Afro-pessimism and the continent-wide over-generalizations that mar so many analyses of Africa, it is vital to stress the success of certain African states. One can, however, not deny the existence of a distressingly large number of African states that remain vulnerable to collapse or have indeed collapsed (Clapham 2001). What we witness in Africa today are different forms of statehood, most of which if measured against the criteria for statehood provided by Western countries, would not qualify as 'strong states'. When examining these state 'deviations' an idiosyncratic mix of post-colonial legacy and pre-colonial forms of political organization and ideas about governance, is revealed.

One of the processes which manifested in terms of the emerging configurations of social life in African states, is the practice of pouring resources into administrative arrangements and organizations of selected strongmen. The consequence of this is that after independence social control remained entrenched in social organizations other than the state. Not surprisingly, the control of the state in Africa has been fiercely contested (Migdal 1988, p.130-137) feeding into a political culture of revolution. Since 1960, African rulers have faced about a 60 percent chance of ending their term with violent death, exile or imprisonment. Nine African states, among which is the DRC, faced major armed struggles to replace incumbent regimes in 2001 (Sollenberg *et al.* 2000, p.52-55).

The section to follow will focus on some of the most frequently employed terms, which have been accorded to the African state in an attempt to capture the unique nature of states in Africa. The discussion does not represent an exhaustive list of all the terms, which have been used to describe African states. The terms selected are considered to cover the most prominent features of African states and are therefore considered sufficient for the purpose of this study. The three concepts frequently employed to capture newly emerging trends in terms of states are 'shadow states', 'collapsed states' and 'failed states'.

### Shadow State

The archetypical shadow state is a form of personal rule constructed behind the façade of the formal- and institutional structures of the state (i.e. laws and government institutions). A shadow state 'feeds' on the ruler's ability to manipulate external actors' access to markets in such a way that it enhances their power. Corruption is therefore woven into the fiber of shadow states. In its most extreme form the shadow state fails to provide citizens with basic protection from disorder. This is a deliberate act to undermine citizens' ability to obtain means of achieving their own goals, which might enable them to use these means to organize opposition to the rulers (Reno 2000). In short, the shadow state operates alongside existing government bureaucracies but advances the interests of the rulers and often deliberately withholds basic rights from their citizens (Funke & Solomon 2003).

### Collapsed State

An intense form of paralysis of the 'strong state' has recently been witnessed in the form of state collapse. In such instances the halt and virtual disappearance of a formerly functioning state system occurs. Zartman (cited in Woodward 1996, p.144) highlights the fact that in reality state collapse is not a sudden event but rather "a long term degenerative disease". One can

thus view state collapse as a downward spiral inaugurated by a complex and conflict-ridden process of deterioration, decline and erosion of state functions. "Actual collapse is likely to constitute the final moment of such processes, and to occur when a certain point of no return has been passed." A truly collapsed state can be classified as the "shell of a polity" (Rotberg 2002). In this sense, a collapsed state constitutes the complete antithesis of a strong state (Doornbos 2001, p.4). Baker and Ausink (1996, p.22) define a collapsed state as a state lacking the characteristics central to any functional state. Simply put, a collapsed state refers to a situation in which the structure, authority (legitimate power), law and political order of the state have disintegrated and where the institutions of the state can no longer exercise authority over its political and economic territory (Zartman 1995, p.1-9; Adar 1999, p.79).

### Failed State

State failure refers to instances where "less than complete collapse" occurs (Doornbos 2001, p.5). Failed states are characterized by many of the same characteristics as collapsed states but just in a 'milder' form. Rotberg (2002, p.132) identifies a number of characteristics of failed states (See Table 2).

**Table 2:** Characteristics of Failed States

- Rise of criminal and political violence
- A loss of control over borders
- Rising ethnic-, religious-, linguistic- and cultural hostilities
- Civil War
- The use of terror against its own citizens
- Weak institutions
- A deteriorated or insufficient infrastructure
- The inability to collect taxes without undue coercion
- A collapsed health system

- Rising levels of infant mortality and declining life expectancy
- The end of regular schooling opportunities
- Declining levels of GDP per capita (especially inflation)
- A widespread preference for non-national currencies
- Basic food shortages – leading to starvation
- Leaders destroy the economic and political fabric of the country
- Questionable legitimacy

Source: Rotberg 2002, p.132

A government functioning in a situation characterized by the abovementioned characteristics frequently face rising attacks on their fundamental legitimacy. All the symptoms of the failed state are causally connected. Rulers increasingly work exclusively for their own benefit as the state's capacity gradually weakens. Key interest group's loyalty to the state attenuate as people feel increasingly disenfranchised and marginalized. The result is that, as Rotberg puts it, "the social contract that binds citizens and central structures is forfeit". Citizens therefore seek alternative forms of identity and transfer their allegiances to communal warlords, ethnic leaders etc., which fuels domestic anarchy (Rotberg 2002).

#### **2.3.1.5. Preliminary Conclusions**

The aspects of the conflict context which have been addressed above have been singled out since they represent the observations on which the theories included in the next section are built. This section will capture the essence of the conflict context by revisiting a few key points concerning the self-financing nature of conflict, the conflict economy, new actors in conflict and the state as the arena for conflict and illustrate to what extent this represents a departure from the conflict context as described by more seminal or conventional theories of conflict.

### 2.3.2. Theoretical Responses

Scholars have altered the way in which they approach the analysis of conflict in response to the observation of changes in conflict tactics, actors and features of the conflict arena. Concepts such as 'war economy'<sup>1</sup>, 'informal economy'<sup>2</sup>, 'conflict commodities'<sup>3</sup>, etc. were coined to describe the types of conflicts identified in the post-Cold War era. These concepts now surface in an increasing number of academic writings within the discipline of Political Science, International Relations and Economics. A number of scholars including Kaldor (1999), Duffield (2001) and Berdal (2003) started analyzing conflicts in terms of what they referred to as 'new wars' – a qualitatively distinct type of conflict characterized by economic predation and an increase in civilian casualties (Malone and Nitzschke 2005, p.1).

Clarence Tshitereke (2003) notes that trends in contemporary conflicts have spurred the revision of discourses on war. The qualitative shift from the 'old wars' of the Cold-War era during the last decade has moved the academic spotlight onto new forms of armed conflicts with specific characteristics. Among the identified characteristics of these 'new wars' are their typically intra-state rather than inter-state scope. Also, these conflicts seem to be integrated into regional and global economic networks. 'New wars' often rely upon natural resources for financing although some analysts would argue that they are not necessarily caused by the exploitation of natural resources *per se*. Additionally, 'new wars' are frequently seen to result from processes of underdevelopment, incomplete state formation, and, at times, state collapse. "Overall, they manifest an unpredictable and shifting emphasis between political and economic dimensions of armed conflict. Hence the political

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<sup>1</sup> The particular configuration of economies emerging during times of war, frequently play a role in the financing of the war.

<sup>2</sup> The system of exchange used outside state-controlled or money-based economic activities, which has increased in prominence in 'collapsed states'.

<sup>3</sup> Lucrative natural resources, which play a role in the self-financing of belligerent groups and are obtained by means of anarchic exploitation, criminalized transactions and/or militarized production.

economy of civil war has become a major concern for research, policy, and practice..." (Thayer 2002, p. 2)

As part as this shift in approach to conflict analysis a body of knowledge exploring the relationship between economics and the eruption of conflict developed during the 1990s. Keen (1998), Collier & Hoeffler (1998), Reno (1995, 1998), Berdal & Malone (2000), and Klare (2001) are some of the prominent contributors to the body of knowledge on the role of the economic dimension in conflict. The subsequent sections will discuss the initiation and duration of conflict by drawing upon the findings of these prominent researchers.

### **2.3.2.1. *Salient Aspects of Theoretical Responses***

During the late 1990's academic debate concerned with the causes and dynamics of contemporary armed conflicts has become polarized around the 'greed versus grievance' dichotomy. Collier (1999, p.8) captures the crux of this debate in his statement that "The true cause of much civil war is not the loud discourse of grievance, but the silent force of greed." The 'greed versus grievance' dichotomy juxtaposes 'loot-seeking' with 'justice-seeking' rebellions. 'Loot-seeking' or greed identifies resource capture or economic factors as the primary drivers in conflict whereas 'justice-seeking' or grievance view socio-political factors as the most important causes of conflict (Ballentine & Nitzschke 2003a). Until the late 1990s the generally accepted motivation for conflict was grievance as articulated in theories that identify power as the central cause of conflict. The introduction of greed as a primary motivation in the onset of conflict therefore spurred widespread debate. The loaded and emotive nature of the terms greed and grievance, the stark opposition in which they were presented, and a continued lack of clarity as to what variables these terms are meant to capture can all be seen as contributing factors to the lack of consensus on the ways in which economic factors

matter as well as how much explanatory weight they bear in terms of conflict analysis (Ballentine and Sherman 2003, p.5).

The 'greed versus grievance' debate has its roots in a quantitative study done by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler in 1998. The study employed a simple rational choice model of greed-rebellion and contrasted the predictions forthcoming from this model with those of a simple grievance model. Collier and Hoeffler (1998) based their rational analytical framework for the occurrence of civil war upon the assumption that "war occurs if the incentive for rebellion is sufficiently large relative to the costs". The benefits to be reaped from rebel victory are a product of the probability of rebel victory minus the costs of rebellion, represented by the opportunity costs of conflict and the cost of coordination. This would imply the existence of a point at which the continuation of conflict would become irrational considering the aforementioned factors (Collier and Hoeffler 1998).

The duration of the conflict is influenced by the strength of the rebel group *vis a vis* the government. Strength is determined by military capacity, which is dependent upon financing. Collier and Hoeffler (1998) argue that "the military capability of the rebellion is unrelated to the domestic economy (for example, being financed externally), whereas the military capabilities of the government depends upon its military expenditure", which is seen to be measurable in terms of the taxable base. It would thus follow that the balance of military capacity between the government and the rebel group would determine the duration of the conflict. Thus, if the government is much stronger than the rebel group the conflict duration will probably be much shorter since the rebel group will be more easily suppressed. If the inverse is true and the rebel group is much stronger than the government then the conflict will also be much shorter since the rebels will take over the government or secede with much more ease. If the military capacity of both groups is roughly equal then the conflict will tend to be prolonged by the 'balance of power'.



Based on their statistical analysis, Collier and Hoeffler (1998) determined that the greed model substantially outperforms the grievance model. Collier (1999, p.1) clearly outlines the conceptual distinction between greed and grievance as drivers in conflict. "At one extreme rebellions might arise because the rebels aspire to wealth through capturing resources extra-legally. At the other extreme they might arise because rebels aspire to rid the nation, or the group of people with which they identify, of an unjust regime" (Collier 1999, p.1). Collier (1999) notes that he expected to find a close relationship between grievances and the incidence of conflict. In contrast, Collier's research revealed statistical links between economic agendas and conflict. In Collier's words "economic agendas appear to be central to understanding why civil wars get going." Collier is of the opinion that conflicts are far more likely to be caused by economic opportunities than by grievance. Following from the assumption that economic agendas are driving conflict it is likely that some groups are benefiting from conflict and that these groups therefore have some interest in initiating and sustaining the continuation of conflict. Civil wars create economic opportunities for a minority of actors even as they destroy them for the majority. The key to the resolution of such conflicts is considering which groups benefit and what the international community can do to reduce their power.

The conclusion that economic agendas motivate conflict was confirmed in a similar study done by Collier and Hoeffler (2000). Collier and Hoeffler (2000) do, however, preface their findings by mentioning that they cannot reject the hypothesis that the grievance model adds to explanatory power and are basing their conclusion in favour of the greed model on empirical results. Collier's findings pertaining to the motivations for conflict were crystallized into the 'greed hypothesis' put forward in the paper entitled 'Doing well out of war' in which he proposes that the grievance narrative has dominated discussions of civil conflict while the empirical evidence in support of a grievance based explanation of the onset of conflict is tenuous at best – "the

objective factors which might contribute to grievance, such as income and asset inequality, ethnic and religious divisions, and political repression do not seem to increase the risk of conflicts.” Instead, Collier maintains that the evidence on the causes of conflict reveal a much more empirically robust link between conflict eruption and economic factors. “The combination of large exports of primary commodities, low education, a high proportion of young men and economic decline between them drastically increase risks. Greed seems more important than grievance...” in determining the onset of conflict (Porto 2002, p.9-10). In adopting a greed based approach to conflict one would accept that the underlying economic conditions and not grievance create the risk of conflict. “Some societies will have repeated conflicts, not because of the cumulative legacy of the desire for vengeance, but because war is profitable for some groups” (Porto 2002, p.11).

An analysis of rebel motivations also begs the question of appropriate methodology when determining the motivation for conflict. This stems from the subjective nature of motivation and the extent to which statements of motivation or narrative are vulnerable to manipulation. As pointed out by Collier (1999, p.1-2) “...both greed-motivated and grievance-motivated rebel organizations will embed their behavior in a narrative of grievance, the observation of that narrative provides no informational content to the researcher as to the true motivation for rebellion.” Rebel organizations have deliberately generated and developed a discourse of grievance in order to mask their intentions of predatory activity. This has led rebel groups to manifest more characteristics of organized crime than protest movements (Naidoo 2000). The analyst is therefore forced to infer motivation from patterns of observed behavior as opposed to publicly stated narratives. In an attempt to determine patterns in the origins of civil war, most research have focused on distinguishing between those causal factors which are broadly consistent with an economic motivation, and those which are more consistent with grievance” (Porto 2002, p.10)

The reason why rebels prefer to frame their motivation in terms of a narrative of grievance is because not only is it much more functional externally but it also is more satisfying personally - rebel leaders may readily be persuaded by their own propaganda. Further, an accentuated sense of grievance also serves the internal function of facilitating recruitment for the rebel group. The rationale behind employing a 'fabricated' narrative of grievance is that as the organization grows, the material benefits which it can offer its additional members is likely to diminish and recruiting on the basis of grievance as opposed to greed with the accompanying promise of gain is more practical. "Hence, even where the rationale at the top of the organization is essentially greed, the actual discourse may be entirely dominated by grievance...since both greed-motivated and grievance motivated rebel organizations will embed their behavior in a narrative of grievance, the observation of that narrative provides no informational content to the researcher as to the true motivation for rebellion." By applying the methodology of inferring motivation from patterns of observed behavior, Collier (1999, p.4-5) concluded that his research confirmed the importance of economic agendas as more informative than grievance as far as the motivation for conflict is concerned.

Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler (2001) cautioned that it is imperative to draw a distinction between what motivates conflict and what makes it feasible and notes that the greed versus grievance debate should be positioned within the context of this distinction<sup>4</sup>. In accordance with the distinction between motivation and opportunity, the financial viability of a conflict is the ultimate determining factor as far as the onset and even continuation of a conflict is concerned and the motivation of the conflict has comparatively very little impact in this context. This argument implies that the rise and continuation of all conflicts is only possible if the bellicose parties are financially equipped to do so. "A rebellion occurs because of its real and potential extraction of productive economic resources. Whether rebels are motivated by greed, the

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<sup>4</sup> This distinction is explained quite succinctly in the introductory paragraph of Collier and Hoeffler (2001, p. 2).

lust for power or genuine grievances, a rebellion occurs only when the rebels can enrich themselves from the war effort. Predatory behavior during conflict may not be the objective of the rebel organization, but becomes the means of financing the conflict” (Naidoo 2000). The emphasis on the financial viability of conflict seems logical when considering self-financing of conflicts as discussed above (Sherman 2002, p.2; Ballentine 2004, p.3).

Bearing Collier’s caution in mind there seems to be a disjunction between, what can be referred to as, the ‘resource end’ interpretation and the ‘resource means’ perspective. The former views resource capture as the end objective of conflict hence the term ‘resource wars’ while the latter highlights the evolution of resources into the determining factor of a conflict’s financial viability. Collier and Hoeffler (2001) tested both the ‘means’ and the ‘end’ approach to the role of finance and resource exploitation in conflicts and found that opportunity provides considerably more explanatory power than grievance. In their opinion, economic viability appears to be the predominant systematic explanation of rebellion. “We find that a model that focuses on the opportunities for rebellion performs well, whereas objective indicators of grievance add little explanatory power...One factor influencing the opportunity for rebellion is the availability of finance...Opportunity as an explanation of conflict risk is consistent with the economic interpretation of rebellion as greed-motivated. It is, though, also consistent with grievance motivation as long as perceived are sufficiently widespread to be common across societies and time. Opportunity can account for the existence of either for-profit, or not-for-profit, rebel organizations. Our evidence does not therefore imply that rebels are necessarily criminals. But the grievance that motivate rebels may be substantially disconnected from the large social concerns of inequality, political rights, and ethnic or religious identity.” (Collier and Hoeffler 2001, p. 17)

New conflict dynamics have served to shape conflicts in different ways; conventionally, intrastate conflict was seen as engendering complete

economic breakdown and anarchy, whereas more recent approaches to conflict analysis identifies its potential to create alternative systems of profit, power and protection. Violent conflict on the one hand, contributes to massive human suffering and societal devastation, while engendering patterns of distribution and redistribution on the other hand. These conflict dynamics realign interests and actors in ways that are consequential to the course of armed conflict while also impacting the opportunities for conflict resolution (Ballentine and Sherman 2003, p. 2). Paul Collier (1999) reaffirms his conviction that conflicts are far more likely to be caused by economic opportunities than by grievance. Collier goes beyond the mere identification of the role of economic opportunities in the onset of conflict by also addressing the economic opportunities created by conflict. Collier points out that some groups benefit from conflict and that these groups therefore have some interest in initiating and sustaining it. "Civil wars create economic opportunities for a minority of actors even as they destroy them for the majority." Collier's suggested approach for conflict resolution in cases where significant economic opportunities have been created by conflict, is to consider which groups benefit and what the international community can do to reduce their power (Collier 1999, p.1).

As far as the dynamics (i.e. duration, intensity and character) of conflict is concerned, Ballentine (2003, p.260-262) singles out the salient role of combatant access to economic resources, which shapes a "permissive opportunity structure for sustaining hostilities". The existence of grievance in some form, whether economic, political, or social in nature, appears to be the most persuasive motivation of conflict. Economic motivations (whether the pursuit of resources for war-financing or elite self-enrichment), on the other hand, appear more significant in sustaining, prolonging, and transforming conflict (Sherman 2002, p.1). This argument warrants a modification of the 'feedback effect' described by Collier and Hoeffler (Collier and Hoeffler 2000).

Before Collier and Hoefler's (2000) study, it was widely believed that grievances beget conflict, which feed into additional grievance, which fuels further conflict. These assumptions about the origin and dynamics of conflict, confined policy options to intervention aimed at the reduction of the level of objective grievance (Collier and Hoefler 2000). Collier and Hoefler's study does not only explore the origins of civil war<sup>5</sup> as addressed earlier in this section but also unpacks the dynamics of the subsequent conflict. Collier & Hoefler's (2000, p.26) findings contrast with conventional beliefs about the causes of conflict. Collier and Hoefler's (2000) study point at a feedback effect in accordance with which conflicts caused by opportunities for predation generate grievances, which induce diasporas to further finance conflict (Collier and Hoefler 2000). David Malone (cited in Sherman 2003, p.30) concurs with Collier and Hoefler (2000) as far as the contribution of feasibility and greed to the duration of conflict is concerned.

Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003), on the other hand, maintain that conflicts mutate as a result of resource capture by combatants – initially conflicts are motivated by political aims but over time a key driver in the conflict becomes the securing of short-term economic benefits. Participants at an International Peace Academy conference on the 'Economic Agendas in Civil Wars' viewed the political aim of seizing a state or succeeding from it to be the primary spark for certain wars. The primary aim, however, can later mutate into economic agendas as the conflict progresses (Adebajo 1999). The adoption of this outlook on conflict dynamics implies the use of intervention methods aimed at the reduction of economic benefit. The impact of conflict conceptualization on the method of intervention and the framework for peace agreements should thus be evident.

One should also consider the possibility that economic activities, including

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<sup>5</sup> The common definition of civil war as used by Ross, M. 2004. p. 47 will be accepted. Definition: "A conflict between a government and an organized rebel movement that produces at least one thousand battle-related deaths."

natural resource<sup>6</sup> extraction, are means to achieve a political end (Cater 2002). Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003) remark that in situations where the state has already been extensively penetrated and privatized by particular patron-client relationships, state capture can simultaneously be a political and economic goal. This would imply that economics and politics could at times be mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive.

Lieven (cited in Sherman 2003, p.27) further points out that the relative weight of greed or grievance's contribution to the origin and duration of conflict differs between countries, if not from town to town. Cater (2003, p.20) posits that conflicts, and by implication the contribution of greed and grievance, changes over time. Need is also a powerful driver in war. Civilians located in conflict zones survive on activities connected to conflict in the absence of alternative means of economic sustenance (Guaqueta 2002, p.5). People dependent on the war economy to sustain their livelihood develop an ironic interest in the continuation of conflict. On the one hand, the conflict has an adverse effect on human security and increases casualties but on the other hand, it provides a means of survival in the short term. Civilians in conflict thus find themselves in a precarious position of having to choose between long-term or short-term benefits and in circumstances where life has been reduced to 'survival of the fittest', civilians are at times more inclined to favor short-term benefits.

### **2.3.2.2. Preliminary Conclusions**

The preliminary conclusions with regards to theoretical responses to the economic dimension of conflict will be dealt with by answering a number of key questions. The following questions will be addressed:

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<sup>6</sup> A broad definition of natural resources, encompassing oil, gas, gemstones, non-fuel minerals, timber, and agricultural commodities (including illicit drugs), will be employed in this chapter.

Which seminal theories come to the fore in economic theories of conflict?

Until the late 1990s grievance was considered the primary motivation for conflict and was articulated in theories that identify power as the central cause of conflict. The introduction of greed as a primary motivation in the onset of conflict therefore represented a departure from the generally accepted motivation of conflict. Before Collier and Hoeffler's (2000) study it was widely believed that grievances spark conflict and that conflict dynamics then follow a positive feedback loop with grievance at its basis. Collier and Hoeffler's research introduced the role of greed in conflict dynamics, which represented a modification of the grievance fuelled feedback effect described by earlier scholars. The principal of rational behavior also features in the basic assumptions of the quantitative studies conducted by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler in as much as their research employed simple rational choice models. The basic assumption of the utility theory employed by Collier & Hoeffler is that rebels weigh the perceived benefits and costs of rebellion against each other and will only engage in rebellion if the benefits outweigh the costs.

Are conflicts motivated by greed or grievance?

A simple answer to the above question would imply the adoption of a reductionist theoretical approach to the onset and duration of conflict. As discussed above, the adoption of a reductionist approach carries with it the risk of oversimplification but also has tremendous theoretical value. Based on the arguments presented by Collier (1999) one could answer the above question in the affirmative. Collier (1999, p.8) argues that: "The true cause of much civil war is not the loud discourse of grievance, but the silent force of greed." Collier and Hoeffler (1998) reach the same conclusion as Collier (1999) based on the statistical analysis of conflicts. Simply stated, Collier and Hoeffler's (1998) greed model substantially outperforms the grievance model. This conclusion was confirmed in a similar study done by Collier and Hoeffler (2000). As explained in the preceding section, there are many nuances to the



motivations of conflict and although statistical evidence seem to point at greed as the primary motivation for conflict, other forms of analysis may draw different conclusions.

#### How does one determine conflict motivation?

Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003) are cognizant of the methodological problems inherent in making conclusions based on combatant's 'self-described purposes' since they always frame their involvement in terms of a narrative of grievance. Drawing conclusions based on behavior proves to be equally problematic because combatants engage in predatory economic activity, which is seldom a reliable guide to their central disposition. Analysts are, nonetheless, forced to infer motivation from patterns of observed behavior as opposed to publicly stated narratives. In an attempt to determine patterns in the origins of civil war most research have focused on distinguishing between those causal factors which are broadly consistent with an economic motivation, and those which are more consistent with grievance" (Porto 2002, p.10) The reason for having to rely on inferring motivation from behavior lies in the objective nature of motivations and their susceptibility to manipulation. Collier and Hoeffler (2000, p.2) hold that "both greed-motivated and grievance-motivated rebel organizations will embed their behavior in a narrative of grievance, the observation of that narrative provides no informational content to the researcher as to the true motivation for rebellion." An alternative would be to employ statistical methods such as those adopted by Collier and Hoeffler in their research.

#### Are greed and grievance necessarily exclusive terms?

The manner in which Collier (1999, p.1) depicts greed and grievance as the two opposite ends of the spectrum, could lead one to answer the above question in the affirmative. Collier (1999, p.1) holds that: "At one extreme rebellions might arise because the rebels aspire to wealth through capturing

resources extra-legally. At the other extreme they might arise because rebels aspire to rid the nation, or the group of people with which they identify, of an unjust regime.” Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003) remark that in situations where the state has already been extensively penetrated and privatized by particular patron-client relationships, state capture can simultaneously be a political and economic goal. The implication of such a statement would be that greed and grievance could at times be mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive terms.

Is there an alternative to the starkly polarized ‘greed versus grievance’ approach to conflict analysis?

According to Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003) there is a growing realization of the analytical limits of a starkly polarized ‘greed versus grievance’ approach. In Collier and Hoeffler’s later research an integrated model, which incorporates features from both the grievance and the greed models, outperformed the two independent models (Collier and Hoeffler 2000, p. 2) suggesting that greed and grievance are not mutually exclusive motivations for conflict but might actually work in concert during the onset of conflict. Anatol Lieven (cited in Sherman 2003, p.27) similarly identifies both greed and grievance as important aspects of conflict. Acknowledging that both greed and grievance are determinants of conflict dynamics does not imply their necessary simultaneous influence on conflict, although the mutually reinforcing nature of greed and grievance has been observed. Based on the findings in Ballentine and Sherman eds. (2003), Ballentine (2003, p.259-260) argues that most conflicts are not purely “resource wars” or instances of “loot-seeking” by either insurgents or state actors. Rather, when analyzed these conflicts reveal the varying degrees in which economic incentives/opportunities and socioeconomic/political grievances, interethnic disputes, and security dilemmas interact to spawn conflict. Cater accepts the simultaneous influence of greed and grievance on conflict and suggests the use of a modified ‘political economy’ approach that integrates both the

interrelationship between economic and political factors and the complementary rebel-centric and state-centric models of conflict analysis (Cater 2003, p.20).

Does resource capture merely represent a means of financing conflict or does it permeate the underlying motivations of the conflict?

Naidoo (2000) provides a succinct answer to this question: "A rebellion occurs because of its real and potential extraction of productive economic resources. Whether rebels are motivated by greed, the lust for power or genuine grievances, a rebellion occurs only when the rebels can enrich themselves from the war effort. Predatory behavior during conflict may not be the objective of the rebel organization, but becomes the means of financing the conflict." Collier and Hoeffler (2001, p. 17) agree that the opportunity for resource capture represents the means of financing conflict and point out that a model that focuses on the opportunities for rebellion outperforms the objective indicators of grievance. As far as conflict financing permeating conflict motivations is concerned, Collier and Hoeffler (2001, p.17) note that: "Opportunity as an explanation of conflict risk is consistent with the economic interpretation of rebellion as greed-motivated. However, it is also consistent with grievance motivation as long as perceived as sufficiently widespread to be common across societies and time."

Is it possible that conflict motivations can mutate over time?

