

**THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PEACE, SECURITY,  
DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREAT LAKES  
REGION, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:**

**A FRAMEWORK FOR MULTILATERAL PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY**

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## ABSTRACT

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is recognized by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as a threat to international peace and security, due to its impact on the entire Great Lakes region of the African continent. Therefore, for the stability of this region, any feasible solution should take into consideration the regional dimensions of this conflict. Many diplomatic initiatives undertaken in this regard have thus focused on how to end the hostilities in the region.

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region was also convened to address the regional factor of the conflict and therefore prevent further conflict in the area. How this Conference addresses this regional dimension in order to prevent a return to violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo and therefore to bring about sustainable peace in the region, is the main focus of this study. The basic premise on which this research is based, is that this Conference is the first gathering of all countries in the region to address the causes underlying the conflict in the region, thereby rendering it a framework around which to prevent violence from flaring up again in the DRC.

A literature review of the theory behind preventive diplomacy is discussed in-depth throughout the study, chiefly applying the notion expressed by Lund (1996: 37) that alternative actions should be applied during periods of socio-economic, political or regional and international upheaval, in order to avoid the use of armed force and/or the manipulation of political disputes. The aim of this study is to apply this theory in the framework of the Conference, primarily because the diplomatic initiatives undertaken thus far have created an environment of unstable peace in which preventive diplomacy can work.

**Keywords:** conflict resolution; preventive diplomacy; International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region Democratic Republic of Congo; policy tools.

## DECLARATION

I declare that *The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region, and Conflict Resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A Framework for Multilateral Preventive Diplomacy* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

*Umba Dindelo (Mr)*

*May 2006*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for a dissertation on preventive diplomacy emanated from an observation of the situation prevailing in the Great Lakes region, a region where the atrocities caused by the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo have caused great consternation. The participants in this conflict are not only Congolese citizens but also foreign nationals fighting their own wars on Congolese soil. Therefore, the question came to mind: why not work on the prevention of violence instead of seeking solutions that do not alleviate the misery of the Congolese people? When reviewing the existing literature on the Democratic Republic of Congo situation, I found that preventive diplomacy could be applied in order to bring about resolution of conflict in the country, and in the Great Lakes region, especially within the framework of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region, which was convened to address the regional dimension of this conflict.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADA	Allied Democratic Army
ADF	<i>Forces Démocratiques Alliés</i> /Allied Democratic Forces
ADP	<i>Alliance Démocratique des Peuples</i>
AFDL	<i>Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo</i>
ALIR	<i>Armée de Libération du Rwanda</i>
AU	African Union
BDGL	<i>Banque de Développement des Grands Lacs</i>
CEPGL	<i>Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs</i>
CNDD	<i>Conseil National de Défense de la Démocratie</i>
CNRD	<i>Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie</i>
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DDR	Demobilization, Disarmament, Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAR	<i>Forces Armées Rwandaises</i>
FAPC	<i>Forces Armées du Peuple du Congo</i>
FDD	<i>Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie</i> /Forces for the Defence of Democracy
FDLR	<i>Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda</i>
FIPI	<i>Front pour l'Intégration et la Paix en Ituri</i>
FLEC	Front for the Liberation of the Enclave Kabinda
FNI	<i>Front pour l'Intégration Nationale</i>
FNL	<i>Forces Nationales de Libération</i>
FPDC	<i>Front Populaire pour la Démocratie au Congo</i>
FPRI	<i>Force Patriotique de Résistance en Ituri</i>
FROLINA	<i>Front National de Libération</i>
ICGL	International Conference on Great Lakes
IDP	Internally Displaced People
JMC	Joint Military Commission
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MLC	<i>Mouvement de Libération du Congo</i>
MRLZ	<i>Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre</i>



MONUC	<i>Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo</i>
NALU	<i>Armée Nationale pour la Libération de l'Ouganda/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda</i>
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIF	National Islamic Front
PACMT	Political Agreement on Consensual Management of the Transition
PALIPEHUTU	<i>Parti de Libération du Peuple Hutu</i>
PTA	Preferential Trade Area
PUSIC	<i>Parti pour l'Unité pour la Sauvegarde de l'Intégrité du Congo</i>
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PRP	<i>Parti Révolutionnaire du Peuple</i>
RCD	<i>Rassemblement des Congolais pour la Démocratie</i>
RCD/K-ML	<i>Rassemblement des Congolais pour la Démocratie/Kisangani-Mouvement de Libération</i>
RCD/N	<i>Rassemblement des Congolais pour la Démocratie/National</i>
RDF	Rwandan Defence Forces
REC	Regional Economic Community
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALWs	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
UN	United Nations
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPC	<i>Union des Patriotes Congolais</i>
USA	United States of America
WNBF	West Nile Bank Front

## *Chapter One*

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Identification of the Research Theme**

The world continues to be plagued by a host of destructive conflicts between groups, factions and nations, which take place at terrible costs to those directly and indirectly involved in these situations. After studying the conflict situation in different regions of the world, Wallensteen (2002: 26-27) concludes that Europe, which for a large part of the Cold War, saw few manifested armed conflicts, was the first region to experience a sharp rise in conflicts. In the main, these conflicts were associated with the break-up of the Soviet and Yugoslav unions. The number of conflicts escalated from two in 1989 to ten in 1993, and by 1997, they were down to zero, only to rise again to two in 1998 (Northern Ireland and Kosovo), and three in 1999 (Kosovo, Dagestan and Chechnya)

In Africa, by the mid-1990s, this continent appeared to be a chief beneficiary of the outcome of the end of the Cold War. In fact, wars on the continent that had been sustained by the Cold War, were on the verge of ending. This was certainly the case in the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa. From fourteen wars in 1989 and seventeen in 1990 and 1991, the number dropped to nine in 1995, only to increase to fourteen by 1998. New wars were experienced in the Horn of Africa (Eritrea vs Ethiopia), as well as those of greater complexity in Central Africa. Other regions show a permanent pattern of conflict, such as the Gulf War in the Middle East, tensions between India and Pakistan in South Asia, Indonesia, and East Timor.

For the world as a whole, the total number of armed conflicts currently taking place, is considerable. In spite of great efforts made at conflict resolution, it appears that for each conflict solved between parties with international mediation, a new one emerges, requiring the international community to deal with same or similar methods in resolving conflicts. This repeated experience of failure at conflict resolution fuels interest in preventive conflict

management. It also shows the need to determine the underlying causes of conflict, in order to find remedies that combine prevention with social changes.

According to Fisher (1997: 4), since 1945, most international conflicts have eroded state authority in dealing with armed insurgencies by ethnic, religious, or ideological groups seeking autonomy or protection from prosecution. In the particular case of the African continent, most of the conflicts that occurred in the period spanning 1989 to 2003, were internal in nature.

Whatever the nature may be, a conflict has a negative impact on the international order, for which remedies should be found. Therefore, how to resolve conflicts has become a concern for scholars and political leaders alike. Many means have been suggested to fulfil this the enormous task of conflict resolution. It would, however, be far more advantageous to all concerned to prevent conflicts because their prevention is less costly than their resolution.

In the case of the African continent, most of the conflicts since the end of the Cold War have been conflicts within sovereign states. These internal conflicts have proven, in Africa and elsewhere, to be much harder to prevent, manage and resolve than inter-state conflicts.

The Great Lakes region is one of these affected areas, with intra-state conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. In fact, in the African post-Cold War era, the conflicts in the African Great Lakes region are immensely complex, as they are intertwined over a vastly populated, and resource-rich region. A multifaceted regional conflict was initially created, centering on the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda, which then, by way of refugee migratory movements, guerilla movements and interventions, came to engulf a number of states in the region (Wallenstein, 2002: 27).

When viewed in terms of a pattern, the Great Lakes region resembles a conflict system in which sub-conflict systems exist. As with any pattern, which is made up of different elements, linked together to produce a whole in which the attributes of the components contribute to the functioning of the whole, the Great Lakes conflict system accordingly comprises many conflicts in the region. As with all such situations, in which interactions between sub-systems

flourish, the internal conflicts in the region become inter-connected. For this reason, one cannot consider the resolution of one conflict without taking into account the others.

Many diplomatic initiatives were taken by the United Nations, as well as throughout the African continent, in order to resolve the complex conflict in the Great Lakes region. However, most of these concentrated on how to put an end to the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and while doing so, ignored the regional dimensions of this conflict. On the other hand, as explained above, conflicts existing in different countries within the region are intertwined, and therefore impact upon one other. This fact makes the DRC conflict a complex one, in that the involvement of each country and the shifting of alliances have become a manner in which to deal with the respective internal conflicts. Therefore, it was not surprising that these initiatives were unable to bring about sustainable peace in the region as a whole.

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region was initially convened for the purpose of addressing the problems of the Great Lakes region in its entirety. This event highlights the notion that a holistic solution could only be found if causes underlying the conflicts were addressed at a regional level, due to prevalent interactions between these internal conflicts.

The idea of an global conference on the Great Lakes region was in the making since the early 1990s. After the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, this initiative was launched via the United Nations Security Council Statements of 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1994, and of 24<sup>th</sup> of April 1997 (*Comité Préparatoire National*, 2004: 5). The purpose of the forum was to address the regional dimensions destabilizing the area, particularly, the conflict in the DRC, which affects all neighbouring countries.

From a theoretical perspective, this research study proposes the use of multilateral preventive diplomacy as a technique for obtaining stability in the international system. In fact, the idea behind preventive diplomacy is that the sooner a problem is detected, the easier it is to stop and the less the damage likely to be caused (Solomon, 2003: 2).

As this form of diplomacy operates within the life cycle of conflict, at the level of unstable peace, between peacetime diplomacy and crisis diplomacy (Lund, 1996: 41-42), multilateral preventive diplomacy can be used to address the underlying causes of conflicts. Indeed, it would be best to use preventive diplomacy before the situation escalates into violence, or after the parties have signed a peace agreement, or even once a ceasefire has been declared, to prevent the dispute from reoccurring. It could also be used whilst conflict is taking place to prevent its escalation and intensification. When viewed as a whole, the Democratic Republic of Congo is in the afore-mentioned situation, even if certain parts of the country, such as Ituri, North and South Kivu, and North Katanga, are in another state of the cycle, as described by Lund (1996) above.

From a practical point of view, this research is a case study that proposes the use of multilateral preventive diplomacy within the framework of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, for conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Given the fact that the Congolese conflict occupies external dimensions, this Conference could provide the framework for addressing the regional factors of the conflict. In fact, if the DRC is the theatre of battle, the ethnic struggle in Rwanda and Burundi is the epicentre of the conflict in the Great Lakes region. Furthermore, the fact that each country involved has its own internal conflict with which to cope, through its involvement in the conflict in the DRC, means that only a regional framework that addresses regional dimensions can bring about lasting solutions to the region.

The rationale for adopting the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region as a case study, is that most diplomatic initiatives in the resolution of the DRC conflict have focused on how to put an end to the ongoing hostilities in the country, whilst ignoring the interaction resulting from neighbouring conflicts. The International Conference is therefore the first forum that has taken into consideration the impact of national war on neighbouring nations, in the resolution of this conflict. Indeed, the long period of war in the region, particularly in Burundi, the DRC, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda, has left a number of problems, which have brought about insecurity in the entire regional bloc. This signifies an increasing number of armed groups, the proliferation of small

arms and illicit trafficking, the flow of refugees in neighbouring countries and internally displaced people within the countries, the degradation of infrastructure and environment, as well as a lack of cooperation, due to a feeling of animosity among the people in the region.

Therefore it was necessary to address all the issues that have sustained instability within the regional framework, in order to restore peace, security, democracy and development, not only in each country, but also within the Great Lakes region.

The research theme is defined in conceptual, geo-political and temporal terms. From a conceptual point of view, multilateral preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution and the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, are key variables at play. Conflict resolution essentially aims at attacking the root causes underlying the conflict situations. As mentioned, the International Conference for Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region is aimed at addressing the regional dimensions of the DRC conflict. To this end, preventive diplomacy would be the best means considering the conditions under which it would be applied.

At a practical level, the field of study is demarcated in geo-political terms to include the DRC, as well as external parties to the conflict (Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda). Since the regional dimension requires careful consideration, the geographic scope of the study is extended to include all neighbouring countries, due to their influence in the DRC conflict (Angola, Congo Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia).

From a temporal perspective, the main focus is on the period from 1994 to June 2005 – a period that encapsulates the most energetic attempts at conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo. During this period, there were many developments in the countries involved in the conflict in the Great Lakes region. In Burundi, the assassination of the elected Hutu president accentuated the Hutu-Tutsi conflict and culminated in a new coup in 1996, forcing many Hutus to flee to neighbouring countries. In Rwanda, during this period, the Rwandan Patriotic Front succeeded in securing power, a consequence of which was the emigration of the ex Rwandan Army Forces (ex-FAR) to the then Zaire and Tanzania. In

Uganda, rebels continued to fight Museveni's regime from Sudan and the DRC. In Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), with the support of Uganda, intensified their armed struggle against the Khartoum regime. In the DRC, the developments in Rwanda and Burundi worsened the situation for an already fragile regime undermined by internal problems. Two wars backed by foreign countries (Rwanda, Uganda, and to some extent, Burundi) in 1996 and 1998 respectively, changed the balance of power existing in the region, with the overthrow of Mobutu, and the coming to power of Kabila (Braeckman, 1999: 67).

The same period saw several diplomatic initiatives by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) or the African Union (AU), as well as other sub-regional organizations such as SADC (the Southern African Development Community), to resolve the internal problems of each country, separately. In the case of the conflict in the DRC, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (1999), the Pretoria Agreement (2002), the Lusaka Agreement (2002), and the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (2003). It should be observed that while these attempts did not yield a sustainable resolution in terms of peace and stability in the Great Lakes region, they did, however, at the very least, create conditions to facilitate preventive diplomacy within the framework of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the region.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Research Problem**

The Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia constitute the African Great Lakes region. In the context of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes, other countries such as Angola, Congo Brazzaville, Republic of Central Africa, Sudan and Kenya, have also been included.

The geo-political situation of the region clearly explains the involvement of the countries of the region in this complex conflict, which has as a defined point of departure, the Hutu-Tutsi struggle for the control of power in Rwanda and Burundi.

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been fragmenting along ethnic and provincial lines for more than three decades. From 1965 until his fall from power, Mobutu played the colonial game of ‘divide and rule’. This game fuelled clashes between army units, tribes, provinces, and neighbouring states. Mass refugee movements from Burundi and Rwanda from 1993 onwards, further destabilized its eastern border.

Following the April 1994 genocide of the Tutsi ethnic group in Rwanda, refugee camps along the then Zaire's eastern borders with Burundi and Rwanda received an influx of more than one million people fleeing reprisals from the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). At the same time, Burundi's Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), and the military wing of the National Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD), established themselves in the camps.

Over time, Eastern Zaire's complex rivalries and numerous guerilla armies plotting the overthrow of Mobutu, led to the establishment of the AFDL (*Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Kinshasa*). The refugee camps, where the Hutu militias organized themselves, was an uneasy refuge for the military groupings. Hutu militias formed alliances with opponents of the AFDL, including Zaire's armed forces, as well as certain ethnic groups in the area opposed to the Tutsi.

Uganda's President Museveni was a solid ally of the Tutsi-dominated regimes in Rwanda and Burundi. Tutsis from both Rwanda and Zaire were principal participants in the National Resistance Movement, which defeated the Obote regime and brought Museveni to power in 1986. In turn, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) assumed power in Rwanda with Ugandan support. Uganda's main concerns at the time were insecurity along its borders and its landlocked status. More than one group of rebel militias shelled border towns and launched cross-border raids from either Eastern Zaire or Southern Sudan. These militias included the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and the Allied Democratic Army (ADA). Uganda backed the SPLA, seeking to overthrow Sudan's ruling National Islamic Front (NIF), which seized power in a coup in 1989.



Uganda's involvement in both Zaire and Sudan helped to promote Khartoum's increased support for the Zaire/Hutu alliance and the anti-Museveni rebels operating along Uganda's borders.

Tanzania is allied with Hutu militias from Burundi (FDD, Palipehutu, and Frolina) and provided them with refugee camps, from which they launched cross-border attacks.

Kenya, for its part, housed extremist Rwandan Hutu leaders in Nairobi. In the past, Kenya had supported anti-Museveni rebels and had been supportive of the Mobutu regime. Diplomatic relations had already deteriorated between Uganda and Kenya, and in 1996, Kenya closed the Rwandan Embassy in Nairobi.

The contemporary conflict in the Great Lakes region mainly involves four countries: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. But its consequences extend beyond the conflicting countries, and into neighbouring ones. To fully understand the background to the Congolese conflict, events both internal and external to the country, and even a combination of the two, need to be taken into account. This is because the conflict in the Congo must be seen in its regional context, or alternatively as a part of the overall situation.

The main focus of this research study is to explore how the International Conference in question is equipped to address the regional dimension of the conflict in the DRC, in order to prevent the return to violence, and therefore bring about sustainable peace in the region. In addition, this research study seeks to provide recommendations on how to reinforce this peace.

The basic premise of this study is the fact that the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region is the first gathering of all countries in the region to address the causes underlying the conflict in the region. Therefore, it can be viewed as a framework to prevent violence from flaring up again in the DRC. The Conference aims to provide an opportunity to address the underlying causes of this conflict, and especially its regional dimension.

As stated previously, there were many diplomatic initiatives between 1994 and 2005, aimed at resolving internal problems of the countries directly involved in the conflict system of the Great Lakes region, and the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region is another of these. But the difference between the previous initiatives and this Conference is the fact that its objectives are focused on the regional implications of the conflict, the theatre of operations of which is the Democratic Republic of Congo.