Based on the research discussed above it would seem that the underlying motivations can indeed shift as conflict progresses. Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003), maintain that conflicts mutate as a result of resource capture by combatants. Initially conflicts are motivated by political aims but over time a key driver in the conflict becomes the securing of short-term economic benefits. Participants at an International Peace Academy conference on the 'Economic Agendas in Civil Wars' viewed the political aim of seizing a state or

succeeding from it to be the primary spark for certain wars. The primary aim, however, can later mutate into economic agendas as the conflict evolves (Adebajo 1999). Ballentine (2003, p.260-262) maintains that grievance in some form, whether economic, political, or social in nature, appears to be the most persuasive motivation at the onset of a conflict. Economic motivations (whether the pursuit of resources for war-financing or elite self-enrichment), on the other hand, appear more significant in sustaining, prolonging, and transforming conflict (Sherman 2003, p.1). This is linked to the argument that it is more sensible for combatants to wrap their motivations in the veil of grievance after the onset of conflict. The reason being that as a conflict progresses it becomes more difficult to sustain a greed-motivated conflict. Also, as the number of recruits rise it becomes increasingly difficult to divide the spoils of conflict, which represents the prize in a greed-motivated conflict. The conclusion reached by Collier and Hoeffler's (2000) study contrasts with the findings of Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003). Collier and Hoeffler (2000) point at a feedback effect in accordance with which conflicts caused by opportunities for predation generate grievances, which induce diasporas to further finance conflict (Collier and Hoeffler 2000).

#### Why do conflicts persist or reoccur?

In accordance with the 'greed approach' to conflict the reoccurrence of conflict can be ascribed to the fact that conflict represents opportunities for some groups or individuals to profit. This contrasts with the belief that some societies experience repeated conflict because of the cumulative legacy of the desire for vengeance. The latter observation draws on a grievance informed analysis of conflict (Porto 2002, p.11).

#### **2.3.3. Natural Resources and Conflict**

"Since the 1990s, many scholars have studied the relationship between natural resource wealth and civil war. Most have been motivated by a series

of high profile conflicts – in Angola, Colombia, the DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Sudan...” (Ross 2004a, p.337) Natural resources was revealed to have a strong impact on the probability for armed conflicts and also inform the duration, course and impact of such conflicts. “While this has been historically the case, it is particularly relevant at present, due to reduction in foreign assistance to governments and rebel groups as a result of the ending of the Cold War.” (Porto 2002, p.16) Philippe Le Billion (cited Porto 2002, p.16) points out that belligerents have become more dependent upon mobilizing tradable commodities, such as minerals, timber or drugs, to sustain their military and political activities.

In addition to financing conflicts, resources have also impacted the dynamics of conflicts by shaping strategies of power based on “the commercialization of armed conflict and the territorialisation of sovereignty around valuable resource areas and trading networks.” As such, “...armed conflict in the post-Cold War period is increasingly characterized by a specific political ecology closely linked to the geography and political economy of natural resources.” (Le Billion 2001a) In the same vein, Sagaren Naidoo (2000) argues that “current trends and modalities of protracted conflicts reflect transnational economic linkages which are heavily reliant on the smuggling of a state’s natural resources for the supply of military hardware required for sustaining a war.” The broader implication of the emergence of economic interests in conflict is that it might overshadow political interests by sustaining conflicts that may be profitable for some individuals and groups. Resource exploitation by groups in conflict also strongly affects the chances for resolution due to certain parties’ vested interest in the continuation of conflict for profit (Porto 2002, p.16)

Recent studies have revealed a systematic connection between natural resources and civil wars (Ross 2004b, p.35). Much of the research done on this topic has portrayed contemporary wars, particularly those conflicts in the developing world, as driven essentially by economic agendas. Jakkie Cilliers

points out that this approach has been collated into that of 'resource-wars' and is sometimes put forward as representing a 'new' type of war (Porto 2002, p.2). This begs the question whether the fact that combatants in many of today's armed conflicts finance themselves through the exploitation of natural resources warrant the wholesale reconceptualization of conflicts as 'resource wars'? This section will aim to provide an answer to this question. When analyzing the economic dimension of contemporary civil conflicts it is important to bare in mind that not all commodities traded with the aim of fueling war are natural resources (Guaqueta 2003, p.3). This section, however, will focus on the interface between natural resources and conflict. The reason for this limited focus is the prominence of natural resources in the conflict in the DRC.

While the role of resources in the onset and continuation of violent conflicts has been the object of study for many decades, until recently studies have for the most part centered on the role played by scarcity or relative scarcity of resources as prime triggers of violence, both at the individual as well as the collective level. More recent research has, however, broken away from this emphasis and focused on resource appropriation in situations of abundance as the fundamental underlying cause of war (Porto 2002, p.2). This has led to the emergence of two schools of thought on the relationship between natural resources and conflict. The first is known as the 'scarce resource' hypothesis<sup>7</sup>, which asserts that people fight for access to scarce resources.

The second school of thought is based on the 'abundant resource' argument<sup>8</sup>. This approach correlates the ample availability of resources to the eruption of conflict<sup>9</sup>. The emphasis on resource abundance has reconceptualized conflicts

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7 Le Billon (2001, p.561-584) refers to this hypothesis as the 'need' hypothesis but this term will not be employed in order to avoid confusion with the earlier mentioning of 'need' as a fueling factor in war.

8 Le Billon (2001, p.561-584) refers to this hypothesis as the 'need' hypothesis but this term will not be employed in order to avoid confusion with the earlier mentioning of 'need' as a fueling factor in war. Le Billon uses the concept 'greed' to denote this approach. For the purposes of this chapter 'resource abundance' will be used in an attempt to avoid confusion in the light of the explanation of how the author understands the Collier and Hoeffler's (2000) use of 'greed'.

9 For more information about the 'scarce resource' hypothesis and the 'abundant resource' argument refer to Le Billon (2001, p. 564).

as 'resource wars'. This approach supports the proposition that groups engaged in violent conflict are not primarily motivated by grievance (i.e. ethnic discrimination, inequality, historical animosity), but essentially by economic agendas and therefore greed. A strand in the 'resource-war' hypothesis has recently become known as the 'greed theory' of conflict through the work of Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler (Porto 2002, p.2).

Quantitative research supports the 'abundant resource' argument (Collier and Hoeffler 1998; Collier and Hoeffler 2002). Collier and Hoeffler (cited in Bannon and Collier 2003, p.2) determine that the link between natural resources and conflict is much more intricate than a mere causal link between the two. Collier and Hoeffler's research indicates that a country's level of dependence on primary commodity exports (measured as the ratio of primary commodity exports to gross domestic product) increases its risk for armed conflict. This lead Collier to conclude that "objective political grievances have no direct link to the onset of conflict" and "where there are accessible natural resources and a mass of ill-educated youth, rebel movements have a powerful incentive to use violence to acquire wealth and the opportunity and means to do so". The risk of civil war is four times higher for natural resource-dependent states than for countries having no primary resource commodities (Pauwels 2003, p.4; Ganesan and Vines, 2004). Among the reasons for the nexus between resource dependence and conflict is the fact that in resource dependent countries, resource rents constitute 'the prize' for controlling the state. This creates a situation conducive to rebellious violence, such as *coup* attempts by populist movements wanting political redress (Le Billon 2001a, p.573). In addition, resource dependence also promotes conflict by: impeding a country's economic performance, making the government weaker, more corrupt and less accountable and by the self-financing opportunities of rebel groups (Ross 2002b, p. 2).

A further implication of Collier & Hoeffler's (1998, 2002a) research, as identified by Ross (2004b, p.340), is that the possession of natural resources

initially increases the duration and the risk of civil war but then reduces it. This is interpreted as being due to the taxable base of the economy constituting an attraction for rebels wishing to capture the state. On the other hand, a high level of natural resources diminishes the probability of war due to the enhanced financial capability of the government and hence its ability to defend itself through military expenditure (Porto 2002, p.9-10). The character of resources is also informative in terms of the nature of certain conflicts and the processes, which underscore their evolution. It has been noted that the impact of natural resources on key conflict dynamics varies depending on the type of resource (Le Billon cited Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003, p.4). Fearon (2004, p.275-301) argues that certain types of natural resources (gemstones and narcotics) tend to increase the duration of conflicts.

Natural resource endowment in itself is not a predictive indicator of conflict; rather a statistical link is only established between primary resource exports dependence and conflict risk. Natural resource endowment, however, indirectly contributes to the risk for armed conflict in the sense that it is a prerequisite for natural resource dependence (Thayer 2002, p. 3; Collier and Hoeffler cited in Guaqueta 2002, p. 3; Collier 2000, p.297-322; Le Billon 2001a, p.563). Bannon and Collier (2003, p.11) also illustrate the absence of a necessary casual link between natural resources (even primary resource dependence) and conflict with reference to the differing development paths of Botswana and Sierra Leone.

In 1970 both these countries could be described as low-income countries with substantial diamond resources. Thirty years later these two countries find themselves at much different points in their economic development. Sierra Leone has displayed significant economic regression and found themselves at the bottom of the Human Development Index with a much lower per capita income than in 1970. Botswana, in contrast, emerged as the fastest-growing economy in the world during that 30-year time span and could be classified



as a middle-income country. This example amply illustrate that “the natural resource curse is not a destiny”.

### Geographical Typology of Natural Resources

Le Billon (2001a, p.570) emphasizes the link between specific types of resources and conflict, as differentiated from researchers who link primary resource dependence to conflict. Le Billon devised a geographically based natural resource typology in which he separates natural resources into four categories: proximate, distant, point and diffuse resources. Proximate and distant resources are distinguished by the distance between the center of government control (i.e. capital) and the natural resources with the former being closer to the center of control and the latter being further away. The rationale is that a resource close to the capital is less likely to be captured than a resource closer to a border. A further implication is that distant resources are more conducive to protracted conflict. The reason for this can be sought in the balance of power theory whereby the strengthening of the weaker belligerent group will prolong the conflict. Rebel groups are usually the weaker of the two parties involved in the conflict and since distant resources are more likely to be controlled by rebels it would follow that there is a link between distant resources and protracted conflict. The distinction between point resources and diffuse resources is based on the concentration of the resources (Auty 2001). Point resources are concentrated in a single area and usually exploited by extractive industries (i.e. mining) while diffuse resources are more widely spread and are primarily exploited by productive industries over large areas (i.e. agriculture, forestry and fisheries).

Le Billon (2001, p.573) develops a natural resource-conflict matrix, which establishes links between the nature of the conflict and the natural resource typology (Table 3).

**Table 3 – Natural Resource-Conflict Matrix**

	<b>Point Resources</b>	<b>Diffuse Resources</b>
<b>Proximate Resources</b>	State Control/Coup D'Etat	Rebellion/Rioting
<b>Distant Resources</b>	Succession	Warlordism

Source: Based on Le Billon (2001, p.573)

### Obstruction Typology of Natural Resources

Natural resources can also be differentiated based on the process through which belligerents profit from natural resources. Ross (2004b) identifies three processes of obtaining money from resources: direct looting and sale of resources, the sale of resource futures, extortion, and kidnapping. By focusing on the first process it is possible to identify resources, which are easily looted and resources for which there are certain obstructions to exploitation. The former category of resources can easily be extracted and transported by small groups of unskilled workers. This type of resource can consequently provide direct rents for combatants and tend to generate incomes for local communities. Alluvial diamonds and narcotics also fall into this category. Resources with a high level of obstruction require equipment, infrastructure, and skilled workers for its extraction. Benefits from this type of resource are usually accrued by extractive firms and central governments that provide the necessary skilled workers, security, and capital (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003, p.4-5; Renner 2002, p.11-12). Coltan is an example of a resource with a high level of obstruction accompanied with its extraction.

Based on the 'balance of power' assumption it is also possible to establish a link between the 'mode of exploitation' typology and the duration of the conflict. The 'balance of power' assumption holds that there is a direct relation between the relative power of the weaker belligerent group and the

duration of the conflict. The inverse would also be true, the higher the relative power of the stronger belligerent group the shorter the war. This assumption is most valuable as a tool for analysis of civil wars where the weaker actor is usually the rebel group and the government normally constitutes the stronger actor. In the case of weak states, the government, however, could also constitute the weaker actor.

Building on the generalization that the rebel group is usually the weaker actor, it would follow that a country rich in easily looted resources and/or distant resources are more likely to experience a protracted conflict since the military defeat of the rebels is averted. In addition, natural resources that can easily be looted are prone to feed into the fragmentation and fractionalization of combatant groups, which can increase the risk for protracted conflict (Nitzschke 2003, p.4). Smillie's (2003, p.26) comment that "for well-organized rebel groups operating in a security vacuum, diamonds are almost free for the taking" supports the assumption that rebel groups are more likely to benefit from resources which can easily be looted such as alluvial diamonds. Resources with fewer obstructions to extraction can also be accessed directly by rank and file soldiers, rather than through the chain of command. In such a situation, discipline problems can arise and this makes it more difficult for leaders to impose settlements on followers. Direct access to natural resources can also give rise to second-order grievances that multiply the points of conflict (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003, p.13). The impact of natural resources with more obstructions to extraction, point resources, and/or proximate resource largely depends on the relative strength of the government in the conflict. If the government is relatively more powerful, these resources are more likely to expedite their military victory. In the case of weak states, these resources can serve as a lifeline, which prolongs the conflict (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003, p.13). The natural resource type can also have a bearing on the scope of the conflict. Both the geographical natural resource typology and the 'mode of extraction' typology are informative in this regard. Conflicts in which diffuse resources play a more prominent role may be broader in scope

than conflicts fuelled by point resources. Similarly, conflicts funded through lootable resources become less centralized or territorially contained (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003, p.13).

Despite the research to support the correlation between abundant natural resources, natural resource dependence and conflict, and the links between resource types and conflict, the causal mechanisms underlying this relationship have remained largely unexplored. Not all countries dependent on primary commodity exports experience conflict. Botswana is a good example of a country that depends heavily on primary commodity exports while enjoying relative political stability. Countries that do experience conflict do not display a history of continual conflict, as the acceptance of the 'resource abundance' hypothesis would warrant. In addition, the distribution of valuable resources is not in and of itself a reliable indicator of where conflict is likely to occur. Resources, nonetheless, appear to make conflict more feasible when grievances already exist as they offer a ready means of financing rebellion. Alternatively, the perverse developmental effects of resource-generated revenue may indirectly make a country more conflict-prone by generating socio-economic grievances (Sherman 2001b, p.1-3).

#### The Natural Resource/Conflict Nexus

Michael Ross (2004b) contributes to redressing the gap in research exploring the causal mechanisms behind the natural resource-conflict correlation. In his paper, Ross revisits seven previously articulated hypotheses concerning the links between natural resources and the dynamics (onset, duration and intensity) of civil war and identifies three additional hypotheses (Table 4).

**Table 4 - Hypothesized Causal Mechanisms**

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**Hypotheses on the onset of civil war**

1. Primary commodities increase the probability of civil war by enabling nascent rebel groups to raise money either by extracting and selling the commodities directly, or by extorting money from other who do.
2. Resource wealth increases the probability of civil war by causing grievances over insufficiently compensated land expropriation, environmental degradation, inadequate job opportunities, and labor migration.
3. Resource wealth increases the probability of civil war by giving residents in resource-rich areas an incentive to form a separate state.
4. Resource wealth increases the likelihood of civil war by increasing the probability of foreign intervention to support a rebel movement.
5. Resource wealth increases the probability of civil war by enabling rebel groups to sell future exploitation rights to minerals they hope to capture.

**Hypotheses on the duration of civil war**

6. Resource wealth tends to increase (decrease) the duration of civil wars when it provides funding to the weaker (stronger) side.
7. Resource wealth tends to increase (decrease) the duration of civil wars by offering combatants a financial incentive to oppose (support) a peace settlement.
8. Resource wealth tends to increase (decrease) the duration of civil wars by enabling the weaker (stronger) side to earn revenues by selling future exploitation rights to minerals they hope to capture.

**Hypotheses on the intensity of civil war**

9. Resource wealth tends to increase the casualty rate during a civil war by

causing combatants to fight for resource-rich territory that would otherwise have little value.

10. Resource wealth tends to decrease the casualty rate during a civil war by causing combatants to cooperate in resource exploitation.

Source: Revised from Ross (2004b) (*unexplored hypotheses were omitted*)

#### **2.3.4. Critique of Theoretical Responses**

The research done on the role of the economic dimension in conflict in general but specifically by Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 1999, 2001), had ramifications in terms of not only the analysis of the dynamics of conflict but also the practice of conflict resolution. For this reason their research brought about a myriad of re-analyses, debate and criticism. Subsequent research focusing on the root causes and dynamics of contemporary civil conflicts have adopted the findings of Collier and Hoeffler's research to varying extents. The bulk of subsequent research, however, has pointed out the shortcomings of the conclusions made by Collier and Hoeffler (Sherman 2001).

Thayer (2002, p.4) holds that there is disagreement on some of the most fundamental causes of conflict. He differentiates between analysts who suggest that access to lootable commodities or the opportunity for finance combined with an economic profit motive is the primary factors, which determine the prospects for rebellion. This view is consistent with the 'resource end' approach to conflict. Another group argue that it ignores the possibility that economic activities, including natural resource extraction, may be a means to achieve a political end. This approach displays overlap with the 'resource means' approach to the role of natural resources in conflict. An important caveat when interpreting the research spawned in response to Collier and Hoeffler's findings is that a number of these studies have based their criticism on the 'resource end' interpretation of Collier and Hoeffler's conclusions. This research has provided criticism of identifying the main

motivation of conflict as being capturing and profiting from resources and is not so much a criticism of the 'resource means' perspective.

One of the drawbacks of the 'greed versus grievance' approach is that it has "imposed an unnecessarily limiting dichotomy on what is, in reality, a highly diverse, complex set of incentives and opportunity structures that vary across time and location" (Ballentine and Sherman 2003, p.6). Thayer (2002, p. 4) is of the opinion that reality reflects that the motivation for conflict is generally more ambiguous than a simple dichotomy between political and economic cause and has the ability to shift during the course of a civil war. Criticism of the limiting character of a stark 'greed versus grievance' approach serves to advocate the adoption of a more comprehensive approach to the analysis of conflict thereby highlighting the shortcomings of 'single-factor' analyses of conflict. It should be noted though that in terms of methodology statistical analysis requires the oversimplification of data, and the forcing of events into common classifications, when it is the differences which are most conspicuous (Porto 2002, p.12-13).

Cilliers (cited in Porto 2002, p.14-15) similarly voices a criticism of the reductionist nature of the 'greed theory'. In Cillier's words "...although war may have both intended (i.e. planned) and unintended economic consequences, any analysis that seeks to reduce the study of extensive social conflict to a single determinant should be treated with care. War profiteering, or the economic benefits that may arise during conflict, is not a new phenomenon but as old as war itself."

Historically, economic considerations have been an important cause of wars, commercial agendas (the profits made during war) have often served to perpetuate conflict, and motivations to prosecute war also change over time. But economic considerations have not always predominated and can seldom be used as single-factor explanations.' The resource-war type, product of 'greed theory', does not seem to allow for a comprehensive understanding of

contemporary ongoing-armed conflicts. It does point to crucial aspects concerning the probable role that a number of variables may have in the onset of armed conflicts and therefore should be taken into account by the analyst. In this sense, while not sufficient for a comprehensive understanding of contemporary armed conflicts, it does highlight conditions that may facilitate or constrain the choices that groups make in the pursuit of their goals. Vivienne Jabri (cited in Porto 2002, p.16) reinforces this when she says that, "...war is (a) a multicausal phenomenon, where different causal sequences may apply to different conflict situations, and (b) a result of decision-making paths which, far from suggesting rationality as defined by strict criteria of consistency, point to the view that rationality is bounded by institutional roles and analytic loops which actors may go through prior to the onset of war."

The general claim that 'greed' is the prime cause of war must be rejected. And in fact, this conclusion seems to be confirmed in Collier and Hoeffler's (2001) latest article on this issue. 'Greed and grievance in civil war' contains an interesting development pointing to the incorporation of both 'greed' and 'grievance' in a combined model; representing a move away from both concepts of 'greed' and 'grievance' and introducing the less controversial notions of preferences and constraints while maintaining a focus on 'the economic' rationale of civil war implied in expected-utility. The study concludes by confirming the importance of both 'constraints-based theory' and 'preferences-based theory'. As regards the 'greed versus grievance hypothesis' Collier and Hoeffler posit that the "aim of our econometric tests is to arrive at an integrated model which gives an account of conflict risk in terms of all those constraints and preferences which are significant." Collier and Hoeffler favor the investigation of a combined model; concluding that "while the greed model is superior, some elements of the grievance model are likely to add to its explanatory power" (Porto 2002, p.16)



Collier and Hoeffler (2000) preface their findings by mentioning that they cannot reject the hypothesis that the grievance model adds to explanatory power and are basing their conclusion in favor of the greed model on empirical results. A number of critiques have been waged based on the very empirical nature of Collier and Hoeffler's study. A number of other scholars including Fearon and Laitin (2003), Elbadawi and Sambanis (2002), as well as Hegre (2002) have all tried to replicate Collier and Hoeffler findings on natural resources and civil war with varying results. Each of these research projects utilized a different database of civil wars. The Fearon & Laitin study provides the sharpest challenge to the Collier & Hoeffler findings (Ross 2004b, p.340). The inability to replicate Colier and Hoeffler's findings hints at the fact that the study might not be as empirically robust as Colier and Hoeffler would like to portray it. This could imply an overall weakness of the theory since Colier and Hoeffler already admit to limited explanatory power. Also, due to its statistical basis there is an inherent drawback in adopting greed theory especially for the purposes of policy recommendation. The statements regarding the salience of economic factors that are woven into the fabric of greed theory "are probabilistic statements of conflict rather than factual descriptions of actual conflict dynamics in the specific real-world instances that preoccupy policy-makers" Ballentine and Sherman (2003, p.5).

Although the economic theory of conflict provides sound reasoning for the occurrence and sustainability of conflicts, it nevertheless contains certain limitations and weaknesses. Foremost amongst these are the fact that the economic causes and reasons for war are not exclusive and not necessarily applicable to all conflicts. At the expense of being general, the theory does not consider rebel movements that have had little access to exploitable resources but have nonetheless maintained their arms opposition against the enemy (e.g. The Mai-Mai in the DRC). The theory has neglected examining the commercial activities of national militaries by placing all emphasis on the operations of a rebel movement. It is important to point out that while the theory maintains that a rebellion occurs only when rebels can enrich

themselves from the war effort, it states that predatory behavior during the conflict may not be the objective of the rebel organization. This implies that predatory behavior is only made possible by rebellion. These positions are conflictual and contradictory (Naidoo 2000).

## **2.4. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it is necessary to revisit the central research question at the core of this chapter. The central research question addressed in this chapter as outlined in Chapter One is: In what respect can we view contemporary conflict theories as a response to the changing conflict context and a departure from previous conflict theories? The focus of this chapter has been on theories dealing with the economic dimension of conflict and the role of natural resources as far as contemporary conflict theories has been concerned. Thayer (2002, p.1) highlights a number of economic aspects, which render internal conflicts in the post-Cold War era particularly difficult to resolve resulting in the proliferation of protracted conflicts. Among these economic aspects are:

- Conflicts are often self-financing and economically integrated at regional and international levels.
- Competition for resources can create problems in terms of command, control, and cohesion of both rebel and government forces.
- There is a proliferation of opportunities for self-enrichment over the course of a conflict.
- Diaspora networks are difficult for third party mediators to influence.
- Conflicts involve complicated trade-offs between brokering peace and providing justice.

Using the economic aspects highlighted by Thayer (2002) as a point of departure, it would seem in the light of the preceding discussion that contemporary conflict theories addressing the economic dimension of conflict do indeed represent a response to the changing conflict context. This brings

us to the second aspect of the research question mainly the extent to which contemporary conflict theories represent a departure from previous conflict theories. Based on the information presented in this chapter it is possible to conclude that contemporary conflict theories does in some respects represent a departure from earlier conflict theories in a number of respects. It has, for instance, been pointed out that contemporary conflict theories have incorporated a new 'conflict vocabulary'.

Furthermore, contemporary conflict theories have made a number of shifts in terms of the object of analysis. Contemporary conflict theories focus on groups, as opposed to states, as the primary actors in conflict and also recognized both the internal- and transnational dimensions of war. In general this represents a paradigm shift away from the systemic level of analysis and increases the emphasis on the local and regional levels. The theoretical spotlight has also turned from issues pertaining to politics and security as defined by a 'high politics' frame of analysis to issues, which fall in the realm of 'low politics' to encapsulate the economic dimension of conflict.

Contemporary conflict theories do not represent a departure from seminal conflict theories in all respects. Contemporary conflict theories have retained or built upon many of the fundamental principals of earlier conflict theories. In this regard one can point out the extent to which the notion of rationality underlies Collier and Hoeffler's statistical exploration of the motivations of conflict. Another example is the manner in which the conception of the role of the 'balance of power' has permeated contemporary conflict theories' exploration of the duration of conflict.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONFLICT BACKGROUND

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#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

In an attempt to contribute to a better understanding of the conflict in the DRC, this chapter will provide an overview of the historical and geographic context of the conflict in the DRC. In Chapter One the scope of the study was demarcated in terms of discipline, scope, time period, peace agreements as well as the focus of recommendations. Chapter Three will adhere to the demarcations set out in Chapter One in terms of the focus of the discussion although providing a cursory overview of related events as a means of contextualizing the proceeding chapter.

#### **3.2. GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND**

Straddling the equator in Central Africa, the DRC is a country slightly less than one-fourth the size of the United States of America with a total area of 2,345,410 sq km (Institute for Strategic Studies 2006) and the third largest country in Africa. The DRC borders Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. The DRC is divided into 10 administrative provinces: Bandundu, Bas-Congo, Equateur, Kasai-Occidental, Kasai-Oriental, Katanga, Maniema, Nord-Kivu, Orientale, Sud-Kivu. The official capital of the DRC is Kinshasa.

##### **3.2.1. Natural Resources**

The country is rich in natural resources that include cobalt, copper, niobium, tantalum, petroleum, industrial and gem diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, uranium, coal, hydropower and timber (Central Intelligence

Agency 2006). There are many sources of kimberlite (alluvial) diamonds in the DRC. The diamond deposits follow a broad but disjointed band, which stretches from the southwest to the north and northeastern parts of the country. The reserves are mostly found in the southern Kasai provinces and Bandundu. Approximately 10% of the country's diamond production is derived from deposits in the Equateur and Oriental provinces. The DRC officially exported US\$ 240 million in diamonds in 2000 (Dietrich 2002, p.2). The coltan reserves in the DRC accounts for 80% of the total reserves on the African continent. Coltan in the DRC is mostly found in the Kivu provinces and in Maniema (Hayes 2002). The natural resource in the DRC have come to play a central role in domestic politics, the evolution of the state, foreign relations and the country's place in the global economy. Michael Nest (2006, p.17) reiterates the extent to which natural resources have essentially directed the course of the DRC's history and development by stating that "Politics and economics in the DRC have always been shaped by the exploitation of its abundant natural resources."

### **3.2.2. The Transition from Natural Resources to Conflict Commodities**

#### **3.2.2.1. Alluvial Diamonds**

Diamonds have a relatively constant and internationally recognized price. Diamonds serve as a means of moving cash in 'cashless societies' or in economies where currency has become worthless (Smillie ed. 2003, p.9). As Dietrich (2002, p.1) put it: "Diamonds represent the hardest currency: they are relatively easy to mine and transport; they hold their value; and they are accessible to all segments of the population." They also have a higher value-to-weight ratio than almost any other substance on earth. Unlike copper, cobalt and oil, which requires mining on an industrial scale with accompanying substantial investments and mine site stability, alluvial diamonds such as those found in the DRC can be mined in war zones with

little or no technology. Diamonds are also one of the most easily obtained and easily transported forms of hard currency to be used by state and non-state actors alike. The lack of adequate control measures in transit countries (Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania in the case of the DRC) as well as in trading countries such as Belgium, Israel and India, makes it easy to sell diamonds – licit or illicit (Dietrich 2002, p.1-2; Smillie ed. 2002, p.8).