### **1.3 Literature Survey**

In constructing the theoretical framework of analysis, two main concepts have been employed, which were applied to the case study of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region and the DRC, namely:

1. Multilateral preventive diplomacy, and
2. Conflict resolution.

For the purpose of this study, a variety of data sources were used, but the emphasis is on secondary sources such as books, journal articles, and newspaper publications. However, a substantial number of primary sources were also utilised, especially with regard to the process of conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo and to the development of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region.

The concept of preventive diplomacy is dealt with in Lund's *Preventing Violent Conflict: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy* (1996), where a detailed study of this concept is made, tracing its origins and its context in the full life cycle of a typical conflict, showing the vast toolbox of approaches available, ranging from military and non-military approaches to development and governance approaches. Solomon's *Towards Sustainable Peace: The Theory*

*and Practice of Preventive Diplomacy in Africa* (2003) goes beyond the theoretical explanation of preventive diplomacy to apply this concept in the actual case studies of some African conflicts, namely Sierra Leone, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Mozambique. Other important works on this topic, which were employed in the study, include the following: Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda for Peace* (1992); Walvaren, K., *Early Warning and Conflict Prevention*; (1998); *The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict* (1997); Miall, H. et al., *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts* (1999); Adedeji, A., *Comprehending and Mastering African Conflict: The Search for Sustainable Peace and Good Governance* (1999); and Lund, M. et al., *Peace-Building and Conflict Prevention: A Practical Guide* (1999).

The theoretical aspects of conflict and conflict resolution have been reviewed in the works of Burton, J., *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* (1990) and *Resolving Deep-Rooted Conflict: a Handbook* (1987); Azar, E., *The Theory of Protracted Social Conflicts and the Challenge of Transforming Conflict Situation* (1983); Lind and Sturman, *Scarcity and Surfeit: the Ecology of Africa's Conflict*; (2002); Zartman, W., *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars* (1995), and Brown, M., *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (1996).

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is featured in a variety of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are mainly official United Nations resolutions and agreements between conflicting parties, such as the Lusaka Accord (2002), the Pretoria Accord (2002), and the Luanda Accord (1999). These sources were supplemented by media reports and my own personal participation in several meetings dealing with the conflict at hand, such as the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (2002 and 2003), the negotiation process of the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement (2002), and the negotiation of the Transitional Period Constitution. The minutes of these meetings were also very useful in the course of this study.

Secondary sources comprise books and articles, such as Nzongola-Ntalaja's *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A people's history* (2002), in which he describes the democracy movement in the Congo from the standpoint of popular resistance to exploitation and repression, for a better social and political order. Based on this premise, he analyzes this movement through

history from Léopold to Kabila and concludes that the movement has failed to fulfil the people's aspirations for democracy and economic development because these aspirations were in marked discordance with the narrow class interests and political culture of the leaders of the movement. Other secondary sources include Braeckman, C., *Le Dinosaur: le Zaïre de Mobutu* (1992), *Terre Africaine: Burundi, Rwanda, Zaïre: Les Racines de la Violence* (1996), *L'Enjeu Congolais: L'Afrique Centrale Après Mobutu* (1999); Malan, M. and Boshoff, H., "A 90-Day Plan to Bring Peace to the DRC? An Analysis of the Pretoria Agreement of 30 July 2002" (2002); Kabemba, K., *Whither the DRC? Causes of Conflict in the DRC, and the Way Forward* (1999); Ngbanda, N., *Ainsi Sonne le Glas: Les Derniers Jours du Maréchal Mobutu* (1998); Sindyigaya, J.M., *Grands Lacs, Démocratie ou Ethnocratie* (1998), and the United Nations, *Rapport Final du Groupe d'Experts sur l'Exploitation Illégale des Ressources Naturelles et Autres Formes de Richesses de la République Démocratique du Congo* (2002).

With regard to the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, this study has utilised primary sources such as various United Nations documents, as well as the minutes of numerous Preparatory Committees.

The literature survey indicates that many of the existing works have focused on the means to resolve the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Therefore, they do not take into consideration the regional dimension in resolving this conflict, or if so, not in-depth. This study differs with previous studies on the subject in that it concentrates more on the regional dimensions in the resolution of the Congolese conflict.

## **1.4 Methodology**

From a methodological perspective, a distinction is made between approaches and methods, and between units and levels of analysis. The descriptive-analytical and historical approaches are used in tracing the background of the conflict in the DRC and its developments. Features of the historical approach are also evident, since the study covers a period of more than one decade. The analytical approach helps in uncovering underlying causes of the conflict because

a better understanding of the causes of such conflicts would increase the possibility of preventing them.

The method of research is inductive, although a deductively constructed conceptual framework is used for analytical purposes. Priority is given to the qualitative and not quantitative method, due to the political nature of the issue under consideration.

The main unit of analysis is the Democratic Republic of Congo, but the complexity of the conflict requires a regional overview. Therefore, the level of analysis oscillates between national and regional levels, due to the multifaceted nature of the issue under study.

## **1.5 Structure of the Research**

The study is structured into six chapters, generally comprising a conceptual framework, a main body and a conclusion.

*Chapter One* serves as a general introduction outlining the research problem, demarcating it in conceptual and practical terms, and focusing on the selection of appropriate methods and approaches towards the study. This chapter justifies the rationale for adopting the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development as a case study. It also provides an overview of the literature used and the structure of the research.

In *Chapter Two*, theoretical concepts are defined, described and analyzed, in order to provide a conceptual or theoretical framework for analysis. In constructing the framework of this research, the meaning of the notion of conflict, conflict resolution and preventive diplomacy are examined in great depth, proving practical examples of their proposed use in the Great Lakes region.

*Chapter Three* analyzes the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo according to the theoretical framework defined in the second chapter. The main emphasis is on its history and development, with particular focus on its underlying causes.

*Chapter Four* deals with the diplomatic initiatives to settle the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo before the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region. It analyzes and assesses different peace initiatives from the beginning of the conflict, up to its re-emergence, as well as in the framework of the United Nations (UN) and that of the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It is aimed at responding to the question of why the initiatives have thus far failed.

*Chapter Five* relates to the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development, and Preventive Diplomacy for Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes region. It analyzes how this Conference addresses the regional dimensions of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and consequently, how to strengthen peace in the Great Lakes region.

*Chapter Six* reflects on the research conducted throughout this study, and the way forward in resolving the Congolese impasse through multilateral preventive diplomacy, via the implementation of conflict tools.

## *Chapter Two*

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Conflict and Conflict Resolution**

##### **2.1.1 Theory of Conflict**

The international system witnessed profound changes in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Compared to the Cold War period, which was characterised by the predominance of inter-state conflicts, the post Cold War era is mostly defined by intra-state conflicts (Miall et al., 1999: 27). These conflicts were called by Holsti (1996) and Kaldor (1999) “wars of the third kind” or “new wars” and are the visible signs of their evolution and the way they are conducted. According to Porto (2002: 5), the conflicts do not have a precise beginning, since in the vast majority of cases there are no formal declarations of war that would indicate the initiation of hostilities. Moreover, they lack defining battles, decisive campaigns and formal endings and last for a long time. They are conducted by loosely knit groups of regular troops, militias, cells, and occasionally locally based warlords under little or no central authority, and finally, they often involve regulars on one side and armed groups on the other side (fighting guerrillas, terrorists and civilians).

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo formally started in 1996 with a rebellion led by Laurent Kabila and his AFDL (*Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo*). The AFDL was created on 18 October 1996, nearly two months after the beginning of the offensive. It was a coalition of four groups: Kabila’s own PRP (*Parti Révolutionnaire du Peuple*), the *Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie* (CNRD), a small Lumumbist group established in the Eastern Congo, the *Alliance Démocratique des Peuples* (ADP), a grouping of Congolese Tutsi led by Déogratias Bugera, and the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre*

(MRLZ), an opposition group centred around the Bashi of South Kivu led by Anselme Masasu Ningada (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002: 225).

Most of the international conflicts witnessed during this period have eroded state authority and involved armed insurgency by ethnic, religious, or ideological groups seeking autonomy or protection from persecution. Often, these conflicts cut across state borders, where the same groups have been separated by accidents of history or the arbitrary demarcation of boundaries during the colonial period. (Fisher, 1997: 4). The Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda and Burundi has gone beyond these states' territories to impact on the Democratic Republic of Congo. The rebellions led by the *Armée Nationale pour la Libération de l'Ouganda* (NALU) in Uganda, also affected the Democratic Republic of Congo.

According to Jackson (2002: 30), these internal conflicts can be transformed into wider international conflicts, inasmuch as they become a threat to international peace and security when fighting spills over into neighbouring states, or the refugee-flows upset regional stability. The involvement of Rwanda and Uganda in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is mainly motivated by the instability caused by Rwandan and Ugandan rebels launching attacks from Congolese territory.

Internal conflicts are also transformed into international conflict when other states are directly or indirectly drawn into the conflict through support to the various sides of the conflict, in the form of supplying weapons, training, or other materials, as in the case in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where Rwanda and Uganda backed the rebel group through armed support and training.

Internal conflicts become international when non-governmental actors, such as rebel movements, militias and warlords, often receive financial and political support from Diaspora communities or ethnic kin separated by international borders. Finally, this also occurs when the international community decides to send in a peacekeeping force, or take such an active interest in the fighting that it becomes a matter of international concern.



Zartman (1995: 4) has analyzed internal conflicts that have dominant international dimensions and concluded that they can be subdivided into four categories: Internal rebellions that mirror regional conflicts because of transnational populations and interests, as in the Horn of Africa; Internal conflicts in which the overarching state identity breaks down and the component pieces draw in external support from their “brothers” in neighbouring states, as in Northern Ireland; Internal conflicts in which the search for external sources of power has turned into proxy wars for distant powers, as in Angola and Mozambique; Internal conflicts in which one or both parties have enjoyed sanctuary or support, or both, from outside, as in South Africa.

As one can see, conflict is a phenomenon that involves two or several parties. As stated above, the international system is now witnessing a predominance of internal conflicts in comparison to the Cold War period. However, most of these internal conflicts have international dimensions.

The internal conflict frequently involves neighbouring states in one way or another. Brown (1996: 25-26) states that regional dynamics of internal conflict are poorly understood and to fully understand these dynamics, a distinction has to be made between the effects of internal conflict on neighbouring states and on the actions that neighbouring states take with respect to these conflicts.

The effects of internal conflicts on neighbouring states include refugee problems and military entanglements. They also include economic repercussions, given the fact that the economies of contiguous states are often interconnected and suffer political instability. By contrast neighbouring states also take actions with regard to internal conflicts, such as interventions aimed at relieving humanitarian suffering, interventions aimed at safeguarding national interests and restoring regional peace and security, protective interventions designed to shield people against ethnic cleansing, opportunistic interference designed to further political economic, or military interests, and opportunistic invasions.

The internal wars in Rwanda and Burundi also resulted in a flood of refugees to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania. This situation, in particular in the case of the DRC, had brought instability to the eastern part of the country where the former *Forces Armées Rwandaises* started to launch attacks against the Rwandan Government. The same situation was observed with the different Burundian rebel groups operating from Congolese soil. In Uganda, government military activities against the NALU, the *Forces Démocratiques Alliés* (ADF), and very recently the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), forced these militiamen to find refuge in the DRC, causing tension on the border between the two countries. During the rebellion led by the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (AFDL), Rwanda, and Uganda, and to a lesser extent Burundi, played a major role in support of rebel groups fighting the Mobutu regime and after its demise, the Kabila government.

If the observation of conflict shows the predominance of intra-state conflicts in the post Cold War era, understanding them must lead to the analysis of the causes underlying these conflicts. The phenomenon of conflict has always been of interest to scholars in their attempts to understand the origin of these conflicts, in order to try and find a way to solve them. Solving them implies understanding of the causes of the conflict. Therefore it is important to analyze the causes underlying the conflict phenomenon in the international system.

Considering the fact that the post Cold War is dominated by intra-state conflicts, the emphasis is on the causes underlying internal conflicts in general and the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular.

#### **2.1.1.1 Causes of Conflicts**

Many scholars have explained the phenomenon of conflict and several theories have been advanced. For that purpose, they looked at the groups involved in conflict and their objectives.

Burton explained this phenomenon in terms of unfulfilled basic human needs to refer to what he called “deep-rooted conflicts” (1987: 63). According to this academic, deep-rooted conflicts are not based on negotiable interests and positions, but on underlying needs that cannot be compromised. Besides the needs for identity and participation, he identifies basic needs for consistency, security, recognition and effective justice.

The conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi are examples of non-negotiable human needs, as they relate to the identity of the two major ethnic groups constituting these two countries, namely the Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority. Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002: 219) explains in detail the origins of this conflict in the colonial period of both Rwanda and Burundi, where the colonial power had used the principle of “divide and rule” and favoured the minority Tutsi against the majority Hutu. This is also the point of view of Hauss (2003: 52) when he states that the causes of conflict in Rwanda are embedded in history; the resentments they spawn date from events that occurred decades or even centuries ago. Identity is the main cause that makes these conflicts intractable.

Azar has identified protracted social conflicts (1983: 81-99) that come from a denial of elementary requirements necessary to the development of all people. The pursuit of these requirements is therefore an undeniable need. These fundamental and universal human needs include security, distinct identity, social recognition of identity, and effective participation in determining requirements. In analyzing the accounts presented by parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it can be perceived that the denial of Congolese citizenship to the Banyamulenge population is among the many reasons behind the hastening of the outbreak of war in the DRC in 1996.

In his analysis of causes of internal conflicts, Rothman (1997) found that identity-based conflicts pit people with deep emotional attachment to their religious, racial, linguistic, or ethnic groups against each other. In addition, their identity usually also involved an equally deep fear, hatred, and distrust of the other. Identity-based conflicts tend to be particularly intractable as identity is non-negotiable.

The scholars quoted above explain the occurrence of internal wars in terms of grievances. However, the investigation made by Colliers (2000) into the global pattern of large scale civil war since 1965, revealed a close relationship between measures of hatred and injustice and the incidence of conflict. According to him, economic reasons appear to be central to understanding why civil wars start. Conflicts are far more likely to be caused by economics factors rather than by grievances. Even when the principal motives behind a conflict are essentially those of greed and economic exploitation, motives of grievance will be highlighted because these are what the international community want to hear.

Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi's reasons for motivating their involvement in the conflict in the DRC were the instability caused by rebel groups launching attacks from Congolese territory. But with the evolution of the conflict, it has been demonstrated by the United Nations panel of experts that these countries, mainly Rwanda and Uganda, were very involved in the illegal exploitation of Congolese national resources. That is also true for Congolese rebel groups, who claimed motives of grievance were behind their rebellions but in the end were accused by the panel of having illegally exploited Congolese resources.

In analysing the conflict phenomenon in the context of the African continent, Nathan (1999) argues that violence may be the predominant concern from a humanitarian perspective, but that it should be viewed as a symptom of intra-state crises from an analytical perspective. This author identifies four structural conditions that are said to give rise to crises: authoritarian rule; the exclusion of minority groups from governance; socio-economic deprivation combined with inequity; and weak states which lack the institutional capacity to manage political and social conflict. Therefore, these conditions are the primary causes of mass violence in Africa, and that sustainable peace is possible only if they are addressed satisfactorily.

The origin of the DRC conflict can be found in some of these causes, namely the exclusion of minority groups, such as the Banyamulenge population in South Kivu, to

whom Congolese citizenship was denied. Furthermore, the state's inability to manage the flow of refugees, subsequent to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, is another compelling reason for the Congolese government's failure to effectively and efficiently distinguish between refugees, civilians and soldiers in the refugee camps.

With regard to location, it is observed that conflicts tend to develop in environments characterised by structural factors, such as systemic political exclusion, shifts in demographic balance, entrenched economic inequities, economic decline and ecological deterioration. These factors form the preconditions of crisis situations. Collier and Hoeffler (1998: 7-8) have observed that "the risk of civil war arises when the society is polarised into two groups because polarised societies have around 50% higher probability of civil war than either homogenous or highly fractionalised societies" as in the case of Rwanda and Burundi where there are two main ethnic groups: Hutu and Tutsi. The risk of conflict becomes high when people want to keep the conflict itself alive, because by playing to long-standing fears and resentments among their constituents, they can increase their own power and legitimacy and keep the historical roots of the conflict alive.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is in the conflict system of the Great Lakes region that is made up out of many conflicts. It is therefore important to understand the underlying causes of these conflicts in order to maximize the chances of their resolution. For the purpose of this research, the explanation of the conflict in the DRC in terms of injustice or in terms of economic exploitation will help to understand its causes. However, it cannot be said that the grievance theory or the greed theory can, on their own, explain the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A combination of both is needed in order to understand this conflict, especially when we consider the fact that this conflict has a regional dimension.

### 2.1.1.2 Cycles of Conflicts

Interaction between international actors is a process of disorder and order, of conflict and cooperation. Expectations are disrupted, overt conflict breaks out, new expectations are formed, and peace and cooperation ensue. Only a trigger is needed to break up the old, initiate a new balance, and bring about a new structure of expectations. Change, in essence, is the only constant in life (Rummel, 1979: 193).

A conflict situation arises between parties when they perceive that they possess mutually incompatible objectives. According to Banks (1984: 97), the more valuable the objectives, the more intense the conflict. The greater in number the objectives, the greater will be the scope of the conflict. The conflict behaviour will be determined as per the dimensions and nature of incompatible issues.