The characteristics of diamonds have made the transition to a conflict commodity relatively easy resulting in the emergence of 'conflict diamonds'. The term 'conflict diamonds' is shorthand to describe a phenomenon whereby rough diamonds are used by primarily rebel movements or their allies to finance their military activities, which include attempts to undermine or overthrow legitimate governments (Smillie ed. 2002, p.7-8). "Conflict diamonds are essentially illicit diamonds that have gone septic. They have simply been used for a new purpose – to pay for weapons in rebel wars." (Taylor 2002, p.16)

### **3.2.2.2. Columbo-tantalite**

Coltan (columbo-tantalite) is a rare metal ore, which is used for the production of capacitors in mobile phones, laptop computers, video cameras, playstations, and high-tech automotive electronics. Consumers of coltan include some of the largest mobile phone manufacturers in the world among which are Nokia, Motorola and Ericson as well as computer manufacturers such as Alcatel, Compaq, Dell, and IBM. Coltan is mined in Africa, Asia, and the U.S. and later refined by a hand-full of processing companies situated in Germany (H.C. Starck), the United States of America (Cabott Inc.), Kazakhstan (Ulba), and China (Ningxia). Until very recently the majority of the world's tantalum (i.e. coltan) supplies originated from the discard slags of tin smelters but supply sources have shifted to mines. The biggest coltan mines in the world are located in Australia (Greenbushes,

Wodgina, Sons of Gwalia). Yet, it is generally believed that 80% of the world's coltan reserves are in Africa (Hayes 2002).

In November 2000, the world experienced a boom in the demand for tantalum powder, which was used in a new generation of mobile phones (UMTS), as well as in computer games (Sony Playstation II). This sparked a price rise of unprecedented scale – the price of one pound (lb) of tantalum ranged from 30 to 40 USD. The price of this black powder rose to around 380 USD per pound in December 2000. The coltan rush was short-lived and in April 2001 the tantalum price fell to 150 USD per pound and continued to decrease to its original price (Cuvelier and Raeymaekers 2002, p.4).

### **3.3. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

The DRC's recent history has been an arduous journey characterized by autocracy, violence, economic hardship, and widespread injustice. The scars inflicted by this history permeate current conflict dynamics in the DRC. The DRC's history has led it from the Congo Free State to Zaire and now the DRC. The Congo was the personal playground of Leopold II, King of Belgium, between 1885 and 1908. During this time the country was known as the Congo Free State. During this time, the Congo essentially served as a source of revenue for Leopold II, who extracted wealth from the country by means of violence and terror (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1998, p.6). Michael Nest (2006, p.17) argues that natural resource exploitation generated a lot of foreign economic interest in the DRC and consequently influenced the colony's foreign relations and involvement in global markets. In that sense Nest describes natural resource exploitation as being at the foundation of the colonial state. After the ousting of Leopold, the Congo found it difficult to free itself from the legacy of the Free State. "The basic features of economic exploitation, political repression, and cultural oppression remained essentially the same, albeit less brutal." (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1998, p.6) Since the DRC gained its independence from Belgium in 1960, it has been racked by civil

conflict and ruled by a series of military strongmen, who have plundered the country's mineral wealth (Itano 2002).

Kevin Dunn (2001, p.52) posits that the events behind the recent instability in the region is embedded in the DRC's history of instability and oppression and that identifying a moment of origin for the conflict is virtually impossible and extremely arbitrary. George Nzongola-Ntalaja (1998, p.6) reiterates this idea by stating: "The past weighs heavily on the present in the Congo." Emeric Rogier (2004) posits that the major wars in the DRC since 1996 are mainly attributable to three different sets of causes. These sets of causes are respectively the legacy of Belgian colonialism, the effects of Mobutu's patrimonial rule and the spill-over effects of the civil wars in neighbouring countries (Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda).

In the light of this, the broader historical context of the country and region as a whole should be borne in mind when analyzing the present conflict. In order to adequately understand the complexity of the current conflict, it is necessary to provide a discussion of salient events in the recent history of the conflict, which shaped the remainder of the conflict. Belgium colonialism and the Mobutu era have been mentioned in passing but the events that will enjoy specific attention in this chapter are all in some way linked to what Emeric Rogier (2004) refers to as "the spill-over effects of neighboring countries". Events related to conflicts in countries neighboring the DRC and the question of "foreign intervention" continuously crop up in discussions about the conflict as well as the peace initiatives in the DRC. For this reason, these subjects will be dealt with in more detail. The events that are considered to be of particular importance are the Rwandan Genocide (1994), the First Rebellion (1996-1997), Second Rebellion (1998-2004) and the assassination of Laurent Desire Kabila (2001).



### **3.3.1. The Genocide in Rwanda (1994)**

The Kivu provinces, on the eastern border of Zaire have always been subjected to the ebbs and flows of refugees fleeing the various crises in neighbouring countries. The largest such refugee flow and the one with the widest ramifications occurred in 1994 following the genocide in Rwanda. The Rwandan Genocide in which an estimated 800,000 to one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed is considered a definitive moment leading up to the current political situation in the Great Lakes region. The genocide came to an end when a Tutsi-led rebel army swept down from Uganda, overthrowing the government and sending the majority of defeated soldiers, who were part of the former Hutu-led government - known as the Forces Armées Rwandaises (ex-FAR) (20,000 to 25,000) and the Interhamwe (30,000 to 40,000) - Hutu extremists responsible for the genocide, into exile across the border and into Eastern Zaire. In addition, an estimated 1,1 to 1,25 million Hutus who, although innocent of participating in the genocide, but fearing retribution at the hands of the new regime, also fled across the Zairian border.

The genocide in Rwanda affected Zaire in three different ways. Firstly, Zaire was faced with a massive refugee problem. Secondly, the balance of power in the eastern Kivu provinces was dramatically changed. Thirdly, the genocidaries in the Zairian refugee camps soon became a dominant military and political force within the refugee camps and exploited aid intended for the refugees. In 1995, the first cross-border incursions were launched into Rwanda and pogroms conducted against Zairian Tutsi, among who were the Banyamulenge. In addition to having a bearing on the internal balance of power in Zaire, these attacks also drew Zaire into a regional battle (Hochschild 2003, p.5; Aronson 1998; Scharf 2003, p.212; Orogun 2002; Nzongola-Ntalaja 1998, p.7). In October 1996, matters came to a head with the invasion of Eastern DRC by Rwandan troops, dispersing the refugee camps and sparking a revolt from the Banyamulenge who were promptly

joined by a wide range of Zairians who had reached breaking point with Mobutu Sese Seko's regime.

### **3.3.2. One Rebellion after Another**

The conflict in the DRC can be divided into two rebellions; the first started in September 1996 and ended in May 1997 when Mobutu was exiled and Kabila took over power. The second rebellion started in August 1998 when attempts to topple the Kabila regime, commenced. It is almost as if history has repeated itself in this country - the rebellion, which started in 1996, was initially aimed at ousting Mobutu and the second wave of the conflict grew out of the desire to overthrow Kabila (Weiss 2001).

#### **3.3.2.1. The First Rebellion (August/September 1996 to 17 May 1997)**

The first of the two rebellions was aimed at unseating the United States supported tyrant, Mobutu Sese Seko. The Alliance des Forces *Democratiques pour la Liberation du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL) under the leadership of Laurent Desire Kabila, backed by Rwandan forces eventually succeeded in achieving this objective. The first rebellion should be seen as the culmination of a number of sparks, which would not have resulted in such a conflagration if the situation were not so conducive to conflict. The genocide in Rwanda can be seen as such a spark.

Broad opposition to the Mobutu regime started to build up as early as 1982 and slowly escalated as time passed. In the early 1990s Cold War patrons who extended diplomatic and financial support to the Mobutu regime, started to distance themselves. In April 1990 Mobutu took steps, aimed at managing an imminent transition, such as announcing the end of one-party rule. Simultaneously with this announcement, Mabusu Sese Seko also vowed to

commit himself to reform (Nest 2006, p.17). The escalation of violence within Zaire was in a sense ushered in by the Sovereign National Conference, which was held in 1991. The convening of this Conference was the result of Mobutu bending to pressure to reform. The Conference had the unforeseen effect of exposing the raw nerves of deep-rooted tensions within Zaire. Representatives from North and South Kivu provinces, for instance, utilized the Conference as a platform from which to launch an attack on the Banyarwanda and Banyamulenge. The objective was to rescind the citizenship of both these groups and force them to return to Rwanda and Burundi. Attacks on these groups commenced in 1993 and by mid-1994 thousands of people had been killed in North Kivu (Dunn 2001, p.53).

In August 1996, Mobutu left for Switzerland to receive cancer treatment. Mobutu's illness necessitated a four month long stay in Europe. Mobutu's absence coupled with the political and military ramifications of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide provided the soil in which the seeds for Mobutu's downfall could be sown. At the same time that Mobutu was undergoing cancer treatment in Europe and only making intermittent visits to Zaire, things were starting to fall apart in his inner circle at home. During this time, a rapid escalation of violence in the eastern provinces of North and South Kivu was being experienced and Kengo Wa Dondo's Government was left to their own devices in dealing with the mounting tension (Mthembu-Salter 2003, p.247-251). The rebellion in Zaire began to take shape in August/September 1996 when rebel groups launched a multi-prong attack targeting refugee camps in Eastern Zaire, the Interhamwe, and the Zairian Army known as the Forces Armées Zairoises (FAZ). The rebels swiftly moved from south to north, gaining control of the 300 miles of Zaire's Eastern frontier in the process. By November 1996, the rebels acquired the name of AFDL. At this stage, the rebel group consisted mainly of Banyamulenge rebels and a conglomeration of dissidents of diverse ethnic origin headed by Laurent-Desire Kabila.

Some analysts argue that Kabila, a former Marxist rebel, gold smuggler and bar owner of dubious credentials, was plucked from relative obscurity and that he merely served to provide a 'Zairian' face to mask the Ugandan and Rwandan regimes' involvement in the rebellion (Mthembu-Salter 2003, p.247-251; Aronson 1998; Nzongola-Ntalaja 1998; Hochschild 2003). David Shearer (cited in Nest 2006, p.23) supports this argument by pointing towards Kabila's tribal affiliation. Laurent Kabila was a member of the Baluba tribe from the southwest Katanga province. Shearer further remarks that Kabila's consistent opposition of the Mobutu regime also made a contribution to his credibility and that of the AFDL. Other analysts are of the opinion that Kabila, a long-time opponent of Mobutu, was not a pawn for the Rwandan and Ugandan Governments from the start but rather identified the opportunity to take advantage of the geo-political changes in the region and took initiative by approaching Rwanda and Uganda. In accordance with this argument, Kabila signed an agreement with the Rwandan and Ugandan Governments by which they would provide the military backing for the rebellion and facilitate the transfer of arms across their borders. In return, Kabila pledged to guarantee security along their common borders. This implied that Kabila had to curb attacks by the remnants of the ex-FAR, the Interhamwe Hutu militia, and other rebels who were based in the Eastern DRC. As time elapsed, the Rwandan demands grew more overt and they even insisted on the inclusion of certain military groups in the ranks of the AFDL (Lokongo 2000). These events represent the start of the transnational relationships that continue to have a significant influence on the conflict dynamics in the DRC. Security issues already come to the fore here and one could argue that security concerns were Rwanda and Burundi's initial motivation for involvement and that their military and monetary support gradually necessitated the looting of natural resources.

The assumption which, according to Shaw (cited in Sherman 2001a, p.25), is supported by the bulk of evidence available is that Rwanda recognized that the rebel forces that they were supporting in Zaire were in need of a more

national character. Rwanda subsequently agreed to allow Kabila to first act as spokesperson and later as leader for the newly found AFDL. The AFDL was thus a rebel movement within Zaire with their own convictions and security concerns. Rwanda, aware that the rebel group would most likely not deny military support, exploited the situation and utilized the rebel movement and internal tensions to address their own security concerns. It would not be an accurate portrayal to depict Rwanda merely as the 'scheming puppet-master' since the rebel group in Zaire entered into an agreement with Rwanda with the aim of also advancing their own objectives. Both groups aimed at exploiting support from the other to their advantage but in the process also advancing the other's objectives – a symbiotic relationship.

The AFDL continued to mount their attacks and by early November 1996 AFDL, forces had already seized the key towns of Goma and Bakavu and occupied a substantial area adjoining the border with Rwanda, Burundi, and parts of Uganda. By the end of November 1996, they had captured most of North and South Kivu. Some attribute the rapid gain of control over territory by the rebels to Mobutu's absence and concerns over his health, which it is argued, weakened the Zairian Government's response to the AFDL. Others argue that the main contributing factor was the complete loss of commitment within the FAZ to the conflict. However, even after Mobutu's return to Kinshasa on 17 December 1996, and the launching of a counter-offensive by Zairian troops assisted by foreign mercenaries, the Zairian Government failed to make any significant territorial gains. During the remainder of 1997 the AFDL made a number of additional strategic advances. As the AFDL approached Kinshasa, Angolan government troops also joined the movement to overthrow Mobutu, who was receiving aid from the Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA). In this one can already observe the initial development stages of what would eventually evolve into a conflict that would involve a myriad of African actors and also actors further a field.

On 8 April 1997, Mobutu declared a national state of emergency by which he dismissed the government and deployed security forces throughout Kinshasa. In mid-April, supporters of the opposition under the leadership of Etienne Tshisekedi (at this stage already appointed as Prime Minister) closed down Kinshasa as part of a campaign to oust Mobutu. Subsequent peace talks held in early May 1997 between Mobutu and Kabila; mediated by Nelson Mandela, were inconclusive because Mobutu refused to resign and Kabila reiterated his intention to seize Kinshasa by force. The negotiations between Mobutu and Mandela can be viewed as one of the initial initiatives to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict in the DRC. Mobutu left Kinshasa on 16 May 1997, fled to his mansion at Gbadolite, 700 miles north of Kinshasa. Mobutu left his Information Minister, Kin-Kiey Mulumba to announce to the press that the President had “ceased all intervention in the conduct of the affairs of state”. Despite the fact that there was very little hope of a comeback for Mobutu at this stage, he remained resilient and as Kin-Kiey put it: “The President reigns but does not govern”.

On 17 May 1997, AFDL troops led by Laurent-Desire Kabila triumphantly entered Kinshasa following a “virtually unchallenged long march throughout the then Zaire”. Kabila declared himself president and subsequently renamed the country the DRC, reintroduced the flag and currency unit (the Franc Congolais) originally adopted at independence, banned political parties and began to consolidate his power (Mthembu-Salter 2003, p.247-251; Aronson 1998; Dunn 2001, p.53-54; Orogun 2002; Reyntjens 2001, p.313; Fahey 1999; Serrill and Graff 1997; Nzongola-Ntalaja 1998, p.5). Mobutu later traveled to Togo and then to Morocco where he died on 7 September 1997.

The new president was saluted from all sides as a “liberator” from the tyrannical rule by the Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR) under Mobutu. Shortly after seizing power, Kabila was deemed one of the club of “new breed” African leaders, which included among others Kaguta Museveni and Paul Kagame - described respectively by Philippe Leymarie as the

“Bismark of the Great Lakes” and the Rwandan “Khmer Noir”. It would seem that a new dawn had awakened for Central Africa characterized by increased international support of the new Congolese regime. The United States for instance considered the DRC a new “friend” of the United States symbolizing a departure from their previous attitude towards the country, epitomised by the “Mobutu or Chaos” stance (Schatzberg 1991; Weisman 1994).

History, however, proved that the DRC’s future would not be as serene and prosperous as the incumbent president and his supporters may have hoped. Laurent-Desire Kabila’s international recognition proved fleeting and his legitimacy on the domestic front was also short-lived (Naidoo 2002, p.4). Kabila alienated Rwanda and Uganda by seeking increasing autonomy. There were also a significant number of influential Congolese who opposed Kabila and started to use their leverage to address their grievances. This group was particularly unsettled by the pace and extent of economic and political reforms Shearer (Nest 2006, p.24). It did not take long for Kabila to become a liability to the West and his African patrons. Sagarin Naidoo (2002, p.4) perceptively states that “The Laurent Kabila regime was expected to be amenable to the economic, political and security interests of Western governments and regional states. This agenda involved making the country’s enormous mineral riches available for exploitation mainly by Belgian, Canadian and US-based mining conglomerates, while at the same time allowing Rwanda and Uganda to take charge in Kinshasa”.

### **3.3.2.2. *The Second Rebellion and its Aftermath (2 August 1998 to August 2004)***

Within a year of the AFDL’s victory, Kabila became unpopular amongst his allies after revoking mining contracts, expelling Rwandan advisors, and criticizing Uganda. Kabila’s relationships with members of the international community had also soured. Laurent Kabila had found himself in a precarious

position; walking a tightrope by trying to balance the situation on the national political scene with what had evolved into antagonistic external dynamics. The culmination of internal and external dynamics highlighted Kabila's lack of governing experience and contributed to the complexity of the war to come. It can be argued that the internal legacies of Mobutu and the imperatives of democratization and good governance could have been tackled within the national context by means of political consultations with the Congolese people. Adhering to and institutionalizing the resolutions of the National Forum, could have contributed to a culture of political pluralism and accommodation perhaps feeding preventive diplomacy initiatives. Issues such as political legitimacy and the promotion of Congolese freedom of development could have been improved. Sovereignty also seemed to elude the fledgling DRC state (International Crisis Group 2000b, p.47). The limitations of the economy and army hamstrung the ability to secure the national territory and eliminating its use as a 'jump pad' for disenfranchised rebel groups from neighboring countries. The situation was aggravated by a number of general quandaries including Kabila's erratic "1960s pseudo-revolutionary style of governing" (Naidoo 2002, p.5), his dictatorial tendencies, the hawkishness of Rwanda and Uganda, a generalized greed throughout the region for Congolese mineral and natural resources and general UN and international weariness at the 'Somalisation' of Africa (Braeckman 2003, p.55).

Kabila counteracted actions with potential positive ramifications, such as promised presidential and legislative elections within a two year time period, with measures that expedited his demise. The promised presidential and legislative elections were postponed indefinitely in May 1999. Kabila's leadership was characterized by strident nationalism and self-centered development programs (Braeckman 2003) and he proceeded by banning political parties and personalities. Among those banned was the leader of the UDPS, Etienne Tshisekedi. Human rights violations during the seven-month war of 'liberation' also put him on the wrong foot in his relations with his



neighbors, citizens and even his own followers. Additional measures such as enlarging and restructuring his Cabinet along ethnic lines – in much the same way as Mobutu had done for decades – and sidelining his Rwandan and Congolese Tutsi advisors contributed to feeling of alienation among these groups (Braeckman 2003, p.55; Braeckman 1999).

The last straw came with his decision to purge his administration of the foreign advisors and troops who had helped bring him to power. Assassination plans had been rumoured throughout the latter half of 1998. By the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, Kabila perfunctorily thanked Angolan, Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers for their assistance to his country and asked them to withdraw. Kabila singled out the Rwandan military by stating that “This marks the end of any foreign military presence in Congo” (Braeckman 2003, p.64). By June/July 1998, it became increasingly apparent that relations between Kabila and the Rwandans had not only seriously deteriorated but had reached a boiling point. In 1998, Rwandan, Ugandan, and Burundian troops joined forces with Congolese rebels and retaliated against Kabila and the countries that at that stage supported him – Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia (Pickering 2002; Security Council 2003; Military Analysis Network 1999; Itano 2002; Dunn 2001, p.54 & Weiss 2001). The new rebellion broke out on 2 August 1998 in the eastern part of the country – the same place where the original rebellion emerged. The commander of the 10<sup>th</sup> Brigade – one of the best and largest units of the new DRC army – stationed in Goma, declared the destitution of Kabila. The 12th Brigade in Bakavu soon joined the 10th Brigade. On 4 August, a plane with Ugandan and Rwandan soldiers led by James Kabarehe landed at Kitona army base, located in the Lower Congo near Kabinda. The base contained approximately 10,000 – 15,000 former FAZ soldiers. Kabarehe and his 150 troops managed to mobilize these troops to join the revolt against Kabila. The group was later joined by troops from the east. Under Kabarehe’s leadership, the soldiers succeeded in capturing a number of towns within a matter of days.

Most importantly, the 10<sup>th</sup> Brigade obtained control over the Inga hydroelectric dam and were able to cut off electricity supplies to Kinshasa as well as Katanga. With pressure mounting and Kinshasa left without electricity and water - by implication threatened with starvation, but also facing military threats, Kabila called on the capital's citizens to take up arms. A group of Congolese politicians who united in Goma formed the political wing of the anti-Kabila movement on 20 August 1998. The group called themselves the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie* (RCD). On 23 August, Angola mounted an attack on Rwanda-Uganda-RCD from its bases in Kabinda. Despite the fact that the anti-Kabila forces in Lower Congo were surrounded; the rebellion achieved military control in the Eastern DRC. Zimbabwe sent a military expedition to Kinshasa in support of the Kabila regime on 26 August. Namibia and Chad also subsequently sent troops in support of Kabila (Weiss 2001). The dilapidated transportation and communication infrastructure coupled with impaired central government control in the DRC contributed to the advancement of rebel power. Initially Kabila ruled most of the DRC but by the end of 1998 he had lost more than one third of the territory to the RCD, dominated by members of the Tutsi ethnic minority (Pickering 2002; Security Council 2003; Military Analysis Network 1999; Itano 2002; Dunn 2001, p.54; Weiss 2001).

The war was being fought between two camps – one supporting the Kabila regime and the other aiming to topple it. It quickly became apparent that the rebellion against Kabila was directed by the Ugandan-, Rwandan- and to a lesser extent the Burundian regime. Kabila's regime was supported by the governments of Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia and to a more limited extent by Sudan and Chad. Following several months of fighting, it became apparent that a military solution was untenable for either side. Negotiations commenced in 1999 and have not to date succeeded in providing the definite prospect of lasting peace in the region (Dunn 2001, p.54; Crawley 2003).

In December 2000, the Congolese army suffered a crippling defeat in the Southeastern area of Pweto. This also served to further exacerbate ongoing disputes about the handling of the war. Early on the afternoon of 16 January 2001, Laurent Desire Kabila was shot and fatally wounded by one of his bodyguards. In the absence of constitutional rules concerning succession, Kabila's son - Joseph was appointed by the inner circle as a suitable successor. Joseph Kabila took the oath to be sworn in as President *ad interim* on 26 January 2001. The fact that no contender for power emerged and that those in Kabila's inner-circle arranged the succession, could point to the fact that the murder of Laurent Kabila was neither a *coup d'etat* nor a palace revolution. This does not mean that these possibilities should be completely discarded. Evidence gathered by Stephen Smith of *Le Monde*, who has carried out what appears to be a thorough investigation in this regard to date, points toward the likelihood that the killing might be linked to the disenchantment of military from the east and fear of retribution (Reyntjens 2001, p.314).

### **3.4. CONCLUSION**

The current conflict in the DRC is firmly embedded within a geographical context but more so in a historical context. The Rwandan Genocide had a domino effect in terms of the remainder of the conflict and can be linked to a myriad of additional conflict issues, which still feature prominently in the current conflict. The Rwandan Genocide can be directly linked to the influx of refugees and militia into the DRC and was cited as the primary motivation behind Rwandan invasion of DRC territory. The Genocide indirectly fed into the first rebellion through Rwandan support for Congolese rebels. Rwandan support for rebels was framed in terms of security concerns. Subsequent to Laurent Kabila assuming power, Rwandan sentiments that their security concerns were not being adequately addressed, spurred them to support another rebel group; providing impetus for the second rebellion. Since the Rwandan security concerns can all be traced back to the Rwandan Genocide,

both the first and the second rebellion in the DRC can be linked to the events of 1994.

Even throughout the recent peace talks, securing the withdrawal of Rwandan troops hinged upon alleviating the security threat posed by cross border raids conducted from DRC soil. “The Rwandan government has steadfastly cited the chronic cross-border incursions and insecurity as their primary motivation for the blatant invasion and military occupation of the DRC’s territory” (Orogun 2002). Evidence in support of ulterior motives for continued Rwandan transgressing of DRC borders have been presented. René Lemarchand (2004) argues that, although the extent of Rwanda’s involvement in the June 2004 *coup* attempt in the DRC is a matter of considerable controversy it is safe to, at least posit, that without President Paul Kagame’s approval, it would have been nearly impossible for General Mutebutsi to follow through the rebellion. Irrespective of whether security concerns are viewed as mere rhetoric, the crux of the issue remains the extent to which a Rwandan presence and/or involvement in the DRC contributes to the duration of conflict. Since the Rwandan Genocide ushered in Rwandan involvement, a large percentage of current conflict dynamics can be traced back to 1994.

The influx of refugees and militia across the border between Rwanda and the DRC in the wake of the Rwandan Genocide also draws attention to the porous nature of the DRC’s borders and the fluidity of the population. Porous borders and a fluid population has contributed to the creation of a situation conducive to the thriving of certain conflict dynamics; underpinned by the flow of arms, natural resources, troops etc. Refugees who fled to the DRC in 1994 remain a problem in the DRC. As recent as November 2003, the UN refugee agency launched a campaign to promote the voluntary return of some 80,000 Rwandan refugees, most of them in Uganda and the DRC (United Nations High Commission for Refugees 2003).

Aside from highlighting the ease with which DRC borders can be permeated, the refugee issue, cross-border raids as well as foreign invasion of the DRC has also brought to the fore the issue of respect for the principle of state sovereignty (or lack thereof). As early as 1999, Prendergast and Smock (1999) recognized the centrality of the lack of sovereignty as a central issue in this protracted conflict – an issue, which remains important. Prendergast and Smock (1999) stated that if “this legacy of genocide and the crisis of legitimacy of the Congolese state continue to remain unresolved by the region and unaddressed by the world, the war will likely continue...the Congo's territorial integrity cannot be restored fully until its soil is no longer used as a launching pad for attacks committed by genocidaries, and that the belligerents in the war must work together to fulfill the requirements of these two principles.”

Parallels can be drawn between the DRC's history of undemocratic rule and current political culture in the DRC. The culture of autocratic rule, rebellion and employing violence as a political and economic tool so prevalent in the DRC context, is evident from an analysis of the historical context and one can go as far as using the historical context as an explanatory basis for these phenomenon or even a means of justification. The importance of recognizing the centrality of these phenomenon in the conflict as well as how deeply rooted they are, is of particular importance in terms of conflict resolution initiatives. Furthermore, an historical overview of the conflict in the DRC elucidates the extent to which the spatial distribution of conflict incidents has been concentrated in the eastern provinces of the DRC. An understanding of the features of the eastern DRC, which renders it so conducive to conflict, is therefore of central importance in any analysis of the DRC conflict or conflict resolution initiatives.

The First and Second Rebellion and their ramifications, also reveal the involvement of regional actors. The involvement of regional actors in the conflict hints at a regional conflict system linking a range of actors and

conflict issues. The conflict in which the DRC is embroiled is not a mere civil war in which foreign stakeholders have become involved, nor is it only the result of conflicts spilling over from neighboring countries or a perfect fit for the interstate conflict mould – it is a combination of these aspects but even more enigmatic. The conflict in the DRC should be seen as a number of transnational conflicts with mutually reinforcing linkages, which results in more protracted and obdurate conflicts. The current conflict in the DRC forms part of a system in which factors such as historical context, regime stability, resource endowment conflict spillover effects, etc. have a bearing on the involvement of specific actors and the motivations behind their involvement in the conflict. Transnational linkages established on this basis tend to overlap and shift with the mutation of the nature of a conflict (Studdard 2004, p.3-4).

The conflict system, in which the conflict in the DRC is embedded, is convoluted in terms of the arena, actors and relationships. The arena in which the conflict takes place is characterized by a number of dimensions some of which are static and others more dynamic. Geographical considerations such as spatial proximity represent some of the more static dimensions, while strategic and economic alliances constitute the dynamic dimensions of the regional conflict complex. In another sense, the conflict is also multilayered in terms of the actors involved. These actors range from internationally influential countries outside the region to rebel groups who have managed to carve out a power base within the DRC. Actors in the DRC conflict are linked together by a “fluid web of alliances and enmity” (Studdard 2004, p.4). Gleditsch’s (2003, p.12) central argument, which underscored the analytical importance of taking into consideration both domestic as well as transnational factors, thus seems to contribute to the understanding of the conflict dynamics within the DRC. An analysis of the conflict in the DRC should also consider the network of interactions between additional actors other than the state. The conflict in which the DRC forms the focal point constitutes a myriad of connections drawing diverse and otherwise isolated actors and issues into close proximity and subsequently gives rise to an extremely complex conflict

conundrum. This conundrum is not only challenging to analyze but also even more so to solve.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF THE CONFLICT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

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#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explore the following issues in as much as they pertain to the situation in the DRC and the broader conflict systems in which it is embedded: the state; actors, motivations and conflict dynamics; conflict economy, and natural resources. The four issues selected for discussion, correlates with the issues identified in Chapter Two as representing important dimensions, which have served to direct more recent conflict analysis. The issues identified in Chapter Two in section 2.3.1. under the heading “The Context of Contemporary Conflict Theories” are: The Self-financing Nature of Conflicts, Features of Conflict Economies, New Actors in Conflict, and The State and Conflict. Natural resources, although not specifically dealt with in Chapter Two in terms of the context of contemporary conflict theories, does enjoy attention in section 2.3.3. of Chapter Two.

In short, Chapter Two explores the theoretical responses to the aforementioned issues, while this chapter’s focus falls on the manifestation of these issues within the DRC. The purpose of this chapter is thus to evaluate how well theory and reality mesh as far as the conflict in the DRC is concerned. The two central research questions, which will guide the discussion in this chapter, are: Does an analysis of the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC support the findings of contemporary conflict theories? If so, should the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC be taken into consideration during the formulation of peace agreements? The objective of this study is not to provide a definite and universally conclusive answer as to whether belligerents are primarily motivated by political or economic



considerations but rather to illuminate the presence of an influential economic dimension in conflict and argue for its inclusion in agreements.

## **4.2. THE DRC STATE**

As mentioned in Chapter Two (section 2.3.1.4), the foundational characteristics of states can be divided into juridical and empirical features. The extent to which these features are evident is indicative of the nature of the form of political organization. In accordance with the social contract between the state and society, the state has to provide the society with certain political, economic and social goods in return for the sanctioning of state power and revenue in the form of taxes. The state's performance in terms of the provision of these political goods can be measured by means of statistical information included in indexes such as those compiled by the United Nations Development Fund, Transparency International and Freedom House. This section will unpack the nature and performance of the state in the DRC on the basis of the dimensions mentioned above. This discussion is relevant in terms of the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC since the state provides the arena in which conflict is conducted and can also serve to facilitate the emergence of a number of processes, which can be conducive to an increased impact of economic factors on the dynamics of conflict.

### **4.2.1. Foundational State Features**

#### **4.2.1.1. *Territory Defined by Undisputed Borders***

By virtue of the fact that the DRC government's authority does not extend much further than the capital of Kinshasa, the porousness of this vast country's borders is almost expected. The DRC's borders with Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda are especially permeable and have an immense impact on the political stability and economic viability of the DRC. Some analysts argue that it is inevitable due to the size of the country, which makes it

'ungovernable' by a single government (Orogun 2002). Such notions in a sense serve to justify foreign invasion of DRC territory.

The regional security dilemma partially centers on the porous nature of Congo's eastern borders, which facilitates direct and indirect spillover effects in the form of the flow of rebels, refugees, small arms and troops over the DRC's borders with Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda (Orogun 2002). Refugees, specifically from Rwanda, have upset the internal balance of power within the eastern provinces of the DRC, which has influenced the conflict dynamics within the DRC. Porous borders are the result of the simultaneous existence of a lack of strong government control over borders, which often characterizes failed or collapsed states and a disregard for sovereignty. The conditions in the DRC have created the ideal climate for the emergence of porous borders. While on the one hand facilitating the expansion of strategic spheres of influence of fighting groups from various countries in the region, the porous nature of the DRC's borders are also engendered by the manner in which external regimes and rebel groups define the spatial dimensions in which the conflict is played out. Dunn (2001, p.67) mentions that "many actors conceive the political space of the region as concentric circles of control – that is, as MPLA-controlled space, UNITA-controlled space...and so forth."

Direct spillover effects and foreign intervention also point to a disregard for sovereignty. The Pan-African right of intervention contributes towards clarifying the rationale behind foreign intervention and direct spillover effects. The involvement of neighboring countries in the AFDL victory over Mobutu's regime is an example of an event, which has been widely acclaimed throughout Africa as a rightful assertion of the Pan-African right of intervention. This notion also manifested itself in the wake of the Rwandan genocide. The premise of the Pan-African right of intervention is that Africans can not be indifferent to gross violations of human rights on the continent on

the basis of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1998).

#### **4.2.1.2. A Permanent Population**

The DRC is composed of a “large, heterogeneous and fluid” population of roughly 45 million people (Matthee 1999, p. 89). The DRC has been facing major refugee problems since the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The ease, with which the DRC’s borders can be crossed, permits the almost completely uncontrolled movement of people across the borders resulting in what can be described as a fluid as opposed to definite population.

#### **4.2.1.3. Socio-political Cohesion**

Due to the heterogeneity of the DRC’s population as well as the political reality, alternative forms of identity have become more prominent in the DRC undermining the role of national identity. These alternative forms of identity have further exacerbated conflict in this country since they have generally taken a virulent ethno-centric nationalist form. Consider here the Banyamulenge question or the rival ethnic conflict between Hemas and Lendus in eastern DRC.

#### **4.2.1.4. Recognizable Government with Legitimate Authority sanctioned by the Population of the State**

The people of the DRC have never been granted the opportunity to choose or change their government through democratic and peaceful means (Freedom House Survey Team 1999, p.144). Mobutu Sese Seko was a pro-Western pond in the wider political game of the Cold War and did not draw upon an internal support base. Laurent Desire Kabila, his successor, gained power by revolutionary means with the backing of neighboring countries. Shortly after taking power Laurent Kabila shunned his foreign backers and appointed

Katangans (Laurent Kabila is of Katangan ethnicity) in prominent political positions. At that stage Laurent Kabila thus drew his support from a narrow base of backers who shared his Katangan ethnicity (Karatnycky & Freedom House Survey Team *eds.* 2001, p.152) and his government did not enjoy popular legitimacy. The DRC has a history of authority not sanctioned by the population of the state.

The state in the DRC has always existed alongside other forms of authority and its reach has been limited for the most part. In 1993, Cohen (cited in Weiss 1993, p.157) stated that: "To say that Zaire has a government today would be a gross exaggeration." Shaw (forthcoming) describes Mobutu's Zaire by 1995 as "barely a state at all". Nzongola-Ntalaja's (1998, p.16) account is in line with the aforementioned descriptions: "a hollow shelled kleptocracy dedicated to the enrichment of Mobutu and the coterie surrounding him". Mathee (1999, p.89-90) points out that the actual political authority of Mobutu's regime did not extend far beyond the capital city. After the overthrow of Mobutu's regime the limited scope of authority of the DRC government ensued. Laurent Kabila inherited what can be described as less of a state than a fiefdom. Mobutu had replaced normal state functions with patronage and exercised power by means of a combination of "a web of informal political networks", personal control over the economy and repression. According to a 1992 World Bank estimation 64.7% of Zaire's budget was reserved for Mobutu to spend at his discretion (Shearer 1999, p.92).

In 1999, Mathee (1999, p.89-90) referred to the political system of the DRC as "functional constructs and personal networks" imbedded within inherited colonial state structures functioning alongside local power structures, which have their origin in the colonial or even pre-colonial era. Robinson (2000) described the division of political authority to be shared by warring parties as opposed to being centralized within a government. The division of power and authority was also not static but marred by constant shifts in allegiance.

In December 2002 the first all-inclusive agreement aimed at establishing a government of national unity was signed by the Goma faction of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), the Ugandan-backed Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC), various militia leaders, representatives of civil society as well as unarmed political opposition parties. Under the agreement, Joseph Kabila will remain in power for two years after the agreement upon which time elections will be held (Karatnycky, Piano & Puddington *eds.*, 2003, p.156). Masland (2003) provides a more recent description of the state of governance in the DRC and notes that the president of the DRC “leads a shaky interim government”. In its post-colonial history there has always been some form of government in the DRC but it has not always been ‘recognizable’ in terms of its authority and influence.

#### **4.2.1.5. Formal Independence or Sovereignty**

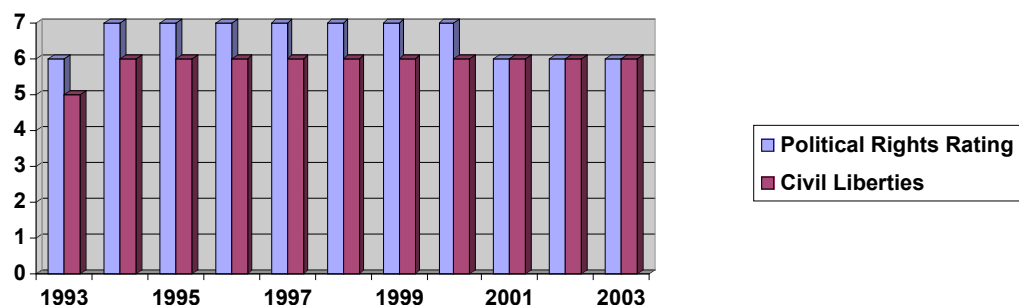
The DRC gained formal independence from Belgium in 1960 but has been subjected to cross-border raids and the interference of neighboring states in its domestic affairs since 1994. The signing of a peace agreement in July 2002 between the DRC and Rwanda, its primary adversary, increased hopes for the securing of this country’s sovereignty. In accordance with the agreement, Rwanda would withdraw its troops from DRC territory. Uganda, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia also agreed to withdraw their troops (Karatnycky, Piano & Puddington *eds.* 2003, p.155; Shah 2003). In May 2003 the last Ugandan troops left eastern DRC as reports emerged of bloody clashes between rival militias in the Bunia area (BBC News 2003).

## 4.2.2. State Performance

### 4.2.2.1. Political Freedom and Civil Liberties

The DRC's recent political history has been marked by serious human rights abuses – every Freedom in the World Report published by Freedom House between 1998 and 2003 mention violations, including extra-judicial execution, torture, rape, beating, and arbitrary detention. Ethnically based killings by both government and rebel forces have also been reported (Freedom House Survey Team 1999, p.144; Karatnycky *eds.* 2000, p.141; Karatnycky *eds.* 2001, p.153; Karatnycky and Piano *eds.* 2002, p.176; Karatnycky, Piano and Puddington *eds.* 2003, p.157). In addition, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly are sharply limited by decree (Karatnycky, Piano and Freedom House Survey Team *eds.* 2002, p.177). Graph 1 depicts the DRC's ratings on political rights and civil liberties and indicates a slight improvement after 2001. This improvement falls together with Joseph Kabila's taking over of power. The improvement is primarily the result of peace talks and it should be noted that there has not been a significant change in the level of abuse of political rights and civil liberties at the grassroots level.

**Graph 1 – DRC Ratings on Political Rights and Civil Liberties**



Sources: Freedom House Survey Team 1999; Karatnycky *eds.* 2000; Karatnycky *ed.* 2001; Karatnycky and Piano *eds.* 2002 & Karatnycky, Piano and Puddington *eds.* 2003

#### **4.2.2.2. 'Freedom House' Ratings**

##### Provision of Economic Opportunities

Inflation has soared under Laurent Kabila's rule, forcing him to rely on revenue obtained from the dilapidated state-run diamond fields in Mbuji-Mayi. Other diamonds areas in the DRC were under rebel control. Indicative of the government's desperation to obtain hard currency to help fund the war, the government prohibited the possession of foreign currency towards the end of 1999. The government required that all foreign currency be deposited in Congolese banks. Because of the lack of faith in the country's banking system, this move had the opposite than desired effect by further restricting the economy because it became extremely difficult to import and export goods (Karatnycky *ed.* 2000, p.143). Valuable mineral resources have continued to lure international companies into deals with rebels. Revenues of these deals have been transferred into personal bank accounts and used to acquire arms to sustain the war effort (Kalemba 2001, p.227). The illicit importation of goods and a growing underground economy has an adverse effect on the development of the private sector in the DRC. Corrupt officials at borders or posts aid both illegal imports and the expansion of the informal economy. The DRC has taken measures to increase the number of customs officers and police at important ports such as the river port of Beach Ngobila – the main transit point for goods from the Republic of Congo (Kalemba 2001, p.234).

In lieu of the country's vast natural resources, the majority of the population in the DRC lives marginal lives as subsistence farmers. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have pledged more than \$1.7 billion in assistance in reaction to measures taken by the DRC government as well as agreements reached with these institutions. Economic reforms are under way and according to the 2002 statistics, the DRC experienced a real GDP growth

rate of 3.5% - higher than that of Canada and South Africa for the same period. Inflation has also dropped dramatically (Karatnycky, Piano and Puddington *eds.* 2003, p.157; Central Intelligence Agency 2003).

The link between an abundance of natural resources and conflict is fuelled by the weakness of public institutions. This phenomenon is clearly evident in the DRC where various military and ethnic factions vie for control over the country's plentiful supplies of diamonds, gold, timber and coltan. The revenues derived from the exploitation of natural resources are channeled into the pockets of commanders or used to fund the war effort (Kalemba 2001, p.234). This also links to the undermining of government power through the strengthening of rebel groups and the expansion of rebel-held territory.

### Good Governance

"Zaire's president, Mobutu has manipulated and co-opted illicit trade to finance his power, intervened in ethnic battles to promote allies, and claimed a growing share of French foreign aid amidst nearly total bureaucratic collapse to build new ties to subjects and external actors" (Reno 1998, p.494). During the four decades in which Mobutu ruled Zaire, very little money was devoted to the upliftment and development of the Congolese people, the building of infrastructures, or even the provision of more than rudimentary security. "Mobutu's government only performed for Mobutu, not for Zaire/DRC" (Rotberg 2002, p.94)

The government's provision of basic political and social goods is severely impaired and as early as 1993 *Le Monde Diplomatique* (cited in Weiss 1993, p.157) described the situation in then Zaire as follows: "The infrastructure, roads, means of communication have disappeared, the universities are closed, the hospitals have become mortuaries, the campaigns to fight the great epidemics are suspended and one no longer measures the ravages of AIDS".



The current situation for the most part still resembles the situation sketched in 1993. Chronic political instability has bred corruption in the DRC, resulting in the continued appropriation of resources needed to combat poverty. The DRC has made anti-corruption policy declarations in response to international pressure and internal criticism (Kalembe 2001, p.227).

#### **4.2.3. *The Link Between the State and Conflict***

In a nutshell, the purpose of the state is the political organization of the population of a territorially defined area. The state protects its population from the rudimentary principles of survival based on 'every man for himself' and 'survival of the fittest'. The type of conflict witnessed in the Great Lakes region is an example of how state failure exposes citizens to the reality of being responsible for their own survival. The basic hypothesis would thus be that the absence of the state would fuel conflict. It is, however, not as simple as merely equating the absence of a 'strong state' to the outbreak and continuation of conflict and the presence of a 'strong state' as the panacea against conflict. Many states which adhere to the majority of 'strong state' characteristics are also tormented by conflict. This section will aim to reveal the manner in which the absence of the characteristics of a 'strong state' feeds into vulnerability and conditions conducive to conflict. The implication is therefore not that deviations from the 'Western' form of state necessarily breeds conflict but rather that the absence of a form of political organization with the interests of the population at heart is more likely to spark violence and conflict.

During Mobutu's reign the neo-patrimonial state became unable to fulfill the basic state function of guaranteeing security especially for the groups in the eastern region of the DRC. This partially spurred groups in this area to join the rebellion (Matthee 1999, p.98). In short, the social contract between the state and the population was finally forfeited and individuals found

themselves in search of new forms of security. The collapse of the state had a bearing on the trajectory of the internal dimension of the conflict in the DRC.

When broadening the focus to include the regional dimension of the conflict the links between state collapse and conflict also become apparent. The DRC's vast natural wealth paired with the weakness of the state makes for a lethal combination (Hochschild 2003, p.5). The absence of the state in the DRC effectively transformed this country into an open treasure chest ready for the taking. With the natural riches of the DRC serving as a lure for actors to become involved in the conflict and others jolted by the security dilemma in the region, the DRC serves as support for Rotberg's (2002) hypothesis that state failure usually precedes the outbreak of war.

Failed or collapsed states are incapable of projecting power and asserting authority within the confines of their own borders, which leaves their territories "governmentally empty" and vulnerable to invasion by other countries or resistance from within. In the words of Stephen Walt, (cited in Rotberg 2002) failed or collapsed states become "breeding grounds of instability, mass migration and murder". There exists an indirect relation between state power and legitimacy as well as the potential for violent conflict. In the stage of state failure preceding complete state collapse people are increasingly forced to count on their own efforts for security and survival (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1998, p.10). With complete state collapse, the last pillar of statehood crumbles as state legitimacy completely disintegrates. In the face of the absence of state legitimacy, democratic channels to address grievances and national identity, alternative forms of identification such as ethnicity become more prominent. Within a context where small arms are relatively easily attainable and the spoils of taking control into own hands are increasingly attractive, the potential for violent conflict increases as state legitimacy decreases.

Ballentine (2003, p.261-267) found that “the correlation between natural resource dependency and conflict is not a direct relationship; neither is the opportunity for rebellion merely a function of the presence of such resources in a given country. “Both qualitative and quantitative studies confirm that critical governance failure by the state appears to be the mediating variable between resource abundance and the risk of armed conflict.”

#### **4.2.4. Preliminary Conclusions**

Judging from the discussion of the nature and performance of the DRC state, it is apparent that this state definitely does not qualify as a strong state especially if its track record for political freedom and civil liberty as well as its provision of political and social goods is taken into consideration. Despite being seriously impaired in certain realms of statehood, this state has not reached the point of complete collapse and can thus not be classified as a ‘collapsed state’. When revisiting the features of the ‘failed state’, which enjoyed attention earlier in this study, a stark resemblance to the model ‘failed state’ and the DRC is apparent. The DRC complies with the majority of the features of the ‘failed state’ but has over time also displayed elements of other forms of ‘deviating’ states. William Reno (cited in Smillie 2003, p.55) fleshes out what he refers to as the “predator state”. Reno argues that distinct elements of the “predator state” can be identified in Mobutu’s Zaire since Mobutu “gutted the formal state, emasculating its institutions and replacing them with personal control mechanisms”. This process of state predation is also encapsulated in the concept “shadow state”. It should also be noted that certain of the measures taken by Joseph Kabila, if they permeate the entire state structure, might contribute to an upward trend towards a ‘strong state’.

Lastly, links between conflict and the state could be established. It has been argued that the slow deterioration of the state facilitated a situation in the DRC, both internal and external, in which individuals increasingly looked

toward sources of security other than the state. This impelled a situation in which rebel groups could ignite rebellions. Within the regional realm the weakening of the state manifested in a lack of governance and porous borders. This coupled with the wealth of DRC's abundance of natural resources, the free flow of natural resources and a quest for alternative forms of identification has given rise to a situation providing ample incentive, whether strategic or economically driven, for actors to become involved in mutual spill-over conflicts between the DRC and neighboring countries.

#### **4.3. ACTORS, MOTIVATIONS AND CONFLICT DYNAMICS IN THE DRC**

Convoluting and complex – these are only some of the adjectives which begin to capture the nature of the conflict in the DRC. The DRC conflict constitutes a multi-faceted security dilemma, which reveals the interconnectedness of actors and issues across national borders. The conflict in the DRC is not a separatist war, nor did it start as a purely civil war. Rather, Erik Kennes of the Africa Institute/Africa Museum asserts that the war is a “complex knot of three intertwined conflicts”: first, the local conflict of the Kivu region in Eastern Congo; second, the national conflict between President Kabila and Congolese rebels fighting to overthrow him; and third, a regional conflict involving several Central African actors (Sherman 2001a, p.25). This complexity makes the situation irreducible to one single frame of analysis. The complexity of the conflict has been intensified by both horizontal and vertical expansion. The conflict expands horizontally by unfolding on the national, regional, and international level. Vertical expansion manifests when the conflict encapsulates states as well as sub-national actors such as rebel groups and militias. This section aims to address two pertinent dimensions of the conflict namely the civil war dimension and the transnational dimension to reveal the features of this conflict system and the linkages between aspects of the system.

#### **4.3.1. The Civil War Dimension**

Civil war usually manifests itself as a high intensity stage in an unresolved political struggle for control of state power in which belligerents are confined to the same country (Civil War 2006a; Civil War 2006b). Civil war can also be demarcated in terms of the number of casualties. A number of studies only consider conflicts with a minimum of 1000 combat-related casualties per annum as a war (Gleditsch 2003). An additional provision is that both parties embroiled in the conflict (usually state and rebel forces) sustain roughly equal casualties. If not, the conflict should more accurately be described as genocide.

Cater (2003, p.29) elaborates on the actors involved in civil war and defines civil war as a closed system of violence between domestic actors. Other definitions such as those provided by Plano, Greenberg, Olton and Riggs (Plano *et al.* 1973, p.58) maintains the geographical limits of the actors but expands it beyond government and rebels to include “different geographical areas, political divisions, or ideological factions within the same country.” In accordance with their definition “civil war may involve a struggle between an established government and antigovernment forces, or it may develop during an interregnum period between groups contesting for power and legitimacy as the new government”. By broadening the definition in this way it leaves room for the inclusion of many conflicts in countries that are characterized by state collapse such as is often found in Africa.

On 2 August 1998, a second rebellion was ignited when the Kabila regime’s power was challenged by a group of rebels within the country. After it became evident that Kabila’s power was in jeopardy, two alliances formed – a pro-government and an anti-government group (Pickering 2002; Security Council 2003; Military Analysis Network 1999; Itano 2002; Maharaj 2002; Dunn 2001, p.54; Weiss 2001). Despite the extensive involvement of foreign forces, the conflict in the DRC during the second rebellion, this stage of the

conflict can still be described as a civil war in as much as it featured a group poised against government control and a group in support thereof. Thus when distilling the conflict down to the basal elements of the two rebellions without considering external support or convoluted motives, it is fair to state that the DRC has been wrecked by civil war since 1996. Primary belligerent groups in both rebellions have been the regime in power at the time and a rebel group. In this sense, the conflict in the DRC adheres to the first criteria of civil war namely, the domestic origin of the belligerents. With superficial consideration, the primary objective of the belligerents can be described as overtaking state power, implying a correlation with the second consideration in the civil war definition.

The Forces Armees Congolais (FAC) was the DRC government's military wing and was assisted by a number of external pro-government forces. Domestic pro-government forces comprised of the Mai Mai militias, the Interhamwe forces and former members of the Forces Armees Rwandaises (FAR). The Mai Mai militias pursued dual agendas – their own local agendas as well as that of the FAC – from their base deep within rebel-held territory. Members of the FAR that became involved in the conflict had escaped from refugee camps in 1996 after facing assaults from the RPA and remained in the DRC after their escape. A number of Interhamwe and ex-FAR also sided with the Forces Diplomatique de Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR). Exiled Rwandans formed the FDLR in 2000 with the aim of unseating the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan government. The most prominent external actors that supported the DRC government were the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) and the Angolan army. The ZDF and Angolan army both became involved in the conflict on August 20th, 1998. Their involvement was followed by a fact-finding mission to the DRC, which took place under the auspices of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – an organization which the DRC joined in 1997 (Nest 2006, p.23).

On the domestic front the DRC government was opposed by the RCD and the MLC. The objective of both these groups was to obtain state control. The primary foreign group opposing the DRC government at this stage was the RPA and the UPDF. The RCD and MLC were militarily and organizational linked to the RPA and the UPDF. In turn, the RCD enjoyed support from the Burundian government. The UNITA forces also played a limited role in the conflict on anti-government side. As the conflict evolved disagreement erupted between the UPDF and the RPA regarding the leadership of the RCD and the group later split in two as a result of this disagreement. The two groups, which resulted from this split were the RCD-Goma and the RCD-ML (Mouvement de Liberation). The RCD-ML later also merged with the MLC for a brief period and formed the Front de Liberation du Congo (FLC). The FLC, headed by Jean Pier Bemba, was short-lived. Soon after the formation of the FLC, the alliance split roughly along the lines of its formative parties. The result of these fluid coalitions was three broad zones of military influence, which divided the government-occupied territory in the DRC (Nest 2006, p. 23).

A report on the human cost of the conflict in the DRC estimated that casualties between August 1998 and March 2001 exceeded peacetime casualties by 2.5 million. Approximately 350 000 of these deaths could be attributed to violence (SIPRI 2002, p.33). This implies that between August 1998 and March 2001, the DRC experienced an average of roughly 11,290 conflict related casualties per month, which is eleven times the required annual conflict related casualties every month. This clearly classifies the violence in the DRC as a war based on the cut off mark of 1000 conflict related casualties per year. An additional prerequisite is also that both parties involved in the civil war should suffer combat related casualties. If not, the conflict should more accurately be classified as genocide, and not a civil war.

#### **4.3.2. The Transnational Dimension**

The risk of conflict increases when countries in close spatial proximity of the country at stake are embroiled in conflict. The DRC finds itself in a conflict-ridden region - all the countries, which are involved in the DRC conflict, have at some stage experienced widespread conflict and most of them have been wrecked by internal wars since their independence. The DRC conflict and the involvement of the above-mentioned actors should be viewed against the backdrop of regime collapse, political leadership delegitimization, and internal societal instability. The persistent inability of the governments of Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Angola and Sudan to promote policies of national reconciliation among ethnically polarized and extremist-orientated insurgent groups in their respective countries has been a contributing factor and constant feature of the regional political and security landscape in the region for some time. The lack of democratic accountability, viable political pluralism, genuine national dialogue, and pragmatic solutions to the intrinsically domestic communal conflicts and ethnic animosities are at the root of recurrent regional security threats and broad political destabilization within the Great Lakes region (Orogun 2002).

When considering the transnational political linkages underlying foreign intervention it is apparent that countries with less than reputable democratic credentials surround the DRC. All of the countries involved in the conflict in the DRC, with the exception of Namibia and Uganda, are classified as 'not free'. This does not bolster well for the political milieu in which the DRC finds itself. In accordance with Gleditsch's (2003) hypothesis and empirical findings about the influence of autocracy on foreign intervention in conflict, the DRC finds itself in a region with transnational political linkages conducive to foreign intervention in conflict. This correlates with evidence of involvement of countries in the region in the conflict in the DRC.



Zimbabwe provides an excellent example of the extent to which autocratic leadership widens the opportunities for foreign intervention and continued involvement in conflicts. Zimbabwe's involvement in the DRC was not in any way beneficial to the citizens of the country and seemed irrational when considering the alarming rate at which the country was losing money from its military venture in the DRC. The potential of future profit and the realization that a change of regime would predict loss of all potential profit, motivated continued involvement in the DRC.

#### **4.3.3. Fluid Military Alliances and Shifting Motivations**

The countries within close spatial proximity of the DRC who are involved in the conflict are most easily conceptualized in terms of two contending camps – those who supported Laurent Kabila at the onset of the second rebellion and those who opposed him. From the outset of the second rebellion on 2 August 1998, two alliance groups emerged based on support for or opposition against Kabila. At first, a group of eastern states evolved with Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda establishing an alliance; backing rebel movements (the most notable being the Congolese Rally for Democracy - RCD - and the Movement for the Liberation of Congo – MLC) staking claims in eastern and northern DRC. As the overthrow of Kabila manifested itself as an increasingly feasible possibility, a southern group comprising of Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia came to the fore. The latter group backed the Kabila regime and after the assassination of Kabila, the regime of his son, Joseph. From the north, Chad and Sudan also expressed their support for Kabila albeit to a lesser extent (Shearer 1999; Dunn 2001, p.54; Weiss 2001; Lokongo 2000; Orogun 2002; Brummer 2004, p.4-6; Emizet 1999, p.202). The conflict reached a military stalemate following the increased involvement of Angolan and Zimbabwean troops in support of Laurent Kabila (Nest 2006, p.26).