In the endeavour to resolve conflict, the delineation of different stages of the conflict is useful because it is important to understand the cycles of the conflict in order to know at what stage a specific kind of solution may be applied.

The literature on the subject (Stedman, 1991; Lund, 1996; Miall et al., 1999) states that there are different stages in the life cycle of a conflict. Miall et al. (1999, etc.) suggests five stages of conflict: All the models are idealized. Real conflicts do not follow a linear path. Rather they evolve in fits and starts, alternatively experiencing progress and setbacks towards resolution. The lack of linear progress helps to give the conflict a sense of intractability. Escalation may resume after temporary stalemate or negotiation. Escalation and de-escalation may alternate. Negotiations may take place in the absence of a stalemate. However, the models idealized by scholars are still useful because most conflicts pass through similar stages at least once in their history.

In this research, the model that is considered is the one used by Lund (1996: 37-40) which analyzes the cycle of the conflict in relation to two dimensions: the intensity of the conflict (the vertical axis) and its duration over time (the horizontal axis). In terms of

intensity, conflicts arise and fall over time. Lund (1996: 38) portrays the course of actual conflicts in five stages: durable peace, stable peace, unstable peace, crisis and war. These five phases delineate gradations in various aspects of the parties' relationships, such as the awareness of the differences and separate identities, political polarization, value congruence, mutual trust, and hostile behaviour. All the levels involve some degree of conflict but of significantly different intensity and forms of expression.

Durable peace is the stage where there is a high degree of political and regime legitimacy. It involves a high level of cooperation and the virtual absence of self-defence measures among parties. Separate interests are pursued within peaceful, institutionalised dispute settlement mechanisms. During this stage, parties feel no need for military force to defend their security against others. To some extent, the relations between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania since 1990, are in this stage.

The stable peace stage, or cold peace stage, is a relationship of wary communication and limited cooperation within an overall context of basic order, mutual respect and absence of violence. At this stage, disputes are worked out in non-violent, more or less predictable ways.

The unstable peace stage or latent conflict, involves palpable tension and suspicion among parties, possibly with sporadic overt violence. A negative peace prevails: there is little physical violence but no friendship. The parties do not value their relationship enough to guarantee not to use coercion or violence to gain particular objectives. Peace is tenuous; levels of tensions arise and fall, and parties maintain armed forces as a deterrent. In the case under study, a high level of tension arose between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda with regard to the issue of the Lord's Resistance Army between July and September 2005. The Ugandan government threatened to send its troops into the DRC in order to attack the LRA members that fled from South Sudan despite the fact that the Congolese government and the MONUC confirmed that the LRA members had left the Congolese territory.

The crisis level is the level of conflict with tense confrontation between mobilized armed forces. These forces may engage in threats and occasional skirmishes but have not exerted significant amounts of force. At this stage, the probability of war is high.

War is sustained fighting between organized armed forces. It may include low-intensity local conflict such as gang wars, low-intensity guerrilla wars, national anarchy, or hot civil and inter-state war.

As one can note, the conflict process involves the development of conflict in phases: the first phase is the one in which parties cooperate as they have complementary goals. In the second phase, interests, objectives and values of the parties are incompatible but they do not have cognisance of this incompatibility. It is the phase of incipient conflict. The third phase is the phase of the perception of mutual incompatibility. In this phase, the conflict becomes latent. In the fourth phase, conflict behaviour is initiated to achieve goals. This is the phase of manifest conflict (Mitchell, 1981: 50-51).

In actual situations, these different conditions are not sharply demarcated but are matters of degree, which shade gradually from one to another. Situations may exhibit several levels of conflict. Distinguishing these gradations has several practical implications for policy-makers and practitioners of conflict resolution. The gradations suggest that conflicts and peace rarely arise suddenly, shift from one status to another, or end suddenly. Relations between parties do not move from total peace to total war without going through intermediate states. They evolve through periods of tension, direct confrontation, détente, and renewed hostility.

### **2.1.2 Conflict Resolution**

The concept of conflict resolution is ambiguous. In fact, it refers both to the process to bring about changes in a particular conflict and to the completion of this process. In addition, conflict resolution refers to a particular defined specialist field, as well as to an



activity carried on by people who may or may not use the term or even be aware of it. (Maloka, 2001: 359). Conflict resolution is a political process that requires a combination of actors and institutions from the grassroots to the international level and implies that the deep-rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved. This implies that behaviour is no longer violent, attitudes are no longer hostile, and the structure of the conflict has been changed. (Miall et al., 1999: 27).

As said in the introduction to this research paper, the aim of this study is to explore how the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region can address the regional causes of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in order not only to resolve this conflict, but also to bring about sustainable peace in the Great Lakes region using as technique, preventive diplomacy. That implies that, at the end of a conflict, there will be a change of parties' behaviour, their attitudes and the structure of the conflict.

Therefore, conflict resolution differs from conflict settlement, which means the reaching of an agreement between the parties, which enables them to end an armed conflict. This was the case in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement signed in 1999, the objective of which was to end the hostilities in the DRC. It also differed from conflict management that involves the deployment of peacekeeping forces.

However, conflict settlement and conflict management create conditions for the resolution of conflict. In fact, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement assisted with the cessation of hostilities, to create conditions for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue to tackle the internal causes of the conflict in the DRC.

Conflict resolution can only be achieved if the parties are willing to negotiate. In order for conditions to be ready, there must be both a perception on all sides that the present course of the conflict is unsustainable and the perception that there is a suitable way out of the conflict (Zartman, 2000: 51).

A number of theories have emerged to understand negotiating tactics, their strengths and weaknesses. Generally speaking, negotiations are complex and a broad range of factors makes each negotiation somewhat unique. According to Kriesberg (1998: 287-291), their shape depends upon the procedures that have become institutionalised, the number of parties and number of representatives present, the scope of issues under discussion, the degree to which it is part of a broader framework of negotiations, and the extent to which they are taking place in the public eye.

As a conflict comes to an end, its components start to change. New and greatly changed collective identities become dominant. Grievances underlying the conflict are often reduced for one side, but to resolve the conflict, the other side's grievances must be minimized also. Goals also change as conflict ends. Significantly, the methods of the struggle change. Often, a political process is established that provides legitimate regulated processes for dealing with contention. Groups that had been excluded from effective participation in making decisions of central concern to them may gain access to effective engagement in such decision-making. It is in this point that the International Conference is important in that it is aimed at designing new mechanisms to settle disputes in the Great Lakes where measures are taken to deal with the causes underlying the current conflicts in the region.

In the process of conflict resolution, if most of the underlying causes are finally remedied, the conflict may be resolved permanently or at least for a long time. If some grievances remain, however, the conflict may be simply settled for the time being, but may develop again later as grievances and injustice again come to the fore. Thus, even at the supposed end of a conflict, the path to resolution is not always smooth and linear, but may fall back into previous stages if conditions change. At other times, peace accords hold for a while, but break down later as old grievances arise or spoilers succeed in rekindling old fires, as occurred in Rwanda after the Arusha Accord in 1993.

Indeed, even after a settlement is reached and a peace agreement is signed, this does by no means signify the end of the conflict – a settlement should subsequently be

implemented. The implementation of this settlement becomes far more difficult in complex conflicts. In addition to those who negotiated the agreement, their constituents should also agree to the settlement, or otherwise the agreement would be likely to fail. The key to transforming conflict is to build strong equitable relations where distrust and fear were once the norm. At the implementation stage, outside actors can play an important role in monitoring agreement and demobilization efforts. According to Hoddie and Hartzell (2003: 16), implementation serves as a concrete signal of a genuine commitment to peace as signatories to an agreement prove willing to endure the costs associated with both compromising their original war aims and withstanding potential challenges from their own groups.

## **2.2 Preventive Diplomacy**

Since the end of the Cold War, there have been many statements regarding the need to expand and enhance the practice of preventive diplomacy. The UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, used the term for the first time, and Boutros Boutros-Ghali used it in his Agenda for Peace in 1992 to describe UN Peacekeeping Operations (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995: 244). The Clinton Administration, through the Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, mentioned in 1993 that the “need for a new diplomacy that can anticipate and prevent crises rather than simply manage them” (Jentleson, 2000: 3). It is important to indicate that the concept of preventive diplomacy has been around from time immemorial. The Concert of Europe or the League of Nations is an example of the idea of prevention action to maintain peace in the international system.

The threats that occurred after the end of the Cold War have elucidated more interest than ever in the idea of addressing conflicts at an early stage through specific procedures. Solomon (2003: 14) gives four trends that, in particular, contributed to this idea:

- The emergence of a new cooperative international milieu;
- The sobering experience of international intervention in advanced conflicts;

- The prospects of more threats to instability; and
- The growing economic and political constraints on foreign policy.