Direct foreign intervention can be motivated by a myriad of objectives. Two specific motivations can be identified within the DRC context: strategic and

economic motivations. Broadly speaking, similarities in terms of motivation cross the divide between the two camps identified earlier. Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, who form part of the same camp, as well as Angola; aligned with Zimbabwe and Namibia, share a common political dilemma and are all primarily motivated by the objective of regime preservation. These states continue to face or have faced the threat of rebel groups and armed militias who utilize the DRC's territory as an operational base from where cross-border raids are conducted. The objective of these countries' involvement in the conflict is installing a sympathetic regime in Kinshasa. They aim to benefit from involvement in the conflict in terms of safer and securer borders, which would be conducive to regime survival. It is therefore in their strategic interest to support Kabila (Shearer 1999, p.89; Dunn 2001, p.65; Orogun 2002). Despite the prominence of these countries' security concerns, they also have developed economic interests over time. In the case of Zimbabwe and Namibia, economic interests played a bigger role from the onset in terms of involvement in the conflict. Zimbabwe entered the conflict on the premise that it would derive economic benefit from involvement (Dunn 2001, p.65).

The regional dimension of the conflict in the DRC partially hinges on the desire to maintain the complex regional balance of terror and power politics. This desire has manifested in terms of support of renegade forces without regard for national borders. A number of governments within the region have overtly provided political-, military-, and logistic support for armed insurgents with diverse objectives i.e. indirect foreign intervention. The flow of armed rebellions across the region; infiltrating countries, which have no direct stake in the rebellions, but have either deliberately involved themselves to further their own objectives or have been involuntarily involved by virtue of the flow of armed groups across porous borders, has contributed to "a culture of impunity, deep mutual distrust, and excessive miniaturization of interstate relations" within the Great Lakes region (Orogun 2002).

Indirect foreign intervention also comes to the fore when examining extra-regional involvement in the DRC conflict. The USA or France's links to Rwanda, Uganda, and Chad in the form of military assistance and training has influenced the power balance within the region. The USA's blocking of peace forces to Rwanda during the 1994 genocide also constitutes a form of indirect intervention, which had major reverberations for the conflict in both Rwanda as well as the DRC.

#### **4.3.3.1. Angola**

UNITA derived considerable economic benefit from Zaire, something that was abruptly brought to a halt when Kabila took power. UNITA rebel leader, Jonas Savimbi, aimed to secure this flow of economic benefit once again but could not do so while Kabila was still in power (Shearer 1999, p.96; Orogun 2004). Angola was at first reluctant to enter the current DRC conflict and risk alienating the Rwandan-backed alliance on whose side it had initially fought to install Kabila. In lieu of the failure to reach an agreement at separate meetings held in Kinshasa and Kigali, and considering reports that the RCD rebels in the western DRC had enlisted ex-FAR troops, Angola was left with little maneuvering space and fell in behind Zimbabwe in support of Kabila (Shearer 1999, p.96; Orogun 2004). One might therefore argue that Angola's involvement was fuelled by strategic considerations based on the links between UNITA and Mobutu (Weiss 2001, p.3).

In short, Angolan involvement in the DRC conflict was hinged on the desire to obtain a tactical advantage over UNITA rebels. It was upon this desire that Angolan military support for Kabila in 1996 and again in 1998 was based (Orogun 2004). The prime strategic consideration behind involvement in the conflict for the MPLA government of Angola was linked to the prospect of obtaining tactical advantage over UNITA rebels by controlling the shared border with southwestern Congo, which would cut off indispensable rebel supply lines (Fahey 1999).

Nest (2006, p.50) argues that the scope of Angolan involvement in the DRC conflict is more limited than that of Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Nest points at the “only documented venture”, which provides proof of Angolan economic involvement in the DRC conflict. This was a venture between the National Angolan Fuel Company (Sonangol) and Comiex - a company formed by Laurent Kabila in the 1970s to create joint ventures to exploit state assets for private gain (Nest 2006, p.45). In accordance with the venture the company was to distribute and retail Angolan petroleum products in the DRC and jointly explore for oil off the DRC-Angolan coast. According to reports Jose Dos Santos, the Angolan president, also demanded compensation for military expenses incurred when assisting the DRC government in the conflict. Compensation was demanded in the form of diamond concessions (Nest 2006, p.50-51).

#### **4.3.3.2. Burundi**

Burundian soldiers have repeatedly crossed the DRC border and engaged in military reprisals against the Hutu rebel guerrillas known as the FDD. The FNL also continues to engage in cross-border raids onto DRC territory. This country’s involvement in the DRC conflict has been the subject of speculation and controversy. The Kabila government has on numerous occasions accused and publicly denounced Burundi for violation of the DRC’s territorial borders while Burundian officials vehemently deny any involvement or military support for the RCD rebels (Orogun 2002).

#### **4.3.3.3. Namibia**

Nujoma unequivocally stated that Namibia’s intervention in the DRC war was strictly aimed at defending the political sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kabila’s regime in Kinshasa. Analysts, nonetheless, point out that Namibia’s involvement in the DRC conflict was not based on mere altruism as premised

in the statement but rather that geopolitical realities and economic considerations have driven Namibia's adventurism in the DRC. In this context Namibia's plans to divert water from the River Congo across Angola to northern Namibia, is highlighted. In other words, by intervening on behalf of Kabila in the conflict, Nujoma aimed to "secure economic and vital resource benefits" while simultaneously advocating a political rhetoric of intervening in the name of political sovereignty as well as "safeguarding Namibia's future security" (Freedom House 2003, p. 395).

#### **4.3.3.4. Rwanda**

The alliance between the Rwanda and the DRC hit a nadir in August 1998 when Rwanda backed the rebel campaign to oust Kabila. The Rwandan government disapproved of Kabila's economic policies, was disappointed in his inability (or unwillingness to) address Rwandan border security concerns, and disagreed with his exclusionary political tactics. Part of the benefit, which the Rwandans sought from backing Kabila, was strategic in nature. Close to a million Hutus had re-established their political leadership and military structures within UN refugee camps on the border between the DRC and Rwanda. This was viewed as a security threat since Rwanda was continuously tormented by a movement of Hutu rebels who were launching destabilizing attacks from DRC soil against Rwanda. In exchange for support in the uprising against Mobutu, the Rwandans expected the security of their borders to be top priority. Kabila did not deliver on his end of the bargain and pushed aside Rwandan security concerns by denying the Rwandan and Ugandan regimes the latitude to create the kind of 'security zone' they envisaged (Shearer 1999, p.93-94; Weiss 2001; Orogun 2002; Dunn 2001, p.64; Seybolt 2000, p.62).

Rwanda also aimed to draw benefit from installing a pro-Rwanda government in the DRC by means of having a 'puppet' in the DRC who was obliged to be sympathetic towards general Rwandan concerns - not only security concerns.

Therefore, in addition to 'hand-picking' Kabila, Rwanda also aspired to infiltrate the DRC leadership by placing Tutsis in influential government positions. This was thought to achieve the objective of increasing Rwanda's leverage within the DRC. Kabila, however, minimized Rwandese influence by marginalizing Tutsis and promoting fellow Ketangese into powerful positions. James Kabarere, a Rwandan and a former strategist for the ADFL rebellion, was for instance initially Kabila's Chief of Staff. As Kabila grew increasingly politically independent and wary of Rwandan influence, he placed his son Joseph to work alongside Kabarere. The unfolding reality in the DRC under Kabila's rule unsettled the Rwandans since the potential benefit envisaged when initial support was given to Kabila was slowly being reduced.

The chain of events should not merely be seen as the result of Kabila's actions but should be viewed against the backdrop of other developments within the DRC power structure. Following the events of May 1997 the Rwandans remained in the DRC to help shape Kabila's new army but also to keep a close eye on their new protégé and secure their benefits. Kabila's new army comprised of 70,000 ex-FAZ, 3,000 – 4,000 Banyamulenge, 2,000 other ADFL members and approximately 20,000 new recruits or cadogas – most of which were young soldiers who joined the ADFL as it marched westwards to the capital as well as 6,000 – 8,000 ex-Katangese troops who joined Kabila from Angola and later became his strongest allies. Each of these groups, although they had the same goal namely ousting Mobutu, was aiming to draw different benefits from putting a government under Kabila in place. The Banyamulenge were for instance chiefly concerned with securing their homes in the eastern province of South Kivu and thought that the Kabila government would provide them with this security.

Merely judging from the composition of the army, it was predictable that divisions within the army were soon to appear. The ex-FAZ grouping within the army was unsympathetic towards Rwanda's border problems and had no desire to be embroiled in what they perceived as a Rwandan problem. The

cadogo also became increasingly uneasy when Kabila continuously gave preference to fellow Ketangese. Kabila's actions can be seen, as an attempt to hold onto power and tend to the demands of those he thought would be most beneficial in future. In this vein, Kabila subsequently announced the expulsion of Rwandans from the DRC in late July 1998. This sounded the death knell for Rwandan benefit from Rwanda's strategic investment in the DRC. Kigali immediately started planning a military offensive (Shearer 1999, p.93-95). Aside from security- and strategic benefit, Rwanda also had its eye on securing economic benefit from its involvement in the overthrowing of Mobutu.

Micheal Dorsey (cited in Dunn 2001, p.6) argues that Rwanda aimed at creating an economic base in the DRC that would free Rwanda from Western economic dependency. Judging from Rwanda's resource endowment compared to that of the DRC, the possibility of Rwanda viewing the DRC as a source of economic benefit becomes almost inevitable. Antoine Lokongo (2000) argues that, "Rwanda overplayed its hand by trying to run Congo by remote control, using its officers who occupied top positions in the Congolese army as well as Tutsi political figures in Kabila's inner circle." As has been argued earlier, Kabila's actions can be seen as an attempt to balance contending demands of benefit, some of which threatened his position of power. Kabila was walking a tightrope between being the 'puppet' of his allies and consolidating his domestic power base and eventually leaned over to secure domestic and personal benefit at the expense of Rwandan interests.

In the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda the Rwandan government's involvement in the DRC conflict was directly linked to the presence of the Interhamwe and Hutu Power organizations, which were located in the DRC at that time (Nest 2006, p.20). In 1996, the renamed Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) entered the DRC in retaliation of continuing cross-border attacks launched from refugee camps in the DRC. The motivation behind entering the

DRC was to disperse refugees from the refugee camps and kill genocidaires (Nest 2006, p.23).

The majority of economic activity between rebel groups in the DRC and the Rwandan government was conducted under the auspices of the “Congo Desk” – a division of the Department of External Relations in the Rwandan Ministry of Defense and essentially the RPA’s “commercial wing”. Findings made in the investigation by the UN Expert Panel describe the “Congo Desk” as the “link between the commercial and military activities of the RPA”. Among the ventures facilitated by the “Congo Desk” were the establishment of diamond- and coltan-buying comptoirs in Kisangani and Bukavu. Among the additional ventures were the contracting of aircraft to transport coltan ore of which the mining was also facilitated by ventures between rebels groups in the DRC and the “Congo Desk”.

The dealings between the DRC rebels and the “Congo Desk” displayed links to international criminal networks. These networks facilitated the provision of aircraft, which was used to transport minerals, military personnel and weapons between RCD-Goma and RPA controlled areas. “The Rwandan-based network was all-encompassing, involving international, regional, and local actors. It controlled production, transport, and wholesale sales of minerals extracted from eastern DRC.” Unlike the economic activities of Zimbabwe, the Rwanda established ventures, which proved to be highly profitable. Estimates of the net profits earned by Rwanda during the eighteen months between mid-1999 and the end of 2000 approximate the figure at \$40 million from coltan exports alone (Nest 2006, p.51-52). To put this figure in perspective one should note that this period coincided with the boom in coltan demand and accompanies price hike. The earnings figures provided by the United Nations’ Panel of Experts (2002; cited in Nest 2006, p.52) derived from all economic activities conducted by the “Congo Desk” during the course of 1999 amounted to \$320 million.



#### **4.3.3.5. Uganda**

The Ugandan army backed the RCD-ML who claimed control of the Ituri region in the second Rebellion (Robinson 2000). Rwanda and Uganda share similar security concerns in terms of the DRC – just like Rwanda, Uganda borders the DRC and face attacks from rebel groups inside the DRC. One such rebel group is the ADF led by Jamil Makulu – a Muslim cleric who has persistently operated from the Eastern Zaire region. This rebel group is firmly entrenched in the ‘Mountains of the Moon’ on the Uganda-DRC border. The Ugandan People’s Defense Force (UPDF) was finding it increasingly difficult to counter attacks from this group (Shearer 1999, p.95). Other prominent rebel groups, who posed a threat to the Ugandan regime, include the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony; and the West Bank Nile Front (WBNF) led by Idi Amin’s son, Taban (Dunn 2001, p.64; Weiss 2001; Orogun 2002). Similar to Rwanda, Uganda aimed to benefit from supporting Kabila by addressing their security concerns.

After a year in power, Kabila proved incapable or unwilling to address the border security issue to the extent that Uganda had hoped and this prompted their support for the removal of Kabila (Shearer 1999, p.65; Orogun 2002). Uganda has officially backed two rebel groups who are involved in the current Congo conflict: the RCD-Kisangani faction led by Wamba dia Wamba as well as the Jean-Pierre Bemba-led Movement de Liberation Congolaise (MLC) with operational headquarters in Gbadolite. Aside from strategic considerations, Uganda involved itself in the DRC war to further its aim of establishing a larger economic community in the region (Shearer 1999 p.96).

“Organizations, companies, and individuals involved in the Uganda-based network have been involved in a wide range of endeavors, including exporting a wide range of primary commodities from the DRC and shipping weapons and consumer goods to the DRC for sale in UPDF and MLC territory.” The primary actors in the economic network from which Uganda derived profit

were the Ugandan government as well as the UPDF and its allies in the DRC, which featured senior military officials with ties to President Museweni. The majority of the military officials co-opted in the network founded private companies through which they channeled their commercial activities in collaboration with a Congolese affiliate. Trade was not conducted in the name of the UPDF. The network also had links with the RCD-ML, the UPDF's political ally in the DRC, through a set of Congolese intermediaries. As was the case with Rwanda, Uganda's involvement in the DRC proved to be highly profitable.

The value of diamond exports from Uganda increased sevenfold between 1997 and 1998. Diamond exports peaked in 1999 generating \$1.8 million in revenue. The export volume of other minerals such as gold and coltan out of Uganda also displayed a market increase. Gold exports between 1999 and 2000 reached a level roughly double that of 1997. Coltan exports in 2000 were twenty-seven times greater than the 1999 level. Detailed information pertaining to exactly who benefited to what extent from these increases in exports is, however, very difficult to obtain (Nest 2006, p.52-53).

#### **4.3.3.6. Zimbabwe**

The involvement of Zimbabwe, a country that is thousands of kilometers away from the DRC's border, has effectively transformed the conflict in the Great Lakes Region from a regional affair into what Orogun (Orogun 2002) refers to as a "continent-wide armed conflict". The official Harare rhetoric underlying Zimbabwe's involvement in the DRC is that "Zimbabwe is fighting for Africa". Robert Mugabe has staunchly maintained that Zimbabwe's intervention in the Congo was based exclusively on the political imperative of defending a sovereign African government against the *de facto* foreign invasion and military aggression initiated by Rwanda and Uganda.

Analysts of the conflict, however, quickly surmised that Zimbabwean soldiers are “fighting for Mugabe’s bank account” (Orogun 2002). Robert Mugabe sent troops into the DRC with the promise that should Kabila remain in power, Mugabe’s support would be rewarded with a bevy of highly profitable mining contracts, which would be awarded to Mugabe and his immediate friends and relatives (Fahey 1999). Some have also argued that the DRC war has not provided Zimbabwe with the expected benefits and that in its later stages Zimbabwe’s involvement in the conflict was, seen from cost-benefit perspective, quite irrational since the country was losing money at an alarming rate (Dunn 2001, p.66). On this score it should perhaps also be pointed out that the involvement of states in conflicts should not always be seen as motivated by potential benefit for the country as a whole but can just as easily be premised upon potential benefit for senior individuals within the country.

A commercial network encapsulates the wartime relationship between Zimbabwe and the DRC. This commercial network links senior government and military officials from Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), the ruling political party in Zimbabwe, by means of ventures involving the trade of copper, cobalt, and diamonds. Most business ventures between ZANU-PF members and wealthy private entrepreneurs in the DRC did not yield significant profit and was tormented by many operational difficulties. Many of the operational difficulties were related the weak state system in the DRC. Among the difficulties experienced include difficulty making simple payments via the DRC banking sector, the increase in debt owed to Zimbabwean parastatals and firms by Congolese citizens and the DRC government as well as the lack of contract accountability due to the dilapidated DRC legal system. In the light of the afore-mentioned difficulties one is puzzled by Zimbabwe’s continued involvement in the DRC conflict. What was the motivation behind Zimbabwean involvement in the DRC conflict? Despite the obstacles to conducting business in the DRC there were still some profits to be made and shrewd businessmen found a way around

these obstacles. Entrepreneurs shifted the focus of their operations to sectors where they were subject to less competition. They also zones in on commodities, which were easier to produce. The commodity of choice became diamonds. Zimbabweans developed a vested interest in the war since their ability to exploit diamonds was contingent upon the continuation of the conflict and the resultant importance of Zimbabwe's military assistance to the DRC government (United Nations Expert Panel on Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth 2002; Nest 2006, p.50).

#### **4.4. CONFLICT ECONOMY**

The economic and financial aspects of the conflict in the DRC inevitably point to linkages between local and global levels of activity. Globalization has facilitated the growth of international, regional, and national networks among political and economic elites. In the DRC, these networks pre-date the conflict and continue to exist, even though the state is weak. Under Mobutu, formal and informal structures not only existed alongside one another, but also were mutually dependent (Sherman 2001, p.25). The war economy in the DRC would not have grown so rapidly and to the extent that it has, had it not been for the willing cooperation of private companies (Raeymaekers 2006, p.8). Taylor (2002, p.9) concurs by stating that companies, which included companies of a relatively small size but who operate internationally, use armed conflict as a façade for "more or less anarchic exploitation". These companies have connections with the leaders of rebel groups or repressive governments and profit from continued fighting. Connections with these companies are also often crucial to the prosperity and survival of these powers. Links have been drawn between companies such as H.C. Starck, a German processing company, and support for rebel movements in the eastern DRC by means of the purchase of coltan.

A report entitled "Supporting the War Economy in the DRC: European Companies and the Coltan Trade" was released by the International Peace

Information Service (IPIS), a Belgian research institute, in January 2002 (International Peace Information Service 2002). The report concluded that a number of European companies promoted the war in the DRC through their cooperation with the military while others made an indirect contribution by paying taxes to the old government institutions, which are currently occupied by the RCD rebel group (Cuvelier and Raeymaekers 2002, p.3). The report further provided evidence of a number of trading contracts between the RCD, Rwanda's Congolese ally, and two Belgian companies (Cogecom and Cogear), worth almost 4 million USD. The findings pointed towards Finmining, a Swiss company, which has been shipping coltan from comptoirs operated by the Rwandan Patriotic Army to a factory in Kazakhstan and framed these companies as important contributors to the ongoing Rwandan war effort (Raeymaekers 2006, p.9).

The economic activities associated with armed conflict are characterized by "anarchic exploitation", "criminalized transactions", and "militarized production" (Guaqueta 2002, p.1). Pre-existing shadow economies and informal cross-border trade networks are often captured, such as occurred in the DRC, and integrated into the global criminal economy. This allows insurgents to transform illegally exploited natural resources as well as Diaspora remittances into military capacity (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003, p.17). The reverse is also possible as is evident from the fact that civil wars are often fought with arms produced from areas outside a region, and in particular by industrialized nations who dominate the global arms supply. Once arms make their way into a region marked by conflict, they become an element of regional smuggling and trade networks characterized by flexibility and resilience (Studdard 2004, p.4).

Based on the findings in Ballentine and Sherman *eds.* (2003), Ballentine (2003, p.259-260) argues that most conflicts are not purely "resource wars" or instances of "loot-seeking" by either insurgents or state actors. Rather, when analyzed these conflicts reveal the varying degrees in which economic

incentives/opportunities and socioeconomic/political grievances, interethnic disputes, and security dilemmas interact to spawn conflict. As far as the dynamics (i.e. duration, intensity and character) of conflict is concerned, Ballentine (2003, p.260-262) singles out the salient role of combatant access to economic resources, which shapes a “permissive opportunity structure for sustaining hostilities”.

The conflict reality in the DRC elucidates the extent to which conflicts can mutate. Renner (2002, p.28) argues that the initial motivation of countries such as Rwanda and Uganda’s involvement in the conflict was primarily related to security concerns. The opportunities for plunder facilitated by the context of lawlessness and weak central authority coupled with the DRC’s enormous resource wealth, caused the mutation of primary interests in the conflict.

The proliferating economic interests of actors involved in the conflict and individuals or companies further a field has led Orogun (2002) to describe the conflict in the DRC in the following terms: “The war in the Congo is being commercialized by both sides as a moneymaking venture. Congo’s vast natural resources are being used to finance both coalitions, to develop the economies of the external players in the war and to create personal enrichment for many.” Zimbabwe and South African businessmen’s interests in the DRC can be framed in terms of self-enrichment. The South African based Kramer Group profit from the continuation of the conflict through the provision of uniforms. The situation becomes more complex as far as Rwanda and Uganda are concerned. Having strategic interests in the DRC but also profiting directly from the extraction of natural resources places these countries in a precarious position.

As far as Rwanda and Uganda are concerned, capturing areas rich in natural resources become of strategic importance (occupying the area implies preventing ones rival from claiming the area and its resources) and profits

from natural resources are injected back into the conflict. The natural resources in the DRC have served to finance the military presence of both Rwanda and Uganda. Rwandan President Paul Kagame has described his country's involvement in the DRC conflict as 'self-financing' as evident by the fact that the government has even set up an extra-budgetary system for keeping record of funds obtained from the extraction of natural resources in the DRC. In the case of Uganda, the enrichment of top military commanders and businessmen seems to be paramount. Salim Saleh, the brother of President Museveni, as well as James Kazini, former chief of staff of the Ugandan army, have for instance profited immensely from Ugandan involvement in the DRC conflict (Renner 2002, p.29).

#### **4.5. NATURAL RESOURCES**

The availability of resources serves to complicate conflicts in Africa by virtue of the alternative sources of financing, which they represent. In the DRC "access to and control of minerals seem to be at the heart of military aspirations...The Democratic Republic of Congo controls significant reserves of uranium and manganese. Control of areas where these metals are mined is essential for those who desire economic and political power. During the period of Mobutu's rule, Mobutu himself controlled the exploitation of much of the Congo's riches. His near monopoly of access to these resources made him an extraordinarily wealthy man. In the post-Mobutu era, the underlying economics of political power and warfare in the Democratic Republic of Congo has not changed. Various forces (from the central government in Kinshasa to Angola, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, and Uganda) all intend to divvy up the Congo because, by partitioning the country, they would have access to these valuable resources. With the profits from the sale of these resources, combatants finance the purchase of arms or, even, armies." (Laremont 2002, p.12-13)

#### **4.5.1. Natural Resources in the DRC – A Consideration of the Geographical and Obstruction Typologies**

If the center of government power is assumed to be the capital, Kinshasa, then the majority of the natural resources found in the DRC can be classified as distant resources. For the most part, the natural resources of importance in the DRC conflict are point resources. There are diffuse resources in the DRC, for example agricultural potential and timber, but due to the dilapidated infrastructure of the country, it is extremely difficult to utilize these resources. Following from Le Billion's categorization of natural resources, the DRC's natural resource endowment renders the resources more vulnerable to being captured by rebel groups, which could feed into a protracted conflict. The assumption that point resources are more likely to be captured by the government is logical within most conflict settings but does not apply within the DRC where rebel groups have been known to gain control over mines (Ross 2003, p.53-54).

The sudden increase in demand for tantalum capacitors and the consequent boom in the coltan market in 2000 placed the RCD rebels in an extremely advantageous position since they were in control of the eastern area of the country in which a number of World Heritage Parks (Kahuzi-Biega, Okapi & Virunga) were situated. The parks were not the source of advantage but rather the coltan deposits found in these parks. The rebels exploited their position and with the spike in coltan prices in November 2000, they installed a monopoly in order to siphon off all revenue from coltan exports out of the area. The economic benefit that arose from their monopoly served to finance the RCD's war effort (Cuvelier and Raeymaekers 2002, p.3; Raeymaekers 2006, p. 19).

According to Le Billion's natural resource-conflict matrix, the conflict in the DRC should be aimed at secession, which is not the overriding feature of the conflict. The conflict in the DRC rather contains elements of *coup d'état* as



illustrated by the ongoing thrust of the conflict as well as particular incidents such as the failed *coup* attempt on 12 June 2004 (United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks 2004). The DRC conflict also displays definite elements of warlordism. Le Billon's model provides valuable insights on the balance of power and duration of the conflict but the conflict in the DRC does not fit the natural resource-conflict matrix. The reasons for the disjunction between Le Billon's model and the conflict reality in the DRC, requires further analysis and empirical data collection, which falls outside the scope of this study. It is nonetheless a valuable observation and as a possible explanation for the disjunction, one could mention that Le Billon's model is based on the analysis of civil wars and that the conflict in the DRC is an atypical civil conflict due to the extensive involvement of foreign troops, which has transformed it into an intra-state conflict.

Smillie's (2002, p.26) comment that "for well-organized rebel groups operating in a security vacuum, diamonds are almost free for the taking" supports the assumption that rebel groups are more likely to benefit from resources, which can easily be looted such as alluvial diamonds. Adolhe Onusumba, RCD rebel, has admitted that the RCD "raise more or less 200,000 USD per month from diamonds...Coltan gives us more: a million USD a month."

#### **4.5.2. Angola – The Expansion of a War Economy**

Links between Angola and the former Zaire date back to Mobutu's reign. With the assistance of Mobutu, UNITA gradually acquired more and more of the characteristics of a 'shadow state' with its continued existence greatly depending on Zaire serving as a conduit for arms and smuggled diamonds used to bankroll the civil war in Angola. However, it is not only UNITA that drew benefit, with the advent of the resistance against Kabila the Angolan government promptly annexed all but Kitoni, Matadi, and the Inga Dam hydroelectric power plant. This has benefited the Angolan government by

boosting the country's economy and giving *de facto* control over the Congo River basin and by implication control over the small Congo oil output.

Viewed through a 'political economy of war' lens, the MPLA's involvement can be deduced to two related factors: advancing the strategic position against the UNITA rebels and the desire to further exploit the spoils of control over the diamond trade. The latter would prove to be very beneficial to the Angolan elite and further the economic profits derived from conflict. Both MPLA and UNITA involvement in the DRC conflict touches on the essence of a war economy by serving to enlarge the scope of their own war economies and feeding into the rationale in accordance with which the defeat of the other becomes subordinate in importance to the institutionalization of conflict for profit (Dunn 2001, p.63-64).

#### **4.5.3. Rwanda and Uganda – Funding a Strategic War or Strategizing to Obtain Funds?**

Based on the finding of a UN Panel of Expert's report on the exploitation of natural resources in the DRC, Ross (2003, p.57) argues that the DRC's natural resource wealth enticed both Rwanda and Uganda to support rebel groups in the DRC. As far as Rwanda is concerned, it would seem as if the primary reason for lending support to rebel groups stemmed from security concerns. It does, however, seem as if the contribution that profiting from the DRC's natural resource wealth could make to offset the cost of involvement in the DRC conflict, did play a decisive role in the final cost-benefit analysis. The Rwandan belief that the war in the DRC could become self-financing has been confirmed.