In fact, after the end of the Cold War, governments are more willing to work together through the United Nations and other multilateral channels to resolve international conflicts. The growing number of peacekeeping missions such as in Somalia, Namibia, etc reflects international willingness to cooperate in mitigating conflicts and alleviating human suffering. From 1986 to 1993, for instance, the annual cost of peacekeeping to the United Nations increased more than twelve fold from US\$243 million to \$2,984 billion without counting the peacekeeping costs borne directly by the countries that contributed troops to those operations (Cahill, 1996: 17). At the same time, the global geopolitical contest between capitalist and communist ideologies no longer exists. Market-oriented economies, freer trade, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law are widely accepted as norms. For instance, the collapse of communism in Africa stimulated popular pressure on autocratic regimes, leading to broader participation in politics, as in Zambia and Tanzania. In addition, war in the post-Cold War era is losing favour as an instrument of national policy. The hostility to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 signalled that many nations are less willing to tolerate the unilateral use of force as a foreign policy tool. Finally, the notion of national sovereignty is no longer so sacrosanct. More nations are now accountable through good governance.

To these changes observed in the international system must be added current trends in technology, globalisation, and economic integration. Improved access to technology has brought worldwide improvements in communication. As national economies open up and protectionist policies are dismantled, competition has increased within and among nations.

The post-Cold War change in political priorities presents incompatible elements. Market competition and freer trade have increased prosperity for some nations and groups but left others behind. Democratization and increased popular participation in government

can lead to minority rights abuses. In the long run, these values may be reconcilable, but in the short run, they can generate tensions.

Preventive diplomacy is based on the idea that problems or situations must be addressed early and dealt with before becoming crises.

In the following section, the emphasis will be on the definition of preventive diplomacy, its place in the cycle of the conflict and the tools in implementing this technique.

### **2.2.1 Definition of Preventive Diplomacy**

Preventing a conflict from escalating into violence is a more limited objective than ending violence once it has begun. According to Lund (1996: 37), preventive diplomacy can be described as

... actions taken in vulnerable places and times to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion by states or groups to settle the political disputes that can arise from destabilizing effects of economic, social, political and international changes.

According to Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1995: 45), from the beginning, a preventive role had been envisaged for the United Nations. This was clearly stipulated in Article 1 of the UN's Charter: "...to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace...". According to Boutros-Ghali, "preventive diplomacy is the use of diplomatic techniques to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent disputes from escalating into armed conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur". These diplomatic techniques are defined in Article 33 of the Charter. If the parties cannot make use of these techniques, the help of a third party is thereafter sought.

Preventive diplomacy can be conducted in two ways: when the action is taken in a particular dispute that is about to turn into armed conflict (late prevention), or when

actors, and especially the United Nations, are involved as early as possible to offer an early dispute resolution service (early prevention). The late prevention includes fact-finding missions, preventive deployment, recommendations of a specific dispute settlement procedure, or a resolution calling on the parties to desist and warning them of further Security Council actions.

It varies from unilateral preventive diplomacy when it is carried out by a single state or an alliance of states, and from multilateral preventive diplomacy when it is a collective action undertaken by an international organization. In the case under study, multilateral preventive diplomacy will be used because it will be conducted by the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region that gathers together all the countries involved and affected by the regional dimension of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The kind of preventive diplomacy used is multilateral it involves the United Nations and the African Union. It is important to recall this Conference was convened by the United Nations.

It is also to be distinguished from peacetime diplomacy, conducted by states enjoying more or less stable relations, and from crisis diplomacy that involves efforts to manage tensions and disputes that have reached the level of confrontation.

### **2.2.2 Preventive Diplomacy in the Cycle of Conflict**

In analyzing the life cycle of any conflict, its course evolves from the level of durable peace to the level of war. If conflict is considered as a dynamic process composed of alternate cycles of escalation and de-escalation, conflict prevention finds its place right before the beginning of escalation, and also at the end of a phase of de-escalation. In the former, preventive diplomacy is a short-term intervention to encourage a peaceful solution. In the latter, it is a prolonged initiative to stabilize and solidify a new peace agreement.

According to Lund (1996: 38), there is a specific kind of intervention corresponding to the cycle of a conflict. Preventive diplomacy is operative at the level of unstable peace, between peacetime diplomacy and crisis diplomacy. Preventive diplomacy comes into play when tensions in the relationships between parties are about to shift from the situation where they are enjoying peaceful relations, to unstable peace characterized by tension and suspicion, but where violence is either absent or only sporadic. From 1994 to 1996, preventive diplomacy would have helped to avert the rebellion led by Laurent Kabila from the Eastern Congo, had the issue of refugees been dealt with. This issue increased tensions between Rwanda and the then Zaire, as the soldiers had not been disarmed or separated from the civilians. Attacks launched by members of the former *Forces Armées Rwandaises* and Interhamwe militia caused Rwanda to support the rebellion and later led to its involvement in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Preventive diplomacy aims to keep actual or potential disputes from the danger of escalation in situations that have seen no recent conflict, or from the danger of re-escalation in those post-conflict situations where violence or coercion have been terminated, but the efforts to post-conflict peace building are apparently insufficient to move the conflict into stable peace.

When preventive diplomacy fails, and the conflict deteriorates into a crisis situation, the concept of preventive diplomacy ceases to apply, and leads to a new concept, that of crisis diplomacy. The latter involves efforts to manage tensions and disputes that are so intense that they have reached the level of confrontation.

In the conduct of preventive diplomacy, the Charter of United Nations gives this responsibility to the United Nations, but this role is not exclusive. In most of the conflicts, the United Nations works in partnership with others. These partners have come in various shapes and sizes. Some have been other intergovernmental organizations like the Organization of African Unity, which is now the African Union, have mediated in most African conflicts. Other partners have been sub-regional organizations such as the

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the west of the African continent, or the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in the Southern part of the African continent. The United Nations has also worked with *ad hoc* coalitions of governments as in the case of the Contact Group in the independence process of Namibia and with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) like in the case of Mozambique where the Rome based NGO, Sant' Egidio, took a lead in the negotiation process. Finally, there is another category of partners: individual statesmen. In Burundi, for instance, the UN had worked very closely with former President Nyerere, and subsequent to him, former South African President Mandela (Stedman, S.J., 1991: 58).

It is important to underline that preventive diplomacy is not a panacea in itself, to prevent the escalation of violence in conflicts. But it would appear to be a viable strategy in that a more proactive approach could make a major contribution to conflict resolution because the longer a conflict continues, the more difficult it is to resolve. Preventive diplomacy should be viewed as one of several multilateral preventive measures used to alleviate and resolve disputes and conflicts. It is a strategic instrument for maintaining an unstable peace during the onset and nascent escalation phase of a crisis, where latent conflict is evident, through conflict prevention by means of diplomacy.

### **2.2.3 Tools for Preventive Diplomacy**

The stage of a conflict is very important in determining what intervention tools are most likely to be effective. Responding to conflict requires two steps: knowing what tools are effective in which circumstances and devising and implementing multi-tooled strategies to move a country toward durable peace.

These tools are methods to prevent or mitigate a conflict and to build peace. Policy tools can comprise several projects, procedures, programmes, policies or mechanisms. Each tool operates on a conflict's sources and manifestations by manipulating different kinds of influences ('carrots' or 'sticks').



Even if it is agreed that preventive diplomacy comes into play before conflict escalation, the question often asked is how to know when to intervene in order to keep actual disputes from the danger of escalation or re-escalation. According to Peck (1996: 132), early warning indicators help to define the timing, the targets and the specific tools for preventive diplomacy.

Early warning has as goal the identification of potentially serious disputes and the development of an understanding of interests, which might be useful in the resolution process. Therefore, it requires the gathering of data on the basis of systematized procedures; their analysis according to a proper scientific methodology; and the transmission of a warning to political decision-makers if it is concluded that those data point out a high probability of impending violent conflict (Walvaren 1998: 3). Early warning entails an informational problem of obtaining the necessary quantity and quality of intelligence in reliable form and timely manner, and an analytic problem of possible impeding or distortion of the accuracy of the analysis. The gathering of data indicates when a situation is on its way to becoming violent. This information can be gathered through arrangements with member states, UN information centres, regional organizations, etc.

The transmission of the warning to political decision-makers enables them to take the requisite step: early action. Early actions are actions and initiatives taken to prevent the conflict from reaching a violent phase, or alternately from escalating to higher levels of violence.

Conflict prevention requires multi-divided, multi-organizational means, deploying a wide array of tools through more global and regional actors, rather than leaving the task solely to individual states or to the United Nations. Third party official international bodies, nongovernmental organizations, individual governments, and military and civilian agencies are now working with affected countries and regions. Therefore preventive

diplomacy needs a multi-track approach where national, regional and international actors complement one another.

If the Cold War philosophy held that certain policies and programmes, such as diplomacy and development were inherently peaceful, while others such as military assistance and military intervention were inherently bellicose, current conflict theory states that all tools have the capacity to promote or prevent conflict, depending on particular circumstances and how they are implemented, so each must be evaluated with respect to their probable effect on the situation at hand.