Subsequent to the 1998 conquest of the eastern DRC, the Rwandan and Ugandan armies "spent a year practically emptying stockpiles of money and valuable goods found in the occupied territory". These foreign armies were able to do so with the help of Congolese soldiers in the RCD. The initial focus

was on coltan, timber and coffee and to a lesser extent on diamonds. The resources extracted from the DRC were channeled to Kampala and Kigali from where it was re-exported (United Nations Panel of Experts on Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth 2002). With the exhaustion of lootable resource areas of the DRC occupied by Rwanda and Uganda, the emphasis shifted to engagement in extractive and productive activities. Soldiers, local people, as well as foreigners gradually became involved in the extraction of attractive resources (United Nations cited in Samset 2002, p.471).

Both Uganda and Rwanda have no natural diamond deposits, yet these countries have exported diamonds worth millions of USD over the course of its involvement in the conflict in the DRC. Uganda's exports of diamonds were multiplied twelve fold from 1997 to 1998 and remains on a high level. Rwandan diamond exports had reached a level 90 times higher than during the entire year of 1998 by October 2000. The immense increase in Uganda and Rwandan diamond exports has been accompanied by a significant drop in the official DRC diamond exports (United Nations Panel of Experts on Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth 2002). One, however, should be careful of merely interpreting these figures on face value since there is a clandestine dimension that should not be overlooked. These statistics do not necessarily indicate that Uganda and Rwanda are looting DRC diamonds and they are the sole beneficiaries of the gains, DRC diamonds could very well be channeled through Uganda and Rwanda by DRC officials or rebels and not be reflected in official accounts.

A report compiled by a UN expert panel and released in October 2000 reveals that more than half of the coltan exported from eastern DRC was "mined under the direct surveillance of RPA mining *detaches* and evacuated directly to [the Rwandan cities of] Kigali or Cyangug" (United Nations Expert Panel on Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth 2002; Brummer 2004, p.5). There thus seems to be ample evidence of the exploitation of DRC

natural resources by Uganda and Rwanda but for what purpose are the funds derived from these natural resources employed? A report compiled in November 2001 by a UN Panel of Experts concluded that the profits emanating from the vast natural resources of the DRC, have over time, become the “primary motive” for parties embroiled in the conflict. Fingers were specifically pointed at Rwandan and Uganda who were blamed for prolonging the war based on economic considerations (Cuvelier and Raeymaekers 2002, p.5).

The rationale behind resource exploitation in the DRC were initially two-fold: on the one hand, certain areas rich in natural resources were captured for strategic reasons but the spoils to be reaped from the exploitation of natural resources soon became increasingly attractive and even overshadowed the strategic benefits. Financial benefits from the capturing of certain areas rich in natural resources served as sources of self-enrichment for key individuals but also bankrolled continued involvement in the conflict.

Leaders of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) have become increasingly involved in the war economy with the objective of freeing Rwanda from Western economic dependence and consequently involvement has manifested in the establishment of monopolistic control of economic trade areas controlled by the RPF as well as the extraction of primary resources from the DRC (Dunn 2001, p.64). Salim Saleh, the brother-in law of Museveni, Uganda’s president, founded a trading post for the commercialization of gold and diamonds in Kisangani called Caleb International (the name of the company is derived from Salim Saleh’s real name, Caleb Akandwanaho) (Raeymaekers 2006, p.13).

Aside from the strategic rationale behind Uganda’s military intervention in the DRC there was also the added prospect of tapping into, if not controlling, the resources in northeastern Congo – from gold mining to the smuggling of coffee, timber and minerals. Uganda’s frustration with Kabila can also be

traced to his refusal to consider economic integration eastwards (Dunn 2001, p.65). Kabila retracted diamond, gold and timber concessions affecting top Ugandan army officers in northeastern Congo among which were Museveni's half-brother, Salim Saleh (Lokongo 2000, p.20-23).

Control over the sizable economic resources locked up in the Kivu area can be considered as an incentive for Ugandan and Rwandan invasion and military occupation in DRC territory (Orogun 2002). Both Rwanda and Ugandan have engaged in strategies of harnessing local farmers and businessmen in occupied territories with the objective of establishing monopolistic control over trade in these zones. Gold, cobalt, timber, palm oil, and elephant tusks extracted from the eastern DRC have become a major source of foreign exchange supporting continued involvement in the conflicts (Dunn 2001, p.65) A report compiled by a UN Expert Panel in October 2002, provides a detailed account of the pillage of DRC diamonds and other natural resources by Rwandan and Uganda (United Nations Expert Panel on Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth 2002).

According to UN reports, the RPF have earned enough money through the export of DRC minerals to 'finance a war'. Indeed, according to another well-informed sources, 60 to 70 percent of the profits made on this basis are re-invested in the war (Cuvelier and Raeymaekers 2002, p.8-9; p.24). Consider somewhat exaggerated UN estimates, the RPF exported a minimum of 100 tons of coltan a month through the Rwandan capital Kigali. Further, in accordance with UN figures, the RPF generated 20 million USD a month by selling coltan through its allied trading posts to international traders. If transport and other external costs are taken into consideration, this would have amounted to profits totaling at least 250 million USD over the 18 month period stretching from 1999 until mid-2000 – a period during which world market prices for coltan reached an all-time pinnacle (Samset 2002, p.472).

Cuvelier and Raeymaekers (2002, p.9), however, reveal a slightly different picture based on evidence of selling contracts for this period. They suggest that a more likely figure would be 64 million USD, which is calculated by taking the highest average prices and excluding all external costs. These calculations suggest that the RPF could not have made much more than 40 million USD in profit over the period at stake. These figures should also be tied up to official export statistics for Rwanda. Official export figures suggest that Rwanda exported 44 million USD worth of coltan in 2001. Cuvelier and Raeymaekers (2002, p.9). argue that most of this revenue ended up in the pockets of the Rwandan Army.

In 1999, the total for exports of all products 'looted' from the DRC expanded to a level of 8.4 per cent of total Rwandan exports and remained as high as 7.1 per cent in 2000. It is argued that the profits gained, have enabled Rwanda to double its military expenditure and consequently fasten its grip on occupied areas of the eastern DRC (Samset 2002, p.472). Gains from the re-export of DRC resources have also indirectly spurred the expansion of Uganda's military spending. This growth in military spending has facilitated Ugandan control in the vast areas across its western border. Uganda gains from the re-export of DRC resources primarily by means of taxation of DRC minerals that pass through the country. Taxation has provided Uganda with an estimated income of 5 million USD a month, which has had a positive impact on Uganda's balance of payments. Income generated on this basis has also translated into a considerable improvement in Uganda's GDP. Donors limit the Ugandan military budget to only 2 per cent of GDP but the increase in the GDP implies that Uganda's military budget has in fact swelled (Samset 2002, p.472).

There are also other economic linkages evident between Rwanda, the DRC and even actors further a field - in 1999 MTN, Rwanda's fixed-line operator and Tristar Investments, a company reportedly founded and owned by Rwanda's ruling party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), entered a joint

venture to set up Rwanda's first cell phone network. Tristar has been economically involved in the eastern DRC in ways, which have fanned the conflict. Tristar, for instance, owned a bank that provided a credit line to RCD-Goma rebels. UN reports have also linked Tristar with two Rwandan companies who are involved in the illicit trade of minerals from eastern Congo. If there is indeed a link between Tristar and the RPF, then the Rwandan government have profited from their business ventures thus providing incentive for Rwanda to continue their military involvement in the DRC (United Nations Expert Panel on Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth 2002; Brummer 2004, p.6).

#### **4.5.4. Zimbabwe – A 'Business Bonanza' in the DRC**

Despite the fact that president Robert Mugabe has discursively framed his country's involvement in the DRC conflict in terms of international law and solidarity among countries that form part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), trails of economic benefit reveal a possible ulterior motive for involvement. Judging from the domestic unpopularity of involvement in the DRC conflict, the casualty figures, which are kept as state secret, and the estimated \$1 million a day price tag attached to involvement, benefits are definitely not manifesting on grass-roots level in Zimbabwe. Rebel leader Wamba-dia-Wamba has for instance referred to Mugabe's interests in the Congo as 'basically a mercantilist intervention'. Zimbabwe's involvement in the DRC conflict appears to solely benefit the ruling elite and Mugabe's inner circle. According to evidence uncovered in late 1998, members of Mugabe's ruling party, top military officers and members of the president's own family had lucrative contracts with the Kabila government. The economic incentives of involvement in the conflict, however, have not materialized to the extent that was hoped. It was for instance thought that the appointment of Zimbabwean CEO, Billy Rautenbach, as the head of Gecamines copper and cobalt parastatal might result in enormous benefit for Zimbabwe i.e. those within the inner circle. A contract was signed between

Gecamines and Rautenbach's Ridgepointe Overseas Ltd. for an 80 per cent interest in Gecamines's Central Group operations. Subsequent to the signing of this contract, Gecamines went through the worst crisis of its history with cobalt output dropping with 40% between 1998 and 2001 (Dunn 2001, p.62-63).

As far as explaining Zimbabwe's backing of Kabila is concerned, an in-depth investigation conducted by the Financial Times (1999, p.2) illuminated the scope and magnitude of commercial and economic factors that prompted Zimbabwe's intervention in the Congolese civil war. "Mugabe and his ministers also needed to protect their commercial interests in the Congo. Several Zimbabwean companies, including state-owned Zimbabwe Defense Industries and private groups controlled by senior officials and army officers, are owed money by the Kabila regime for the supply of weapons, fuel, and other equipment. Zimbabwe is, furthermore, exporting Congolese cobalt and probably diamonds." It is estimated that Kabila owed Zimbabwe between \$40 and \$200 million for military support according to 2002 estimates.

Mugabe would not trust either Uganda or Rwanda to repay this debt if they come to power and therefore had a vested interest in keeping Kabila in power. It therefore makes sense that Zimbabwe opted to back Kabila and set its sights on Mbuji-Mayi's diamond wealth as a means of automatic repayment. When one scratches beneath the surface additional evidence to support that Zimbabwe's involvement is driven primarily by economic motivations is uncovered. Zimbabwe supplied military equipment and military uniforms to the value of \$200 million to Kabila's government. Mugabe's brother and nephew have substantial commercial interests in the DRC. Zimbabwe also draws benefit from the Inga hydro-electrical scheme's power. Promises have been made of shares in mineral concessions and Kabila's government has given shares to Mugabe and Nujoma. According to the findings of a UN panel released in 1999 (cited in Orogun 2002), Laurent Kabila granted Zimbabwe mineral concessions in the DRC to compensate it



for the Zimbabwe Defense Force's support in the first rebellion. Sengamines, a US\$ 2-billion diamond concession carved from that of Miba, the DRC's diamond parastatal, is one of the 'compensation' concessions mentioned. A Wall Street report released on 12 October 1998 candidly captures the crux of Zimbabwe's involvement in the DRC war with the following statement: "Zimbabwe's political and military elite has turned the war in Congo into a business bonanza...' - invited countries are repaying themselves the money Kabila borrowed during the ADFL war, funding the current war and making a profit from the bargain."

#### **4.5.5. Summary of Findings**

Natural resources constitute an important source of financing in self-financed conflicts in resource-rich African countries. The DRC is no exception; direct looting and sale of natural resources as well as the sale of resource futures serve as important sources of funding for belligerent groups on both sides of the conflict. Not all profits from natural resources obtained during the conflict, however, are channeled back into the conflict. It is possible to distinguish between two profiting groups: those who are concerned with self-enrichment and those who view profiting from natural resources as a strategic activity. Both of these groups can be found in the DRC, which supports the argument concerning the analytical limits of a dichotomous greed versus grievance debate.

The majority of the natural resources found in the DRC can be classified as distant resources and point resources. According to Le Billon's natural resource-conflict matrix, the conflict in the DRC should be characterized by secession and warlordism. Secession is, however, not the overriding feature of the conflict; the conflict in the DRC rather contains elements of *coup d'état*. Le Billon's model provides valuable insights on the balance of power and duration of the conflict although the conflict in the DRC does not fit the natural resource-conflict matrix. The prevalence of both lootable resources

and resources of which the exploitation is obstructed, has yielded unpredicted outcomes. The DRC conflict reality reveals that resources with obstructions to extraction can in fact extend the duration of the conflict. This hinges on the extraction of these resources by rebel groups, which is a deviation from the norm, and a shift in the balance of power where the government constitutes the weaker not the stronger actor in the conflict. The balance of power approach to conflict and the generalization that the rebel group is usually the weaker actor in the conflict while the government is normally the stronger party should thus be approached with a certain amount of caution within the DRC context. The abundance and variety of natural resources found in the DRC also increases the complexity of the conflict.

The situation in the DRC furthermore seems to support a number of the hypotheses identified by Ross (2004) in terms of the causal links between natural resources and conflict. The first hypothesis to be considered concerns the extent to which resource wealth increases the probability of civil conflict by enabling rebel groups to sell future exploitation rights to minerals they anticipate to capture. In this regard, Renner (2002) points out the manifestation of this hypothesis by mentioning the negotiation of lucrative deals by international investors as Laurent Kabila's rebel alliance, the ADFL, was gathering strength but had not taken over power completely. In the words of Dena Montague, a researcher at the Arms Trade Resources Project in New York, international companies including De Beers, Anglo-American Corporation, Barrick Gold Corporation, Banro American Resources, American Mineral Fields, and Bechtel Corporation, "effectively crown[ed] Laurent Kabila as the de facto leader of the Zaire while he was still a rebel leader in control of only a small portion of the country".

The situation in the DRC also provides some evidence for the hypothesis that resource wealth has the ability to increase or decrease the duration of a conflict by serving as a source of funding for either the weaker or the stronger group embroiled in the conflict. This hypothesis links to the principle

of the 'balance of power', as discussed in previous sections of this study. The DRC government has drawn on its natural resource wealth to bankroll the conflict but with the passing of time has also taken it a step further. The DRC government has not only sacrificed vast natural resources but also developed economic interests in the presence of external troops in a bid to secure its own share of the resources. In a strange twist of circumstances, the DRC authorities have grown dependent on foreign military presence to facilitate benefit from their own resources. On the domestic front, Kinshasa is facing popular dissent and is reliant on the assistance of foreign armies to curb this rising popular dissent and sustain profits derived from resource exploitation (Samset 2002, p.477).

If one assumes that the government is the stronger party, it would follow that the conflict will be shortened when the government draws benefit from the exploitation of natural resources. The evidence provided by Samset seems to bring this hypothesis into question. A possible explanation was mentioned earlier in the chapter with reference to the balance of power assumption. It is possible that the stronger party is not always the government and that natural resources may constitute a lifeline for the government. The other possibility is that 'grievance' has become subordinate to economic motivations in the conflict and that self-enrichment plays an important role in the dynamics of the conflict.

An additional hypothesis proposed by Ross (2004) is that natural resources have the capacity to influence the duration of conflicts by means of the financial incentive provided to either oppose or support a peace settlement. In this regard it can be mentioned that during the second rebellion (1998-2004) the profits to be gained from natural resources in the DRC has provided foreign governments, rebel militias, and individual officers added incentive for continued conflict. Despite the signing of the Lusaka cease-fire agreement in July 1999, the agreement was not implemented until 2002, partially because it forced foreign combatants to withdraw from the DRC – a step that will

hamper their ability to siphon off the DRC's natural wealth.

Ross (2004) hypothesizes that an abundance of natural resources tends to increase the casualty rate during civil wars. The rationale behind this causal link is that combatants are more prone to fight for resource-rich territory, which would otherwise have been of little value. In the DRC, battles over mines have contributed to the number of casualties in the DRC conflict (Ross 2004, p.55-56). Since the beginning of the second Congolese rebellion, Ugandan and Rwandan army officials have been competing for control over trading posts in the thriving diamond center of eastern DRC, Kisangani (Raeymaekers 2006, p.13). Competition for control over resource rich areas have also led to fierce fighting between Ugandan and Rwandan troops especially in Kisangani, which is the focal point of the diamond trade in the eastern DRC (Dunn 2001, p.65).

An additional hypothesis provided by Ross (2004) is that resource wealth tends to decrease the casualty rate during civil war by providing an incentive for combatants to cooperate for the purpose of resource exploitation. This seems to be the case in the DRC since combatants intermittently cooperate in exploiting the same resources, which was previously the subject of conflict between the two groups (Ross 2004, p.56). The UPDF have been fighting the Congolese Mayi-Mayi rebels in order to gain control over the coltan rich areas of North Kivu and Ituri. At the same time, the UPDF allows the Mayi-Mayi to sell their commodities in the main city centers (Raeymaekers 2006, p.18). Lastly, the evidence of foreign intervention in the DRC as discussed in the sections dealing with the role of Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe in the DRC as far as natural resource exploitation is concerned, supports Ross' (2004) hypothesis that the availability of natural resources increases the risk for foreign intervention in civil conflicts.

Ross' (2004) findings concerning the impact of natural resources on the dynamics of the conflict in the DRC since 1998 can be summarized as follows:

Natural resources contributed to the onset of the conflict, natural resources increased the duration of the conflict and had a mixed influence on the intensity of the conflict. Based on the discussions of the manifestation of relevant hypotheses within the context of the DRC conflict, Ross's broad findings concerning the impact of natural resources on the dynamics of the conflict in the DRC can be supported.

#### **4.6. CONCLUSION**

The preceding sections have shed light on the two research questions identified as being at the core of this chapter. In terms of the extent to which the analysis of the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC supports correlates with contemporary conflict theories, it can be concluded that the conflict reality in the DRC for the most part supports contemporary theories of the economic dimension of conflicts. In particular, the conflict in the DRC underscores the increased importance of phenomenon such as self-financing, the emergence of a war economy, and causal linkages between conflict dynamics and natural resource exploitation. All of the phenomena are facilitated by the presence of a failed state. The failed state provides an arena for elevated levels of exploitation, conflict with both domestic and transnational dimensions as well as the emergence of increased roles of new actors such as private companies. Having determined that the economic dimension of the conflict is particularly pronounced in the DRC, it necessitates the consideration of the economic dimension of the conflict during the formulation of peace agreements. Based on the premise that sound conflict resolution is built on the foundation of comprehensive analysis, it would follow that it is imperative to include the economic dimension of conflict during the formulation of peace agreements. The next chapter will address the extent to which the economic dimension of conflict has been taken into account in peace agreements agreed upon between 1998 and 2004.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PEACE AGREEMENTS AND THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION

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#### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

“The horrors of recent wars seem to have thrown into stark relief the inadequacy of our attempts to end them.” (Taylor 2002, p. 7) The protracted conflict in the DRC and the broader region serves to validate this statement. A number of formal conflict resolution initiatives were launched in an attempt to bring an end to the conflict. The Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement, which was signed in July 1999, was the earliest of these initiatives. The most recent conflict resolution initiative, the ICD resulted in the signing of The Final Act in April 2003 and the acceptance of the Draft Constitution of the Transition. Despite the signing of these agreements, conflict persists<sup>1</sup>.

The continuation of violent clashes between warring factions in spite of conflict resolution initiatives is a trend, which warrants investigation. It is hypothesized that shortcomings of attempts to foster peace can often be traced back to flawed analysis of the conflict. “Policy choices for conflict resolution and prevention are deeply influenced by the way a given conflict is characterized...” (Ballentine and Sherman 2003, p.273-280) An improved understanding of the causes, character, and dynamics of conflict can lead to increased effectiveness of policies for conflict prevention and resolution. Conversely, there is a causal link between deficient analysis and

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<sup>1</sup> On 30 July 2006 democratic elections were held in the DRC for the first time in nearly 40 years. The electoral process was declared largely devoid of major violence or gross irregularities. Joseph Kabila was sworn in as the first democratically elected president of the DRC since independence on 6 December 2006. The elections and the swearing in of Kabila as president and more specifically the establishment of a parliament and implementation of the constitution represents the conclusion of the transition born out of the 2002 Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Pretoria. Despite these advances the situation, particularly in the Eastern part of the DRC, remains extremely volatile (International Crisis Group 2006). Although it is important to mention these developments, the discussion in this study will be limited to events prior to August 2004 in accordance with the initial demarcation of the research parameters.

“inappropriate policy responses and ill-conceived solutions” (Ballentine and Nitschke 2003, p.1).

Chapter Two addressed conflict analysis and illustrated the different ways in which conflicts have been approached from a theoretical standpoint. Chapter Two further illuminated the extent to which the nature and dynamics of conflicts have changed, warranting a reconsideration of approaches to conflict analysis. Chapter Three and Chapter Four provided some background to the conflict in the DRC and more specifically the economic dimension of the conflict. These chapters have cumulatively dealt with the way in which the conflict in the DRC has been characterized thus addressing the one aspect of Ballentine and Sherman’s (2003) argument. Chapter Five will deal with the other dimension of Ballentine and Sherman’s (2003) argument by addressing the policy choices for prevention and resolution within the DRC context and the extent to which the characterization of the conflict has been taken into account. The analysis of policy responses to the conflict in the DRC will be limited to the examination of Track One peace initiatives.

This chapter aims to provide an answer to the following question: Does a lack of attention to the economic dimension in peace agreements represent the Achilles heel of the peace process in the DRC? This overarching question breaks down into a number of sub-questions, including: Does the economic dimension play a prominent enough role in the DRC conflict to warrant inclusion in the overall characterization of the conflict? If so, should this dimension be considered in terms of Track One conflict initiatives? What weight should be awarded to the role of the economic dimension of conflict in terms of peace agreements? To what extent has the economic dimension featured in terms of peace agreements in the DRC? Is there a possible correlation between the attention given to the economic dimension in peace agreements and the persistence of the conflict? Chapter Six will conclude the study and address the final sub-question namely: What recommendation can

be made for future Track One conflict initiatives in terms of the economic dimension of conflict?

## **5.2. THE ROLE OF THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION IN PEACE AGREEMENTS**

This section will explore the basis on which the inclusion of the economic dimension in the peace agreement is warranted. The section will primarily draw from Chapter Two, which addressed the theoretical foundation of the economic dimension in conflict and advocated the inclusion of the economic dimension in terms of particularly analysis and by further implication, policy. This section will also utilize the evidence presented in Chapter Three in favour of the argument that the economic considerations constitute a prominent dimension of the conflict in the DRC and for this reason should be taken into account in terms of peace agreements.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, a number of new actors, phenomena and issues have been identified in post-Cold War conflicts. Based on the information presented in Chapter Two it is possible to sketch a picture of the changing conflict landscape by highlighting a few salient features of more recent conflicts. These features include:

- Increased competition for and exploitation of natural resources.
- A proliferation of opportunities for self-enrichment.
- Self-financing and economic integration at regional and international levels.
- The emergence of Diaspora networks.

The afore-mentioned features draw our attention to two reoccurring issues, namely the increase in self-financing of conflicts and the role of natural resources. In terms of observations made based on the more recent analysis of conflicts, natural resources have come to play a much more central role in conflicts and is closely linked to the issue of self-financing in conflicts. Philippe



Le Billion (cited in Porto 2002, p.16) points out that belligerents have become more dependent upon mobilizing tradable commodities to sustain their military and political activities. In addition to financing conflicts, resources have also impacted the dynamics of conflicts by creating problems in terms of command, control, and cohesion of both rebel and government forces. Natural resource exploitation also shape strategies of power based on “the commercialization of armed conflict and the territorialisation of sovereignty around valuable resource areas and trading networks” (Le Billion 2001). Resource exploitation by groups in conflict is an important issue to take into consideration in terms of peace agreements in as much as it has an impact on certain actors’ interest in the continuation of conflict for profit (Porto 2002, p.16).

The economic dimension of conflict should, however, not only be taken into account in as much as it manifests in terms of actors and issues but also in terms of its impact on conflict dynamics. Thayer (2002, p.1) argues that internal conflicts have recently become more protracted in nature and attributes this to the increased prominence of the economic dimension, which adds an additional dimension to conflicts hence making them more complex and convoluted in terms of issues and actors. Chapter Two also provides an explanation for why conflicts persist or reoccur. This explanation is based on conflict theories, which take the economic dimension of conflict into account. In accordance with the ‘greed approach’ to conflict, the central reason why conflicts become protracted is related to the profit opportunities created by conflict, which provide an incentive for certain groups or individuals to sustain the conflict (Porto 2002, p.1). This notion is in stark contrast to the ‘grievance informed’ conviction that some societies experience repeated conflict due to the cumulative legacy of the desire for vengeance (Porto 2002, p.11).

Contemporary conflict theories have shifted the focus in terms of actors from a focus on states to a focus on groups as the primary actors in conflict.

Conflict theory has also come to recognize the internal- and transnational dimensions of recent conflicts. Conflict theories no longer only focus on issues pertaining to politics and security as defined by a 'high politics' frame of analysis but also consider issues, which fall in the realm of 'low politics'. In doing so, theories encapsulate the economic dimension of conflict. These shifts in focus should also inform the formulation of peace agreements in as much as they are based on observations made in terms of unfolding conflict dynamics and will contribute to the applicability, relevance and eventual success of such peace initiatives.

Chapter Three concluded that the evidence presented in terms of the conflict reality in the DRC support contemporary theories of the economic dimension of conflict. The conflict in the DRC particularly highlights the increased importance of phenomena such as self-financing, the emergence of a war economy, and causal linkages between conflict dynamics and natural resource exploitation. These phenomena are facilitated by the presence of a failed state in the DRC. The failed state provides an arena for elevated levels of exploitation. The state in the DRC also forms the arena for conflict with both domestic and transnational dimensions and serves to support the emergence of increased roles of new actors, which span both these dimensions. According to Ballentine (2003, p.261-267), qualitative and quantitative studies identify critical governance failure by the state as the mediating variable between natural resource abundance and conflict risk.

One of the purposes of the state is to protect its population from exposure to the rudimentary principles of survival. Chapter Four points out that the failure of the state in the DRC facilitated a situation in which individuals increasingly looked toward sources of security other than the state. This facilitated recruitment into rebel groups and contributed to the porous nature of the DRC's borders. The combination of the DRC's natural resource wealth, the ease with which people and goods could move across the borders and increased rebel recruitment gave rise to a regional conflict network.

Extrapolating from the hypothesis that the absence of a form of political organization with the interests of the population at heart is more likely to spark violence and conflict, one can thus advocate that the establishment of a strong state should also be considered under the umbrella of the economic dimension during the formulation of peace agreements.

### **5.3. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PEACE PROCESS**

#### **5.3.1. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and its Aftermath (August 1999 - 2000)**

On 10 July 1999 the Heads of State of the DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe as well as Angola's Minister of Defence signed the Lusaka ceasefire agreement. Representatives of the Ugandan-backed MLC rebel group signed the agreement on 1 August 1999 and an additional fifty people signed the agreement on 31 August 1999 on behalf of both factions of the RCD (Rogier 2004). The agreement represented the conclusion of a year of trying negotiations facilitated by South Africa and Zambia, which was at that stage the Chair of the Southern African Development Community's defence and security committee, and represents the foundation of the entire peace process in the DRC (Grignon 2006, p.70-71). The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement was concluded in the midst of a military stalemate and has been described as "the result of opportunistic moves by each party" rather than "a reflection of a general commitment to reaching a political settlement". With the signing of the agreement the DRC received assurance that the invading forces had an obligation to withdraw from DRC territory. The rebels, on the other hand, gained international recognition and further benefited from the weakening of President Kabila's position as a result of the fact that the rebels were given equal status in subsequent political negotiations (Rogier 2004).

Security and political issues dominated the agenda of the Lusaka Ceasefire negotiations and the economic dimension was not considered relevant to the

peace process (Grignon 2006, p.71). The fact that the economic dimension was omitted can partially be ascribed to the lack of public acknowledgement of the economic interests of belligerents since no formal reports has been published on the issue before the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Despite the paucity of formal acknowledgements, evidence had already been mounting that all belligerents were actively involved in the exploitation of natural resources (International Crisis Group 2000a; International Crisis Group 2001). The extent to which the economic dimension was not addressed in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement can thus also be ascribed to the weight that was awarded to the role of economic issues. Parties to the agreement considered economic activities to be a by-product of the war and a secondary matter with little bearing on the course of the peace process (Grignon 2006, p.71-72). The central issues considered to be of importance in terms of the peace process reflect the characterization of the conflict by both participants and mediators to the negotiations. In short, the crux of the conflict in the DRC was conceptualized as the civil war on the domestic front and the involvement of neighbouring countries in the primarily internal conflict.