Governments and multilateral organizations conduct official bilateral and multilateral diplomacy and negotiations that frequently ease tensions between or within states and defuse potential sources of conflict.

Economic development activities alleviate poverty and address resource deficiencies; health and social service programmes deal with disease, sanitation, famine, and other community problems; education programmes increase literacy and address ignorance and prejudice; programmes that halt environment degradation preserve and expand physical resource bases and reduce scarcity. Economic reform and freer trade stimulate more efficient market-oriented ways to produce and distribute goods and services to generate wider prosperity. Higher living standards for more people mitigate social strife by increasing groups' stakes in the peaceful operation of the economy. All these programmes reduce the potential for violence.

Military assistance programmes strengthen defence against potential aggressors, creating a balance of power between nations that can deter war. Programmes such as arms control, weapon disarmament, and counter-proliferation, relate to conflict prevention.

Democratization and human rights programmes build civil society, give unrepresented citizens a voice, strengthen governments' ability to fulfil citizens' needs, and promote minority rights. Opening up authoritarian and autocratic governments to wider

participation makes government structures more legitimate, and fragments political power. These measures restore or pre-empt demands and grievances that could otherwise provoke conflicts.

Demography and population control programmes aim to reduce rapid population growth, especially in societies whose resource base cannot adequately provide for larger populations. Population control helps prevent conflicts by reducing the number of potential competitors for scarce resources.

Aid workers meet basic needs when they provide food, medical supplies, temporary housing, and other humanitarian relief for refugees and others affected by war.

According to Lund (1996:148-151), there are intervention methods and tools corresponding to every stage of a conflict. Thus, in the unstable peace stage, which is the main realm of preventive diplomacy, when the conflict escalates to near crisis point, the priority for preventive diplomacy is to block violent acts, freeze hostilities, reduce tensions, improve relationships, foster positive communications, enhance cross-cutting ties, maintain basic security, create non-violent means for addressing issues in conflict and limit arms. For this purpose, the tools used in preventive diplomacy will be diplomatic and economic sanctions, pre-emptive peacekeeping forces, multilateral peace conferences, economic assistance, track-two diplomacy; arms control regimes and their monitoring.

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region will be relevant if it can come up with tools to prevent the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo from escalating again into violence. A thorough analysis of the conflict must be made therefore in order to find its different causes.

One of the greatest challenges of preventive diplomacy is acquiring potential mediators' involvement prior to the escalation of the conflict into violence. In many situations, mediators stand in waiting, hoping that the situation will ameliorate. There is an

increasing tendency to intervene before the situation becomes worse because it is believed that conflicts are much easier to prevent than they are to cure.

## *Chapter 3*

### **ANALYSIS OF THE CONFLICT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

In Chapter Two, it was shown that the post-Cold War era is characterized by predominantly intra-state conflicts that are explained by scholars in terms of grievances (Burton, Azar) or greed (Colliers). In most cases, these conflicts have international dimensions. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is one of these conflicts with international dimensions in that it involves and impacts on neighbouring countries.

This chapter analyzes the background and the regional environment in which this conflict has occurred, its underlying causes, the actors involved and their interests, and the stage in which it can be classified according to the conflict cycle, as per Lund's elaboration on the conflict life cycle.

The reasoning behind adopting this scheme is the fact that the main objective of this research study is conflict resolution through preventive diplomacy. The understanding of the underlying causes of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo will help to attain this objective inasmuch as conflict resolution addresses the root causes of the conflict. These underlying causes are found not only within the Democratic Republic of Congo but also in neighbouring countries. Moreover, understanding at which stage in the cycle the conflict in question has reached, will allow the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region to apply specific tools of preventive diplomacy in order to bring about a stable peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in particular, and in the Great Lakes region, in general.

### 3.1 Background of the Conflict

To understand the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the regional environment in which this conflict occurred must be examined because it helps those studying the matter to understand its underlying causes or root causes, the actors involved and their stakes as well as the stage of this conflict.

Geographically, the Great Lakes region comprises the countries sharing, in one way or another, the African Great Lakes, namely, Lakes Victoria, Albert, Edward, Kivu, Tanganyika, and Moero. These countries are: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. However, the label of Great Lakes Region is conventionally restricted to the core countries of the region. These are Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. According to Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002: 215-216), these five countries constitute an area of 3,582,746km<sup>2</sup> and a total population estimated at 124 million, or 15.5% of the total population of the African continent.

Culturally, most of the inhabitants of these core countries speak Bantu languages. A language such as Kiswahili is spoken throughout the region, which explains the high level of cultural integration in this region. However, this high level of cultural integration has been diminished by political and social divides, which in turn, has created a great deal of upheaval since 1959.

Historically, three of the five core countries became colonies of the Kingdom of Belgium in 1885, in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and in 1921, in the case of Burundi and Rwanda, after the Kingdom of Belgium inherited the two colonies as mandatory powers under the League of Nations mandate system. Tanzania and Uganda were also colonized by a European power, England. The Belgian colonies were governed according to the principle of 'divide and rule'. In the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the same principle was applied by all the rulers who governed these countries,

from King Leopold II to President Kabila. From the time these nations were colonized by Belgium, until their independence and thereafter, Burundi and Rwanda were governed in the same manner.

Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002: 215) states that the most salient variables of the conflict in the Great Lakes region are the Rwandan genocide of 1994, and the corrosion of the state and its instruments of government in the then Zaire, which had hastened the fall of Mobutu from power in 1997. In fact, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda was the logical outcome of an ideology and a strategy of exclusion that had generated earlier large-scale massacres, and the escape of Rwandans of Tutsi origin into exile. This ideology and strategy emanate from a history of ethnic identity construction and mobilization under colonial rule.

The process of ethnic identity construction and mobilization gave rise to a dichotomous vision of society that did not really exist in pre-colonial Rwanda and Burundi. In reality, pre-colonial Rwanda and Burundi had three cultural groups: Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. The potential for ethnic mobilization and conflict was natural in the historically grounded relations of inequality in the pre-colonial social order. The colonial system took advantage of these relations of inequality by making them more rigid, and then by helping intensify the antagonism between the privileged minority Tutsi and the disadvantaged majority Hutu. The desire for self-determination and independence expressed by the elite Tutsi minority in the 1950's turned the colonial power against them. The colonial system that had created the myth of Tutsi superiority started to portray the Tutsi as an aristocracy of alien origins that should relinquish power to the oppressed Hutu indigenous majority (Braeckman, 1996: 156). This ideological reconstruction of their history sought to describe them as antagonistic groups with centuries-old enmities. The new myth of Hutu as slaves in need of emancipation was warmly embraced by the rising Hutu counter-elite in its quest for social advantages to which Hutu intellectuals felt entitled.

The rise of Hutu awareness as a political force resulted from the emergence of a Hutu counter-elite in the middle of a divorce between the colonialist rulers and their Tutsi

allies in the 1950's. Within the context of decolonization, the crystallization of ethnic tensions had inexorably intensified. The Hutu revolution in 1959 resulted in the overthrow of the monarchy and the transfer of power from one ethnic group, the Tutsi minority, to another, the Hutu majority. The other major consequence of this revolution was the large number of refugees and internally displaced persons it generated. After independence, the Hutu government excluded the Tutsis from power and refused to allow them to return to Rwanda.

The ascension of President Museveni to power in Uganda brought about a new order in the region. In fact, during his struggle to gain power, he acquired the support of Rwandan Tutsis in exile in his country. The new president of Uganda was openly supportive of Rwandan opponents who started a rebellion, which shattered the previous balance of power in the region.

The genocide following the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana in 1994 led to the flight of Hutu refugees to neighbouring countries, mainly to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania, and the return of the minority Tutsis to power. The settling of these refugees in the Eastern part of the DRC, especially in North and South Kivu, where they assembled in order to overthrow the new Tutsi government, was one of the events that triggered the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In Burundi, the situation had worsened with the second coup d'état of President Pierre Buyoya in 1996, forcing the evicted Hutu political party (the Burundian Democratic Front) to organize a struggle against Tutsi power. This resulted in the massive displacement of Hutus and the formation of an armed branch of the Hutu political party, the *Conseil National de Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD).

Another variable in the conflict in the Great Lakes Region is the corrosion of the state and its instruments in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This factor enabled Rwanda and Uganda to invade it, precipitating Mobutu's fall from power. As described by Reyntjens (1999: 241), "the Zairian state had virtually disappeared, thus leaving a black



hole with porous borders, almost no effective national army or administration, very poor communications between centre and periphery and between peripheries, and an essentially informal economy”. The consequence of this situation was the deterioration of state authority, especially in the eastern parts of the country, as a result of the corruption and mismanagement of the regime of Mobutu. The failure of governance in Zaire left a political and security vacuum in this part of the country. In this situation of “no state” conditions became favourable for arms proliferation and the deliberate exploitation of ethnicity, often resulting in ethnic alliances, both at national and regional levels. The weakness of the Congolese state led to the overthrow of the Mobutu regime by armed groups backed by neighbouring countries. It opened the way to the activities of several militias and the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other illicit traffic, such as drug trafficking, and the smuggling of small arms.