In accordance with this characterization of the conflict the salient provisions and enforcement mechanisms encapsulated in the Lusaka ceasefire agreement included:

- All military attacks were to cease within 24 hours of the signing of the agreement, where after all forces were to disengage and redeploy;
- Inter-Congolese negotiations involving the DRC's government, the armed opposition (including the RCD and MLC), and the unarmed political opposition were provided for.
- Provisions were also made for a UN peacekeeping mission; mandated with the disarming of armed foreign groups (Rogier 2004).

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement can be divided into the first section, which deals with the principles of the agreement and three Annexes, which are concerned with the modalities of the implementation of the aforementioned

principles agreed upon. The central focus of the Lusaka Agreement is on the security issues. The preamble of the agreement emphasizes “the need to ensure that the principles of good neighbourliness and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries are respected” and is also cognizant “of the fact that addressing the security concerns of the DRC and neighbouring countries is central and would contribute to the peace process” (Democratic Republic of Congo: Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement 1999).

Annex A, addresses the modalities concerned with implementing the security issues agreed upon but also attend to a number of issues of a more political nature. The first two chapters of Annex A are respectively titled, “Cessation of Hostilities” and “Disengagement”. Chapter Four of the agreement focuses particularly on the withdrawal of “foreign troops” from DRC soil. Chapter Nine of the agreement pays particular attention to the question of disarmament and in particular the disarmament of “negative forces”. In accordance with the agreement, “negative forces” are seen to include the Rwandan ex-FAR and Interhamwe, the Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), The West Nile Bank front (WNBF), the Burundian Conseil National de la Democratie-Forces de Defense de la Democratie, and the Angolan UNITA. Chapters Five and Six are more political in nature and respectively deal with provisions for a “National Dialogue and Reconciliation” and the “Re-establishment of the state administration over the territory of the Democratic Republic of Congo”. The focus of the latter two chapters is primarily on the ICD, which is aimed at facilitating national elections (Grignon 2006, p.70; Democratic Republic of Congo: Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement 1999).

The agreement was aimed at bringing about three specific outcomes. Firstly, the agreement aspired to the orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces. Secondly, the agreement was intended to re-establish the state administration throughout Congolese territory. Lastly, the agreement sought to implement measures, which would normalize the security situation along the country’s borders (Rogier 2004). In short, the Lusaka Agreement was “primarily a

ceasefire agreement aimed at guaranteeing a permanent suspension of hostilities.” (Grignon 2006, p.71).

Reality, however, proved the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement highly optimistic as the agreement failed to live up to the expectation of resolving all the thorny issues within the timeframe of 360 days provided. The Lusaka Agreement addressed the issue of enforcement by means of providing for a Joint Military Commission (JMC) and a peace-support operation led by the United Nations. In lieu of these provisions, enforcement proved to be a major stumbling block on the road towards peace. All parties repeatedly violated the terms of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement during the course of 2000 and the situation remained unchanged as the military stalemate persisted. This prompted the main belligerents to adopt the Kampala and Harare Disengagement Plans on 8 April 2000 (Rogier 2004 & Sub-Plans for Disengagement and Redeployment (DR) of Forces in accordance with the DRC Plan signed at Kampala on 8 April 2000). The plans had been foreseen in the Lusaka Agreement and requested by the UN Security Council by means of Resolution 1291 on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2000 in Kampala. The plan was initially drawn up by MONUC and slightly amended by the JMC and the political committee. The plan stipulated the withdrawal of all forces to a distance of 15 kilometres from the confrontation line as well as the creation of a 30-kilometer wide zone of disengagement. Despite the unrealistic timeframe laid out by the Harare Agreement, the plan was put into effect (Rogier 2004).

### **5.3.2. The Inter-Congolese Dialogue (2000 - 2002)**

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement provided for an ICD with the broad objective of creating a “new political dispensation” for the DRC. The Agreement also made provision for the appointment of a neutral facilitator to oversee the ICD. The appointment of a neutral facilitator proved to be an obstacle as it was difficult to reach an agreement among all the parties concerned. Finally, Sir Ketumile Masire, the former president of Botswana, was appointed on 15

December 1999. The ICD lagged behind the envisioned timeframe for its execution. Sir Ketumile Masire was only appointed two months after the deadline given to the participants for the conclusion of the dialogue. Masire took up his functions in January 2000 and the ICD remained stalled for an additional year (Rogier 2004; Grignon 2006, p.70).

Laurent Kabila obstructed the launching of the ICD. Kabila perceived aspects of the peace initiatives as calling his rule into question and also refused to enter into discussions concerning the future of the DRC as long as the country remained under foreign occupation (Rogier 2004). Kabila was determined to prevent both a genuine power-sharing agreement and any focus on the economic dimensions of the conflict (Grignon 2006, p.72). It was only almost a year after the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement with the death of Laurent Kabila in January 2001 that the peace process began to gain momentum. The death of Kabila created several opportunities in terms of the peace process. It was at this point that Sir Ketumile Masire began to organize the ICD (Grignon 2006, p.64).

The ICD preparatory committee comprised 74 delegates representing all five component groups. Towards the latter part of August 2001 participants had reached consensus on the agenda, structure, rules, location and dates of ICD meetings. Nonetheless, the first ICD session in Addis Ababa on 15 October 2001 was unsuccessful. Representation issues were sighted as the most prominent stumbling block in the success of the ICD. Following all the challenges, it can be argued that the ICD was essentially stillborn but was revived by an initiative by Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations. In November 2001 the three parties (the DRC government, RCD-Goma and the MLC) participated in an informal meeting at which it was agreed to re-launch the peace process. Issues such as funding, representation, and political issues remained central concerns for the revitalization of the initiative (Rogier 2004).

Subsequent to the third battle in Kisangani between Rwandan and Ugandan troops the UN Security Council created its Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth on 2 June 2000 (United Nations Security Council 2000). The objective of the creation of the UN Panel of Experts was to expose the economic agendas, which play an instrumental role in the course of the DRC conflict, yet had remained publicly unacknowledged until the formation of the panel (Grignon 2006, p.71). The official mandate of the Panel of Experts included the “collection of information on all activities on illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including those in violation of the sovereignty of that country, and research and analysis of the links between such exploitation and the continuation of the conflict” (United Nations Security Council 2000). Despite the increase in awareness concerning the role of the economic dimension in the conflict in the DRC, economic issues did not initially feature on the agenda of the ICD. The first report of the UN Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other Forms of Wealth was published two months before the Gaborone meeting in April 2000. The publication of this report focused the attention on the exploitation of resources and paid particular attention to the role of Rwanda and Uganda but omitted evidence concerning the exploitation of resources by Kinshasa and Harare. The publication of the report made it impossible to further ignore the role of economic interests in the conflict (Grignon 2006, p.73).

The draft agenda of the ICD addresses the economic dimension of the conflict in Point 8 by stating that “a review of the content and validity of the economic and financial conventions signed during the war” will be conducted (Office of the Facilitator for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue cited in Grignon 2006, p.73). The issues were addressed on paper but never followed through into concrete actions. This can be attributed to the lack of commitment of the belligerents who were party to the ICD. Joseph Kabila flew to Harare shortly after the talks to guarantee Zimbabwe that their interest would remain in tact



despite the agreements reached during the ICD (Grignon 2006, p.73). This links to the argument that the only way to sustain commitments to address the economic dimension is when enough incentive is provided - the ICD obviously did not succeed on this front.

Economic issues were also incorporated into the official agenda of the ICD during preparatory talks in Gaborone, Botswana, in July 2001 (Grignon 2006, p.72). The facilitators were of the opinion that economic issues were an essential item that should be placed on the official agenda of the dialogue. All parties agreed to the creation of an Economic and Financial Commission within the framework of the talks (Grignon 2006, p.73). The Declaration of Fundamental Principles of the ICD was signed on 4 May 2001 in Gaborone. "Article 11 of the declaration proclaims "the utilization of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo in the interests of the whole country and for the improvement of the living standards of the Congolese people." (Declaration of Fundamental Principles of the Inter-Congolese Political Negotiations 2001, p.2)

The ICD created a commission, presided over by Albert Trevoedjre from Benin, to address the economic dimension of the conflict. The commission was devoted to economic and financial issues and was tasked with the following:

- Conducting a review of the validity of the economic and financial conventions signed during the war.
- Compiling an inventory of the destructive acts that occurred during the war and the identification of those responsible for them
- Evaluating the cost of the two wars.
- Establishing an emergency economic and social program of reconstruction.
- Overseeing the return of the properties stolen from private parties and other assets requisitioned from the state.

In line with the objectives of the commission, a resolution was proposed recommending the establishment of an *ad hoc* parliamentary commission to

look into all the contracts signed by the belligerents with foreign companies during the two wars (Grignon 2006, p.75).

The incorporation of the economic dimension into the agenda of negotiations, however, did not translate into its recognition as a pertinent feature of the conflict. Grignon (2006, p.75) argues that, "attention and effort remained centred on the political and security commissions, where power sharing was supposed to take place." Resolutions from the Fourth Commission were mainly a "public relations exercise in response to the UN Panel of Experts' reports or attempts for delegates to restore some credibility to their economic management". The inability to move economic issues from an issue on the periphery of the negotiations to a central aspect of negotiations is due to a lack of commitment and the manner in which those involved in the negotiations conceptualized the conflict. Grignon (2006, p.68) concurs by stating "...participants in the ICD have not thoroughly addressed the economic dimension of the conflict and refuse to acknowledge any responsibility in the illegal exploitation of natural resources. These same parties have passed resolutions promising good economic governance and economic transparency that have still not been implemented."

The central objective of the ICD thus remained to establish a transitional administration in the DRC pending the holding of democratic elections. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement outlined the purpose of the ICD as reaching an agreement among its participants on four issues related to power sharing in the DRC. These issues include: the formation of a new Congolese army, the design of a new institutional structure, the organization of general elections, the drawing up of an interim constitution and the establishment of the institutions that would govern the DRC during the transition period (Rogier 2004).

The ICD convened in Sun City, South Africa, between February and April 2002. The ICD failed to immediately deliver the expected comprehensive

political agreement, which would be a prerequisite for the expedited establishment of a transitional government. Some progress was, however, made later when the South African government succeeded in persuading the Rwandan and DRC governments to sign a security protocol on 30 July 2002. In accordance with this security protocol the Rwandan government would withdraw its forces from DRC territory and the DRC government would dismantle and disarm all former Forces Armées Rwandaises and Interhamwe on Congolese territory. By 2005, three years after agreeing to the security protocol, the DRC government had still not fulfilled its obligation. The Rwandan government, on the other hand, had withdrawn its troops from the DRC. A similar security deal was brokered between the Angolan and DRC governments. This agreement was formally agreed upon on 6 September 2002 and established a joint pacification committee for Ituri (Grignon 2006, p.64)

The signing of the “Global and Inclusive Agreement on Transition in the Democratic Republic of Congo” (2002c) on 16 December 2002 in Pretoria, South Africa, concluded the ICD. The primary focus of the agreement was outlining the transition process in the DRC. Aside from the first section in the agreement, which deals with the “Cessation of hostilities”, the agreement meticulously outlines the modalities of the transition. Attention is respectively devoted to, “Transition objectives”, “Transition principles”, the “Duration of the transition” and “Transition institutions”. On 31 March 2003, the “Draft Constitution of the Transition” (2003a) was agreed upon, formalizing the foundational and functional features of the state. The entire Intern-Congolese Political Negotiations were concluded on 2 April 2003 with the signing of the Final Act (2003b).

### **5.3.3. The Sun City Talks (February to April 2002)**

The delegates who took part in the negotiations at Sun City, South Africa represented the entire spectrum with representatives from the three Lusaka

signatories, the unarmed opposition, the forces vives, RCD-ML, RCD-National, and Mayi-Mayi. Delegates were divided between five technical commissions and ultimately 34 resolutions were negotiated and approved by means of consensus in the respective commissions. The negotiations commenced with the three main participating parties revealing largely incompatible objectives; preventing a compromise solution. Among the points of disagreement were issues related to power sharing, which foreshadowed the failure of the ICD and the continuation of violent conflict. In an act of desperation, Masire appealed to President Mbeki to broker a 'last-minute' deal. South Africa had a vested interest in the successful conclusion of the dialogue, among which was recouping its financial investment in the proceedings. President Mbeki submitted two plans in response to Masire's request. The majority of the delegates subsequently signed the Accord de Sun City. It is, however, imperative to note that RCD-Goma as well as a number of opposition parties were not among the signatories and proceeded to form the Alliance for the Preservation of the ICD (Rogier 2004).

Emeric Rogier (2004) identifies several factors that contributed to the demise of the Sun City talks, including poor preparation with a substantial amount of time and energy being devoted to solving representation issues, to the detriment of more substantive issues. This ties into criticism of the facilitator's minimalist conception of his role, which eventually necessitated the intervention of Thabo Mbeki.

Most central among the reasons identified is the attitudes of the delegates. The RCD-Goma, for instance, could not accept the idea of the renewal of Kabila's presidency. The extent to which Rwanda could have been involved in preventing the RCD-Goma from concluding a deal was a secondary issue. Rogier (2004) argues that Rwanda found it difficult to reconcile its short-term interest in resource exploitation in the DRC and its long-term objective of creating a "zone of influence" in eastern DRC with the "restoration of the DRC's unity that an all-inclusive agreement" would have brought about. In

Rogier's opinion this illuminates the extent to which inter-Congolese affairs continued to be influenced by outsiders. One could also read a number of things pertaining to the objectives and motivations for involvement in Rogier's observation of the seemingly incompatible goals. In other words, Rwanda can be seen to have dual short and long-term goals and with the signing of a peace agreement they would risk jeopardizing those goals. It might thus not be as simple as arguing that Rwanda was only motivated by economic gain from natural resource exploitation but rather by a more complex set of long and short term objectives of which securing continued natural resource exploitation only constitutes one aspect.

#### **5.3.4. The Pretoria Phase (July to September 2002)**

On 30 July 2002 the DRC and Rwanda signed the "Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of the DRC and Rwanda on the withdrawal of the Rwandan troops from the territory of the DRC and the dismantling of the Ex-FAR and Interhamwe forces in the DRC" (2002a). This agreement is known as Pretoria I. Shortly after the signing of Pretoria I another agreement was signed between the DRC and another prominent conflict actor, Uganda on 6 September 2002 (Agreement between the governments of the DRC and the Republic of Uganda on withdrawal of Ugandan troops from the DRC, cooperation and normalization of relations between two countries 2002b). This agreement was reached under the auspices of Angolan President, de Santos, and hence the name Luanda Agreement. Uganda's participation in the Luanda Agreement and its role in the Ituri Pacification Commission positioned Kampala in such a way that it could bolster the image of peacemaker while simultaneously retaining political influence over a resource-rich district (Rogier 2004). As suggested by their names, these two agreements both paved the way for the withdrawal of foreign forces from DRC territory. As was the case with previous agreements, security and political issues dominated the negotiations during the Pretoria negotiations and economic agendas were not considered relevant to the

peace process (Grignon 2006, p.71). Rogier (2004) is of the opinion that the agreement between DRC and Rwanda did not make any substantial contribution since it represented a repetition of the provisions in the Lusaka Agreement neither did it close any loopholes. The central provision in the agreement is that the DRC government should continue to track down and disarm the Interhamwe and ex-FAR within DRC jurisdiction. Rwanda's withdrawal of troops basically hinged on this provision and was framed in terms of security concerns. The agreement also fell short of addressing the logistics of the disarming of the ex-FAR and Interhamwe.

On 17 December 2002, the participants in the ICD agreed to the Global and All-inclusive Agreement (Pretoria II). The Pretoria II Agreement stipulated the modalities for power sharing during the transition period of 24 months. The Final Act of the negotiations was approved on 2 April 2003 in Sun City. The Final Act served to endorse all the agreements reached up until that point, which included the transitional constitution and the memorandum on military and security issues, which was adopted in March 2003. However, peace continued to be illusive especially in the eastern DRC after the signing of these agreements. Rogier (2004) hints at the fact that these agreements might have contributed to the continuation of the conflict. The signatories to the agreement signed in Sun City were unable to establish a constitutional blueprint to operationalize an agreement that was vague and eventually proved to be short-lived.

Subsequently Mustapha Niasse, Special Envoy of the Secretary General to the DRC, was appointed by the UN Secretary-General to broker an all-inclusive agreement under an initial six-month mandate that was later extended to March 2003. In the period ranging from June to October 2002, Niasse was at the head of three missions to the Great Lakes Region. These efforts culminated in the signing of the Pretoria II Agreement (Global and All-Inclusive Agreement on the Transition in the DRC), which was agreed to by all the most salient actors in the DRC conflict - the DRC government, RCD-

Goma, MLC, RCD-ML, RCD-N and the Mayi-Mayi rebel group. The failure of this agreement was the fact that it focused more on outlining a settlement between the principal warlords on power sharing rather than addressing the root causes of the conflict. The Final Act failed to sufficiently address three central issues, namely the integration of armed forces into a united army, the provision of personal security of all transitional government appointees and the framing of an interim constitution. The RCD-Goma, as well as other autonomist groups who enjoyed Rwandan support in the Kivus was in favour of federalism since a federalist system would provide them with the room to secure control over the natural resources in the eastern DRC. The government, on the other hand, sought to re-establish control over the entire territory and the rebel-held areas in particular.

#### **5.4. CONCLUSION**

In the introduction to the chapter the central question to be addressed was identified as pertaining to the extent to which the lack of attention to the economic dimension in peace agreements represent the Achilles heel of the peace process in the DRC. A number of secondary questions were also identified. These questions included: Does the economic dimension play a prominent enough role in the DRC conflict to warrant inclusion in the overall characterization of the conflict? If so, should this dimension be considered in terms of Track One conflict initiatives? What weight should be awarded to the role of the economic dimension of conflict in terms of peace agreements? To what extent has the economic dimension featured in terms of peace agreements in the DRC? Is there a possible correlation between the attention given to the economic dimension in peace agreements and the persistence of the conflict? Chapter Six will conclude the study and address the final sub-question namely: What recommendation can be made for future Track One conflict initiatives in terms of the economic dimension of conflict? The conclusion of this chapter would now like to revisit these questions.

Section Two of this chapter answers the first two sub-questions in the affirmative. Based on the information presented in Chapter Two and Chapter Four respectively, it is evident that the economic dimension of the conflict is particularly pronounced in the DRC. Drawing on the premise that sound conflict resolution is built on the foundation of comprehensive analysis, it would follow that it is imperative to include the economic dimension of conflict during the formulation of peace agreements.

This brings us to the question of how the economic dimension should be considered or what weight should be awarded to the economic dimension in terms of peace agreements. According to Porto (2002, p.1) there is “no single cause of a conflict. Nor is there often any single precondition for sustainable peace. Different factors vary in importance, and reinforce or neutralize each other. The analysis of the situation must therefore include the relative importance of the different indicators and their inter-relationship.” The comprehensive theoretical approach advocated in Chapter Two can thus be employed as a template for the inclusion of the economic dimension in peace agreements. Departing from the conviction that economic and security/political issues are mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive terms, a comprehensive approach to the consideration of the economic dimension in terms of analysis and policy formulation is considered to be the most sound option. In support of this opinion, it can be noted that Ballentine and Nitzschke (2003) point out that there is a growing awareness of the analytical limits of a starkly polarized ‘greed versus grievance’ approach. The use of a modified ‘political economy’ approach, which integrates economic and political factors, is thus considered to be the best approach to framing conflict analysis and the most comprehensive basis for the subsequent formulation of peace agreements.

Research concerned with the dynamics of war economies and the role of greed in conflict, have provided analysts with useful insights as to why certain conflicts, in particular those in Africa, persist despite a myriad of diplomatic



initiatives and peace efforts (Naidoo 2000). Collier (1999, p.11) identifies a number of factors to consider in terms of the probability of the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Firstly, he points out that the benefit derived from conflict by some groups decrease their incentive to restore peace but could also imply the existence of a group who does not benefit from conflict and therefore have an increased incentive for peaceful settlement. Collier argues that on a relative basis the group who does not benefit from conflict outweighs the group who does benefit from conflict and in that sense there is always scope for a mutually beneficial peace settlement. There are, however, reasons to predict the existence of multiple obstacles to the achievement of peace. One of the obstacles is the challenge of convincing all groups that they will be in a better position after a settlement.

As far as the re-occurrence of conflict is concerned, Collier points to the following. In the case of grievance-motivated conflict, previous conflict represents a powerful impetus for future conflict due to the revenge factor intrinsic to such conflict. By contrast, underlying economic conditions represent a more informative measure of the probability of repeat conflict in the case of greed-based conflicts. Collier does caution that the evidence is only preliminary as far as greed-based conflict is concerned but that the implication would be that conflicts motivated by greed are less intractable in the sense that they are not driven by historical loyalties. Collier emphasizes that since the narrative of grievance has dominated discussions of civil conflict, it has also permeated the focus of settlement attempts. Collier maintains that he does not wish to imply that the parties to a conflict do not hold grievances and historical hatreds nor that there is no sense to attempt to address grievance. Rather, he argues that the bulk of empirical data from his studies point to the prominent role of economic factors and the solution to greed-motivated conflict is intimately linked to the ability to change the economic incentives for conflict (Collier 1999, p.14).

Section Three of this chapter provided an overview of peace agreements in

the DRC and dealt with the extent to which the economic dimension featured in terms of these peace agreements. From the discussion it is apparent that Congolese domestic actors and the international community have only superficially included the economic dimension in the peace process. Economic interests have thus not been ignored; instead they have been integrated into the peace process and become a virtual “hidden script” (Nest 2006, p.64). One of the possible reasons why the economic dimension was not initially integrated into the peace process to a greater extent was the lack of public awareness of the impact of economic interests. The reports published by the UN Panel of Experts increased awareness of the role of economic interests. Additional reasons are the way in which the conflict is conceptualized – major actors involved in the conflict still view the conflict as primarily hinging on security issues with economic issues featuring as a less central dimension – and the fact that actors do not openly admit their economic interests and might even withdraw from the negotiations if forced to table their economic stake in the conflict.

Finally, it should be considered whether one can attribute the lack of attention given to the economic dimension in peace agreements to the persistence of the conflict. The focus on security and political issues as opposed to the economic dimension does play a role in the protracted nature of the conflict, but a number of related issues also have a bearing on the conflict dynamics. At the heart of the dilemma is the fact that lack of attention given to the economic dimension reflects the manner in which the conflict is conceptualized. The conceptualization of the conflict as primarily resulting from security concerns is evident from the focus of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Subsequent agreements, particularly the ICD, have been trapped in this conceptualization of the conflict.

# CHAPTER SIX

## CONCLUSION

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### **6.1. INTRODUCTION**

This study is built on the underlying assumption that the shortcomings of many peace agreements is rooted in the failure to adequately consider and incorporate the economic dimension of conflict. Using this assumption as a point of departure, this study explored the hypothesis that a thorough understanding and recognition of the role of the economic dimension in conflict would contribute to the resolution of conflicts if incorporated during the formulation of peace agreements. This study aimed to explore the assumption through a discussion of theoretical approaches to the conflict-economic nexus, an analysis of the extent to which theory accounts for the conflict reality in the DRC and finally, determining to what degree peace agreements in the DRC have taken the economic dimension and insights gained from the academic exploration of this topic into account during their formulation. The research question at the core of this chapter is: What recommendations can be made for track one peace initiatives in terms of taking the economic dimension of conflict into account? The next section will revisit the conclusions that were reached in the preceding chapters. The discussion in the next section will contextualize the recommendations to be made hereafter by outlining the development of the argument for the inclusion of the economic dimension in peace agreements.

### **6.2. SUMMARY OF PRIOR CONCLUSIONS**

Chapter Two explored the extent to which contemporary conflict theories can be viewed as a response to the changing conflict context and a departure from previous conflict theories. It was concluded that new developments in

the conflict context such as the end of the Cold War and globalization forced analysts to look at conflict differently and to coin new concepts to explain the phenomena they were witnessing. These developments in the conflict context and the theoretical response that they spurred, explain the theoretical departure away from theories trapped in a Cold War paradigm of security to theories that increasingly account for the economic dimension of conflict. Many of the developments were particularly pronounced on the African continent and served to mould African conflicts and are of particular importance in terms of theoretical approaches to the conflict in the DRC. Chapter Two thus drew attention to the shift in theory as a response to conflict reality and argues that this theoretical shift should prompt an evaluation of the manner in which we conceptualize the conflict reality in the DRC.

Chapter Three provided an overview of the geographical and historical context in which the conflict in the DRC is rooted as a means of contextualizing the discussion in Chapter Four. The purpose of Chapter Four was to evaluate how well theory and reality mesh as far as the conflict in the DRC is concerned. The information on the conflict reality in the DRC presented in Chapter Four reflected on the theories and concepts concerned with the economic dimension of conflict described in Chapter Two. Chapter Four determined that the economic dimension of the conflict is particularly pronounced in the DRC and that the economic dimension plays a prominent enough role in the DRC conflict to warrant inclusion in the overall characterization of the conflict. In accordance with the hypothesis that the consideration of the economic dimension is imperative for the success of peace initiatives, the extension of the findings in Chapter Four is that the economic dimension should be considered in terms of track one conflict initiatives. The necessary consideration of the economic dimension of the conflict during the formulation of peace agreements is advocated based on the premise that sound conflict resolution is built on the foundation of comprehensive analysis. Based on an analysis of track one conflict

agreements falling within the perimeters of this study, it was established in Chapter Five that the economic dimension of conflict is not sufficiently incorporated into track one conflict initiatives in the DRC.

### **6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF CONFLICT IN TRACK ONE CONFLICT INITIATIVES**

#### **6.3.1. Increased Awareness of the Role of the Economic Dimension**

The Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement was signed in July 1999 and represents the first track one peace initiative launched in an effort to create peace in the DRC (Rogier 2004). The economic dimension did not enjoy any attention as security and political issues dominated the agenda of the Lusaka Ceasefire negotiations (Grignon 2006, p.71). The Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement can be considered as the foundation for all subsequent track one peace initiatives and the extent to which it has shackled the peace process in a specific conceptualization of the conflict will enjoy more specific attention in section 6.3.3. However, within the context of this section it is important to point out that the Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement is representative of the lack of awareness of the role of the economic dimension in the conflict in the DRC.

Subsequent to the third battle in Kisangani between Rwandan and Ugandan troops the UN Security Council brought to life the “Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth” on 2 June 2000 (United Nations Security Council 2000). The objective of the creation of the UN Panel of Experts was to expose the economic agendas, which play an instrumental role in the course of the DRC conflict, yet had

remained largely publicly unacknowledged until that point (Grignon 2006, p.71). The UN Panel of Experts published its first report focusing on the exploitation of natural resources in the DRC in April 2001 – two months before the Gaborone meeting. The release of this report brought the role of the economic dimension and particularly the role of natural resources in the DRC conflict to the forefront (Grignon 2006, p.73). The publication of the report increased the awareness of the role of economic interests in conflict and made it difficult to deny or ignore the influence of the economic dimension during peace initiatives subsequent to the publication of the report.

The ICD resulted in the signing of “The Final Act” in April 2003 and the acceptance of the “Draft Constitution of the Transition”. The “Final Act” is the last track one peace agreement included in this study based on the demarcated focus time period (Rogier 2004). Despite the increase in awareness concerning the role of the economic dimension in the conflict in the DRC, economic issues did not initially feature on the agenda of the ICD and were later included in a very superficial manner as evident from Chapter Five. The failure to initially address the economic dimension in terms of the peace process can be justified by the lack of general awareness of the role of the economic dimension in conflicts prior to the publication of the UN Panel of Expert’s reports. However, the limited extent to which the economic dimension of the conflict was incorporated in peace agreements following the publication of the UN Panel of Experts’ reports should be sought elsewhere.

The first possible reason for the lack of prominence of the economic dimension in terms of track one peace initiatives should be sought in the questions surrounding the neutrality of the UN Panel of Experts’ Reports. In 2001 the UN Panel of Experts on Illegal Exploitation in the DRC reported on the involvement of Ugandan officers in mining activities in Durba (United

Nations Panel of Experts 2001, p. 11.). In 2002 the Ugandan government appointed a judicial commission of inquiry led by Justice David Porter in response to the UN Reports (Porter Commission 2002). The commission became commonly known as the Porter Commission and was instructed to respond to the allegations made by the UN Panel of Experts. The Porter Commission interviewed various Ugandan officers about their involvement in illegal gold mining in Durba including Lt Okumu, Major Sonko and Lt Col Mugeny amongst others. All of the officers interviewed denied any involvement in such activities (Porter Commission 2002, p.69-70). The commission initially absolved President Museveni from the allegations but later confirmed the involvement of prominent individuals and senior officers from the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF). The UPDF had been identified by the UN Panel of Experts as one of the actors in the illicit looting of the DRC's natural resources (Rogier 2004).

Furthermore, the first report by the UN Panel of Experts framed Rwanda and Uganda as being primarily responsible for the organized exploitation of natural resources in the DRC (United Nations Panel of Experts 2001). The publication of this report focused the attention on the exploitation of resources and paid particular attention to the role of Rwanda and Uganda but omitted evidence concerning the exploitation of resources by Kinshasa and Harare (Grignon 2006, p.73). One of the most prominent criticisms of the report was that the DRC government's stake in the resource exploitation as well as the role of actors with ties to the government such as Zimbabwe and Namibia, were underplayed in the report. This fed into accusations that the reports were biased. As evident from the lack of acceptance of the information represented in the UN reports, there are still a number of question marks, which surround the neutrality and factual correctness of the information presented in the reports.

A second possible reason for the lack of prominence of the economic dimension in peace agreements after the publication of the UN reports is the potential of the data presented in the reports to undermine the entire peace process. The interests of actors in the DRC conflict have become so entrenched in the criminal, violent, and inequitable exploitation of natural resources that it has become virtually impossible to distinguish between economic and political interests. This has also been the case with the peace process. The main concern amongst participants in the peace process was that their own criminal economic behaviour would be exposed if economic issues were placed on the agenda and that they would be forced to give up some of their economic activities as a result (Grignon 2006, p.91). These actors who essentially derailed the peace process because they refused to have their economic interests tabled can be described as 'spoilers'. Stephen Stedman (2001, p.2) is of the opinion that one of the most important environmental sources of failure of peace initiatives is the presence of spoiler factions. Spoiler factions can be defined as groups who oppose peace agreements and even use violence to undermine peace initiatives in an effort to protect their own vested interests in the continuation of conflict.

Those involved in track one conflict resolution initiatives are thus faced with a multi-dimensional dilemma in terms of awareness of the role of the economic dimension in conflict. In the first instance, a complete lack of awareness automatically leads to the exclusion of the economic dimension as the result of ignorance. In spite of the availability of information, the economic dimension can also be excluded from the agenda due to disagreement on the factual data and neutrality of the information gatherers. Additionally, due to the role of spoiler factions the inclusion of the economic dimension could potentially derail the entire peace process. In terms of recommendations for the inclusion of the economic dimension in track one peace initiatives, it is necessary to turn to the question of how to address the aforementioned issues.



The first step in addressing the problem of awareness of the economic dimension is through the proliferation of information. The UN reports have served to address this to some extent but additional and continued research is needed. The UN reports were published in 2001 and since then no additional information of equal scale or comprehensiveness has been presented. In terms of track one initiatives to resolve the DRC conflict, the UN Panel of Experts' reports represent only the initial step towards increasing awareness of the role of the economic dimension. Even the most rudimentary economic data for African countries embroiled in civil conflict and tormented by weak state systems is often extremely hard to come by. Official economic data is frequently unavailable, grossly inaccurate or have to be inferred from other data available. David Malone and Heiko Nitzschke (2005, p.15) contend that there is a need for more systematic field-based research on the political economy of armed conflict. They specifically point towards a paucity of systematic field-based research on the dynamics of conflict that could suggest entry points for more effective policy actions.

Further, there are two options for dealing with the problem of neutrality and the presence of spoiler factions, which represent political obstacles to peace. The first option is opting to address the information and the second option is targeting the actors. In terms of targeting the information, there are a few recommendations on how to improve the neutrality and exclude bias from research. Targeting the information mainly hinges on the neutrality of the fact-finding party and the process of information gathering. Neutral parties, by definition, should not have any interest in the outcome of the conflict. Based on their neutrality, the research party will be able to base their findings on the evidence presented to them. The initial step would thus entail finding people to include in the neutral fact-finding party. The most central concern in this regard is determining that members of the party do not have any overt

stake in the outcome of the conflict. This may prove to be easier said than done so a good compromise might be to at least ensure that the body of fact-finders as a whole is neutral by including experts who differ in their opinions. Additionally the perception of neutrality can be enhanced by means of transparency. It is vital that members of the neutral fact-finding party reveal their underlying assumptions. All factual inquiries involve certain assumptions, or frameworks, through which data and evidence are collected and if neutral experts reveal these assumptions it is easier to evaluate where they stand in their field, what possible biases they might have, and ultimately just how neutral they really are (Schultz 2003).

In terms of the DRC, establishing a fact-finding mission perceived by all actors as neutral will certainly be an extremely challenging endeavour. The difficulties encountered in terms of agreeing on an impartial mediator for the ICD supports this notion. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement made provision for the appointment of a neutral facilitator to oversee the ICD. The appointment of a neutral facilitator proved to be an obstacle as it was difficult to reach an agreement among all the parties concerned. Finally, Sir Ketumile Masire, the former president of Botswana, was appointed on 15 December 1999. The ICD lagged behind the envisioned timeframe for its execution. Sir Ketumile Masire was only appointed two months after the deadline given to the participants for the conclusion of the dialogue. Masire took up his functions in January 2000 and the ICD remained stalled for an additional year (Rogier 2004; Grignon 2006, p.70). Despite the anticipated difficulties, it is still imperative to strive towards the proliferation of unbiased information regarding the economic dimension of the DRC conflict.

A second approach is to target the actors themselves. In terms of actors, perceptions of bias come into play and despite all efforts to ensure the neutral nature of the group gathering the information actors may still find grounds for accusing information to be biased. The peace agreements

continue to be regarded by many of the actors as suspect, containing hidden agendas, and are considered unlikely to make a difference on the ground. Economic agendas will have to be addressed if an end is to be found to conflict in the DRC. The question is then: How can the challenges posed by economic interests be addressed if those interests are not publicly acknowledged? (Grignon 2006, p.69) This ties into more specific questions such as: How do we go about changing actors' perceptions of the neutrality and bias of peace agreements? And how do we go about increasing the incentives for peace? Disagreement on the facts and information gathered during conflict is not uncommon. Such disagreement can contribute to the intractability of the conflict and this could also be the case in terms of the DRC conflict.

The answer to the problem comes back to sound analysis based on neutral information gathering, which would put a mediator in a position to gauge an actor's position and weaknesses. Reaching an agreement on conflict facts is, nonetheless, possible. Although agreement might not lead to complete resolution of a conflict, it does represent a step towards peace. Actors need to be more open and honest about their interests and economic stake in conflict. South Africa is a good example in terms of divulging their economic role in the conflict. The likelihood of actors being candid and open about their economic interests is, however, very slim. The key to convincing actors to reveal their economic interests is providing adequate incentive - making peace more attractive than conflict. Collier (1999, p.14) concurs with the principle of increasing the incentives for peace and bases his view on the evidence forthcoming from empirical data derived from research. Collier's studies point to the prominent role of economic factors in conflict and suggest that the solution to greed-motivated conflict is intimately linked to the ability to change the economic incentives for conflict. Collier (1994, p.14), more specifically, maintains that peace initiatives should place more emphasis on the role of economic agendas in conflict than has been the case in the past.

He argues, “effective policy should reduce both the economic incentives for rebellion, and the economic power of the groups which tend to gain from the continuation of social disorder”.

### **6.3.2. The Actor Dilemma**

The previous section dealt with the role of ‘spoilers’ and noted the importance of providing incentives for participation in peace initiatives and adhering to the agreements resulting from such initiatives. Conflicts often persist because they involve actors who were not party to the peace agreements and consequently have no obligation towards the conditions of the agreement. This raises the question of not only providing incentives for compliance to peace agreements but the more fundamental issue of inclusion. The reason why it is imperative to address the issue of inclusion is because as Grignon (2006, p.66) puts it “some actors who are not part of the peace negotiations are able to bring the DRC back to the brink of full-scale civil and international conflict.”

This raises the question: in what way is the inclusion of certain actors linked to addressing economic issues in terms of peace initiatives? The answer lies in the vested interests that certain actors have in the continuation of conflict. Certain actors’ interest in the continuation of conflict for profit is, for instance, intimately linked to resource exploitation (Porto 2002, p.16). “The argument that the peace process has not addressed economic interests is strengthened by an analysis of different actors’ primary interests and motivations to continue fighting. The ICD, which is currently the sole mechanism for dealing with economic issues, operated under the assumption that the five participating parties are the only actors that should decide the DRC’s economic and political future. The reality is that other actors – excluded from the ICD – continue to shape the DRC’s future” (Grignon 2006, p.78). Grignon (2006, p.67-68) is of the opinion that there is ample evidence to support the

fact that a number of local, national, and regional actors have developed economic interests in the continuation of war. He goes further by arguing that after several years of war both the actors who have been formally included in the peace process as well as a number of actors who have been excluded, continue to have deeply entrenched economic interests that are not being adequately addressed or openly acknowledged.

So why not merely include all actors and incorporate economic issues as a central issue on the agenda of peace initiatives? One of the difficulties faced in terms of including all actors in the peace process is the fact that it has been observed that some actors will refuse to participate in negotiations if economic interests are pertinently tabled and addressed. This is something that has been mentioned in the previous section. Considering the role of spoilers, one of the most important challenges of the peace process as pointed out in the previous section is to ensure that a sufficient number of important actors are provided with enough incentive to opt for peace. This section has a slightly different focus than the previous section and advocates the inclusion of actors that span the entire scope to include national and foreign actors and signatories and non-signatories of the Pretoria power-sharing agreement. It is imperative to lasting peace in the DRC that a mechanism, which includes a wide scope of actors in the negotiations, be established. Neither the ICD delegation nor the transitional government can be expanded indefinitely, but some kind of mechanism is still required to deal with such actors (Grignon 2006, p.79).

An additional requirement for lasting peace is the institutional ability of these actors to prevail over those who stand to lose from peace (Grignon 2006, p.68). This is easier said than done since in cases where rebel parties have been included in peace negotiations they have either ignored their commitments or their leadership has been unable to enforce compliance to the agreements. Part of the solution also lies in sound analysis since such analysis will reveal the economic interests of certain parties. This will provide

mediators or those leading peace initiatives with a point of departure in terms of who to include in the peace initiative and what kind of incentive they should be provided with.

### **6.3.3. Conceptualization of the Conflict**

The identification of the self-financing phenomenon drew attention to novel sources of finance, additional actors, and customized economic processes influencing the conflict arena in contemporary conflict. All these newly identified aspects of conflict fall under the umbrella of the economic dimension of conflict. As illustrated by Chapter Two, the economic dimension of conflict has been increasingly incorporated into the theoretical body of knowledge on conflict. Subsequently the inclusion of the economic dimension in the analysis of conflicts has also become inevitable. There has thus been a conceptual shift in terms of theory and analysis following the identification of the increased prominence of features of the economic dimension of conflict.

Policy choices for conflict resolution and prevention are deeply influenced by the way a given conflict is characterized (Ballentine and Sherman 2003, p.273-280). Drawing on the premise that sound conflict resolution is built on the foundation of comprehensive analysis, it would follow that it is necessary to include the economic dimension of conflict during the formulation of peace agreements. Track one initiatives should be built on a thorough understanding of all the dimensions of the conflict including the economic dimension. The economic dimension of conflict in Africa has been explored and conceptual frameworks developed but little research has been devoted to the interface between the economic dimensions of armed conflict and conflict resolution initiatives.

The focus on security and political issues as opposed to the economic dimension does play a role in the protracted nature of the conflict but a number of related issues also have a bearing on the conflict dynamics. At the

heart of the dilemma is the fact that the lack of attention given to the economic dimension reflects the manner in which the conflict is conceptualized. The conceptualization of the conflict as primarily resulting from security concerns is evident from the focus of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. The Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement represents the foundation of the entire peace process in the DRC and also represents the foundation of the manner in which DRC conflict as a whole is characterized.

Parties to the Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement considered economic activities to be a by-product of the war and a secondary matter with little bearing on the course of the peace process. The central issues considered to be of importance in terms of the peace process reflect the characterization of the conflict by both participants and mediators to the negotiations. The crux of the conflict in the DRC was conceptualized as the civil war on the domestic front and the involvement of neighbouring countries in the primarily internal conflict. In short, the Lusaka Agreement was “primarily a ceasefire agreement aimed at guaranteeing a permanent suspension of hostilities.” (Grignon 2006, p.71). Subsequent agreements, particularly the ICD, have been trapped in this conceptualization of the conflict. The ICD is frozen in a system of power relations and central issues that has changed considerably over the course of the conflict.

Based on the conflict reality in the DRC, as evident from the information presented in Chapter Four, the manner in which the Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement characterizes the conflict is deeply flawed. As Grignon (2006, p.66) points out that economic interest continue to be a “dimension of the Congo War and associated conflicts. While the occupation of Uvira and Bunia were undoubtedly motivated by economic concerns (both towns are key trading posts), there is evidence that the occupation of both Bukavu and Kanyabayonga and its surrounds were primarily driven by security concerns (to be sure, predatory economic behaviour, such as looting, also occurred).”

This specific conceptual framework is not only imposed by the wording of the Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement but also by the mindset of the actors involved in the peace process. This is reflected in statements such as this one: "South Africa believes that the Lusaka Cease-fire Agreement is the only framework within which stability and peace in the DRC can be achieved. South Africa, therefore, actively engages all parties involved in the DRC conflict as well as the regional leaders" (Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of South Africa 2006). Due to their particular conceptualization of the conflict, major actors involved in the conflict still view the conflict as primarily hinging on security issues and approach the resolution of the conflict based on this conceptualization. Additionally, there are also those actors who are well aware of the economic dimension of the conflict but will not openly admit their economic interests and might even withdraw from the negotiations if forced to table their economic stake in the conflict.

Despite the increase in awareness concerning the role of the economic dimension in the conflict in the DRC, economic issues did not initially feature on the agenda of the ICD. This links to the argument that the only way to sustain commitments to address the economic dimension is when enough incentive is provided - the ICD obviously did not succeed on this front. Economic issues were also not incorporated into the official agenda of the ICD during preparatory talks in Gaborone, Botswana, in July 2001 (Grignon 2006, p.72). The facilitators were of the opinion that economic issues were an essential item that should be placed on the official agenda of the dialogue.

The ICD created a commission, presided over by Albert Trevoedjre from Benin, to address the economic dimension of the conflict. The commission was devoted to economic and financial issues. In line with the objectives of the commission, a resolution was proposed recommending the establishment of an *ad hoc* parliamentary commission to look into all the contracts signed by the belligerents with foreign companies during the two wars (Grignon 2006, p.75). The incorporation of the economic dimension into the agenda of



negotiations, however, did not translate into its recognition as a pertinent feature of the conflict. Grignon (2006, p.75) argues that, "attention and effort remained cantered on the political and security commissions, where power sharing was supposed to take place." Resolutions from the Fourth Commission were mainly a "public relations exercise in response to the UN Panel of Experts' reports or attempts for delegates to restore some credibility to their economic management".

Despite the fact that peace instruments created since the Lusaka accords have referred to economic issues and called for an end to predation, illegal exploitation, and corrupt government, actual implementation of these arrangements has never included any serious attempts to address the real economic issues. On the contrary, economic issues have been separated from political agendas allowed for the continued exploitation of natural resources while peace initiatives remain focused on resolving political and security issues (Grignon 2006, p.91). The inability to move economic issues from an issue on the periphery of the negotiations to a central aspect of negotiations is due to a lack of commitment and the manner in which those involved in the negotiations conceptualized the conflict.

The manner in which the conflict is being conceptualized also raises the issue of reconsidering the choice of peace initiative employed to bring an end to the conflict. To clarify, it is worthwhile considering that part of the conceptual parameters imposed could be linked to the choice of peace initiative. Track one diplomacy is trapped in a narrowly defined security paradigm and therefore hamstrung by the inability to make the conceptual shift from war as "politics by other means" to conflict with strong economic undertones. The track one diplomacy approach to conflict resolution is fundamentally flawed due to its state-centric approach to conflict resolution, which also assumes a set of realist conditions. Further, one cannot assume rational choice behaviour in a situation, such as the one encountered in the DRC that is in

many senses devoid of structure and rational thought. One could therefore argue that track one initiatives by definition and nature leave very little room for including the economic dimension of conflict. In the light of this argument it might be worthwhile to explore alternative tracks in terms of conflict resolution in the DRC or to supplement track one initiatives to a greater extent.

A more holistic approach such as adopting multi-track diplomacy might thus be more suited to the resolution of the conflict in the DRC. Adopting a more inclusive peace initiative would be in line with the analysis of the conflict presented in this study. The comprehensive theoretical approach advocated in Chapter Two can be employed as a template for the inclusion of the economic dimension in peace agreements. Departing from the conviction that economic and security/political issues are mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive terms, a comprehensive approach to the consideration of the economic dimension in terms of analysis and policy formulation is considered to be the most sound option. The use of a modified 'political economy' approach, which integrates economic and political factors, is viewed to be the best approach to framing conflict analysis and the most comprehensive basis for the subsequent formulation of peace agreements. Adopting a 'greed-rebellion' approach to conflict to a greater extent would also shift the aims of policy intervention towards the reduction of the absolute and relative attraction of primary commodity predation and impairing the ability of Diaspora to fund rebel movements (Collier and Hoeffler 2000).

In terms of focusing policy intervention on the reduction of primary commodity predation and Diaspora funding it is important to bear in mind the self-financing nature of conflicts. The self-financing nature of conflicts draws attention to the question of financial viability in terms of conflict duration and the prospects for resolution. The prominence of self-financing in conflicts opens the opportunity to the exploitation of a number of loopholes that can be exploited in terms of peace agreements. For instance, globalization has

provided opportunities for self-financing while simultaneously rendering actors more vulnerable to international pressure. This opens the door to harness the power of international influence and also the targeting of sources of self-financing. The adoption of this outlook on conflict dynamics implies the use of intervention methods aimed at the reduction of economic benefit.

A caveat for conflict resolution, which becomes more prominent when targeting economic opportunities during conflict, is that civil war creates economic opportunities for a minority of actors even as they destroy them for the majority. It is necessary to consider which groups benefit from continued conflict and what the international community can do to reduce their power. More specifically it is important to keep in mind that conflicts usually feature a group of civilians who benefit from the economic exploitation of the conflict. The general targeting of economic exploitation without the consideration of this caveat might adversely affect this group of civilians. A careful consideration of who benefits from economic exploitation is therefore necessary and measures should target specific forms of exploitation by particular actors.

#### **6.3.4. The State as the Conflict Arena**

The conflict reality in the DRC is reflected by contemporary theories of the economic dimension of conflicts. The conflict in the DRC particularly underscores the increased importance of phenomenon such as self-financing, the emergence of a war economy, and causal linkages between conflict dynamics and natural resource exploitation. The presence of a failed state ties all these conflict dynamics together. The failed state provides an arena for elevated levels of exploitation, conflict with both domestic and transnational dimensions as well as the emergence of increased roles of new actors such as private companies.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the slow deterioration of the DRC state facilitated a situation in which individuals increasingly looked toward sources of security other than the state. Rebel groups exploited the fact that individuals were seeking security outside of the state and ignited rebellions on this basis. There is thus a link between the 'health' of the state system and the prospect for conflict on the domestic front. Orogun (2002) supports this notion by stating that the lack of democratic accountability, viable political pluralism, genuine national dialogue, and pragmatic solutions to the intrinsically domestic communal conflicts and ethnic animosities are at the root of recurrent regional security threats and broad political destabilization within the Great Lakes region.

The link between the state and conflict can be extended further into the regional realm. The weakening of the DRC state manifested in a lack of governance and porous borders. This coupled with the wealth of DRC's abundance of natural resources, the free flow of natural resources and a quest for alternative forms of identification has given rise to a situation providing ample incentive, whether strategic or economically driven, for actors to become involved in mutual spill-over conflicts between the DRC and neighbouring countries. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the DRC authorities have grown dependent on foreign military presence to facilitate benefit from their own resources. The conflict constitutes a multi-faceted security dilemma, which reveals the interconnectedness of actors and issues across national borders.

The state in the DRC forms the arena for conflict with both domestic and transnational dimensions and serves to support the emergence of increased roles of new actors, which span both these dimensions. According to Ballentine (2003, p.261-267) qualitative and quantitative studies identify critical governance failure by the state as the mediating variable between natural resource abundance and conflict risk. The establishment of a strong state should therefore be considered under the umbrella of the economic

dimension during the formulation of peace agreements. It is important to consider the state as part of the economic dimension of conflict in as much as there are strong links between incapacitated states and the involvement of new actors, increased exploitation of natural resources, the emergence of a transnational dimension due to porous borders, new conflict dynamics due to an increase in incentives for rebel recruitment etc. In short, in cases where the state is weak such as in the DRC, it created a unique arena for conflict with a profound impact on the economic dimension of conflict and in that sense needs to be considered in terms of conflict resolution initiatives.

One of the central challenges of the peace process in the DRC is to establish the basis for a strong state. Such a state should be anchored in national and local systems of good governance and should provide for the security and prosperity of its population but also the region as a whole. The establishment of a strong state is imperative since the “foundational peace instruments will shape economic governance in the post-transitional era” (Grignon 2006, p.63). According to Nzongola-Ntalaja (1998: 17), the existence of a strong state in the DRC is imperative for the maintenance of peace and the prevention of further violence in the Great Lakes region. The existence of a strong state would serve to shelter the DRC from external vulnerability and ameliorate a situation conducive to internal violence and revolt.

This would suggest that South Africa’s (and other external actors) involvement in the DRC to achieve sustainable peace might be misdirected by merely focusing on the transitional government or the holding of elections. This constitutes focusing on building a superstructure where the infrastructure is non-existent. To put it another way, it may be a focus on symptoms as opposed to dealing with root causes. From this perspective perhaps we need to think at rebuilding the very edifice of a new Congolese state. According to Foltz (1995) this would entail at least fundamental elements:

- A central political authority democratically constituted

- Control over national boundaries to prevent the penetration of external forces
- Control over national territory (implying an end to all militias and rebel formations)
- Capacity to extract resources from the domestic and international environment sufficient for the state to function and
- Control over the actions of its state agents.

#### **6.4. CONCLUSION**

New approaches to regional and international conflict management are required to deal with the changing nature of violent conflict in Africa. 'Classic' peacekeeping doctrine and conflict diplomacy have been shown to be ineffective tools in dealing with the 'asymmetric' and increasingly regional conflicts which have emerged around collapsed and failed states where distinctions between state and non-state actors have become blurred. In many African societies, countries and regions violent conflict has become the 'normal' state of affairs. Control of economic resources has become an important factor in motivating and sustaining armed conflicts. Complex political economies, which often hide behind the outward symbols of statehood and national sovereignty, have grown up around conflict. The challenge therefore is to transform regional and national political economies that are served by violent conflict into healthy systems based on political participation, social and economic inclusion, and respect for human rights and the rule of law. The economic dimension of conflict should not only be taken into account in as much as it manifests in terms of actors and issues but also in terms of its impact on conflict dynamics. Thayer (2002, p.1) argues that internal conflicts have recently become more protracted in nature and attributes this to the increased prominence of the economic dimension, which adds an additional dimension to conflicts hence making them more complex and convoluted in terms of issues and actors. These shifts in focus should also inform the formulation of peace agreements in as much as they are

based on observations made in terms of unfolding conflict dynamics and will contribute to the applicability, relevance and eventual success of such peace initiatives.

Based on the information presented in this chapter, the following recommendations can be made in terms of including the economic dimension in track one conflicts initiatives in the DRC as a means of increasing the prospects for sustained peace. These recommendations can also have wider applicability in terms of other peace initiatives.

- *Ensure the proliferation of information* - Information proliferation should serve as the first step towards increased awareness of the role of the economic dimension in the DRC conflict. In this regard the focus should specifically be on the proliferation of systematic field-based research on the political economy of armed conflict, which could suggest entry points for more effective policy actions. It is also important to ensure the neutrality of both the information and the information gatherers.
- *Increase the incentives for actors to be more open and honest about their interests and economic stake in conflict* - Effective policy should reduce both the economic incentives for rebellion, and the economic power of the groups which tend to gain from the continuation of social disorder.
- *Establish a mechanism for the inclusion of a wide scope of actors in peace initiatives* - Conflicts often persist because they involve actors who were not party to the peace agreements and consequently have no obligation towards the conditions of the agreement. Securing lasting peace is dependant on the institutional ability of the actors who are party to the agreement to prevail over those who stand to lose from peace.
- *Peace initiatives have to be freed from a conceptualization of the conflict based on the Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement* - The Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement represents a system of power relations and central issues that has changed considerably over the course of the conflict and can not be adopted as a rigid template for future peace initiatives.

- *Include the economic dimension as a central conflict issue on the agenda* - The inclusion of the economic dimension in peace initiatives should move beyond merely representing a public relations exercise in response to the UN Panel of Experts' reports or an attempt for delegates to restore some credibility to their economic management. Peace initiatives should move beyond mere superficial inclusion of the economic dimension and towards actual implementation of provisions aimed at serious attempts to address the real economic issues.
- *Explore alternative tracks in terms of conflict resolution in the DRC* - Alternatives to track one conflict resolution initiatives include more multi-track diplomacy. The comprehensive theoretical approach advocated in Chapter Two can be employed as a template for the inclusion of the economic dimension in peace agreements. Departing from the conviction that economic and security/political issues are mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive terms, a comprehensive approach to the consideration of the economic dimension in terms of analysis and policy formulation is considered to be the most sound option. The use of a modified 'political economy' approach, which integrates economic and political factors, is viewed to be the best approach to framing conflict analysis and the most comprehensive basis for the subsequent formulation of peace agreements. Adopting a 'greed-rebellion' approach to conflict to a greater extent would also shift the aims of policy intervention towards the reduction of the absolute and relative attraction of primary commodity predation and impairing the ability of Diaspora to fund rebel movements.
- *Exploit the loopholes created by the changing conflict dynamics in the DRC* - The adoption of this outlook on conflict dynamics implies the use of intervention methods aimed at the reduction of economic benefit, which would harness the power of international influence and target sources of self-financing.
- *Targeting specific forms of economic exploitation* - When targeting economic exploitation, keep in mind that such measures might adversely affect civilians who have also become dependent on economic



exploitation. A careful consideration of who benefits from economic exploitation is therefore necessary and measures should target specific forms of exploitation by particular actors.

- *Establish a strong state in the DRC* - Qualitative and quantitative studies identify critical governance failure by the state as the mediating variable between natural resource abundance and conflict risk. The establishment of a strong state should therefore be considered under the umbrella of the economic dimension during the formulation of peace agreements. Such a state should be anchored in national and local systems of good governance and should provide for the security and prosperity of its population but also the region as a whole. The existence of a strong state would serve to shelter the DRC from external vulnerability and ameliorate a situation conducive to internal violence and revolt.

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