In order to deal with the threat posed by the Interhamwe and ex-FAR soldiers who had been amassed in refugee camps along the border, the Rwandans had already recruited and trained Congolese Tutsis from both South Kivu (the Banyamulenge) and North Kivu, in their fight against Hutu extremists. These Congolese Tutsi youths joined the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) as part of the Tutsi solidarity movement or were forced by xenophobia in the Congo to prepare themselves to fight for their national rights as Congolese citizens.

It is important to emphasise that there are Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groupings in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in North and South Kivu. In the latter area, they are referred to as the Banyamulenge. In fact, the security situation that had become untenable for the victorious Rwandan Patriotic Front over the Hutu in Rwanda had also had an impact on the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the wake of the victory over the Mobutu regime, the Kinya-Rwanda speaking minorities came under increasing threat, and the threat of genocide was extended to the Masisi areas in North Kivu and the Hauts Plateaux in South Kivu where Ex-FAR / Interhamwe units and local ethnic Mai Mai militias went on campaigns of ethnic cleansing. This threat culminated in a statement made by the

South Kivu governor, allocating only a few days to the Banyamulenge to leave South Kivu, due to their not being Congolese citizens.

This weakness of the state in the Democratic Republic of Congo is associated with the constraints brought by the post-Cold War in terms of domestic, economic and political liberalization and the impact of rapid democratization (Lind and Sturman, 2002: 163). The political tumult and economic upheaval, caused by a rapid conversion to a market economy and the process of democratization, reawakened the importance of ethnic identity.

In addition to the two variables explained above, two others must be taken into consideration in analyzing the background of the conflict in the Great Lakes Region: the conflict in Sudan, and the war in Angola. According to Reyntjens (1999: 241), the geographical proximity of these conflicts made the then Zaire the connection between these war zones; and the game of alliances, finally, played against the Mobutu regime. In fact, the Mobutu regime backed the Khartoum government in its war against the Southern Sudanese rebellion, which was backed by the United States, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea. In the Angolan civil war, the Mobutu regime supported the Angolan rebel groups fighting the Angolan government, mainly, UNITA. The involvement of Angola and Uganda beside the AFDL to topple the Mobutu regime seems, to some extent, to be motivated by this situation (Reyntjens, 1999: 241).

The DRC seems to represent a microcosm of all political and socio-economic processes that have developed in the Great Lakes region. As seen above, two main variables are crucial in order to understand the conflict that has put the whole region in turmoil: the genocide in Rwanda, and the weakness of the state in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which accelerated the overthrow of the Mobutu regime (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002:67). Two other variables are also important in the understanding of the Great Lakes conflict inasmuch as they seem to explain the behaviour of some states: the conflict in the Sudan, and the civil war in Angola. That is not to say that other conflicts, such as the conflict in Congo Brazzaville is not important. But they have a limited scope, as their impact is

restricted to within their borders even if some consequences such as refugee flows can affect their neighbours.

### **3.2 Causes of the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

The background to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo as described above, gives an overall picture of the situation in the region in which this conflict developed. In analyzing its causes, attention must be paid to factors that contributed to its escalation. These factors are categorized into structural factors and trigger factors. Structural factors, or root causes, are those factors that form the pre-conditions of crisis situations, such as systemic political exclusion, shifts in demographic balance, entrenched economic inequities, economic decline and ecological deterioration. The trigger factors are sudden events that act as catalysts igniting a conflict, such as the assassination of a leader, election fraud, or a political scandal (Varga et al., 2002: 5).

In order to assess the structural factors, or root causes, underlying conflict, it is necessary to identify a set of associated indicators. Often a conflict has no single cause and furthermore the different causes vary in importance. Variables may at times reinforce each other, while at other times they may neutralize one another.

In the case of the conflict in the Great Lakes region, Varga et al. (2002: 5) identified nine interrelated structural causes: history of armed conflict, governance and political instability, militarization, population heterogeneity, demographic stress, economic performance, human development, environmental stress, and international linkages.

The history of armed conflict is that of man's ability and willingness to resort to violence. It is also that of divisions within society created or exacerbated by violence. The history of the Great Lakes Region tells that it is an area of overlapping conflicts. Between 1996 and 2000, four of the core countries (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda) have faced continued armed conflict and the others have been involved in

the violence taking place in the region because of the presence of large numbers of refugees.

The number of refugees and internally displaced persons are two factors that have a significant impact on the occurrence of conflict in the Great Lakes Region. The influx of refugee populations has had a destabilizing effect on the affected regions. Over the past decade, the Great Lakes region has received large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. Most of these refugees and displaced communities originated from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda, and almost one million have been accepted by Uganda and Tanzania, the most politically stable countries within the Great Lakes region. According to Kamanga (2003), the influx of refugees, following the genocide in Rwanda, precipitated the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the subsequent involvement of Rwanda.

Governance and political instability reflect the influence of the political system in the outbreak of conflict. A lack of accountability and representation limits the avenues through which grievances can be constructively and peacefully aired, aggravating the risk of violence. At the same time, the denial of many basic rights can have a similar effect by limiting the options available for expressing dissent (Varga et al., 2002: 17-18). Most of the countries in the Great Lakes region have a high level of corruption, which leads to a loss of confidence in the state, and its institutions, which makes those who desire change to resort sometimes to violence. Governance and instability are areas for concerns in the region. In Uganda, President Museveni came to power after a *coup d'état* in 1986. It was the same in Burundi in 1986 and 1996. In Rwanda, the Rwandan Patriotic Front came to power after an armed struggle in 1994, and in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the change of regimes in 1997 and 2001 did not come about by democratic means.

Another factor that underlies conflicts in the Great Lakes region, is the high level of militarization. This can be seen by the existence in the region of large numbers of armed peoples, militias, rebel groups, community protection forces, and national militaries involved in the conflict. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo involved rebel

groups (*Rassemblement des Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD), *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC), *Rassemblement des Congolais pour la Démocratie/Kisangani-Mouvement de Libération* (RCD/K-ML), and the *Rassemblement des Congolais pour la Démocratie/National* (RCD/N)), national and foreign militias (Mai Mai, Interhamwe, etc.), national military forces (Angola, Burundi, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, etc.) and armed populations (local defence). In addition, the region has long served as a conduit for small arms into and out of neighbouring countries as a result of the large numbers of people migrating throughout the region to flee either violence, as part of rebel activity, or fleeing persecution.

The degree of ethnic and even religious diversity in a country can significantly influence its potential for conflict. In fact, the competing demands of different ethnic and religious groups result in failures to achieve political consensus, contributing to tensions and in some cases to the outbreak of violent conflict. This is the case in situations where there are high incentives for group action, such as historical loss of group autonomy, long-standing or widening political and economic disparities between communal groups, or restrictions on cultural practices. Furthermore, the capacity for collective action depends in large part upon the strength of a group's identity and its level of political mobilization (Beurden, 1998: 53).

The Great Lakes Region exhibits a high level of ethnic and religious diversity. While religion has generally not been a source of conflict in this region, ethnicity has often emerged as a fault-line. There is a continuing struggle for survival between the Hutus and Tutsis who are spread across most of the region. Many analysts believe that the Hutus and Tutsis are driven separately not by differences in culture, but by the politicization of ethnicity, which began during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was reinforced by colonialism (Braeckman, 1999: 78). The 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the continuing tension in Burundi are clear manifestations of politicized ethnicity. In addition, these two conflicts have generated large refugee populations throughout the region, further perpetuating regional instability.

The size, density, distribution and composition of a population in a country are factors that can contribute greatly to the potential for violent conflict. Rapid rates of growth can accelerate conflict development process through heightening competition for access to physical and social resources due to increasing scarcity, growing inequality and environmental degradation (Varga, 2002: 25-27).

The age composition of a population is a powerful element in its tendencies to violence. Evidence suggests that the younger the population, and the higher the level of unemployment, the greater the potential for violence. In the Great Lakes region, the population is very young, with an average of 46.6% of the population under the age of 14 in 2001 (World Bank: World Development Indicators, 2001: 79). Added to the level of development of these countries, this young population are easy prey to recruitment by warlords. Hence the high numbers of child soldiers in the region.

The population density in both Rwanda, Burundi, and to a lesser extent Uganda, is extremely high. This has exacerbated tensions and heightened the risk of continued conflict.

Economic performance is another factor that explains the occurrence of conflicts in the Great Lakes Region, and in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Low or declining income, high inflation, exchange rate fluctuations or collapse, and volatile levels of foreign investment significantly impact on living standards. High levels of inequalities in society contribute to social fragmentation and can cause economically privileged minorities to become scapegoats for all sorts of problems. According to the World Bank (2001: 65), the majority of countries in the Great Lakes region experience fluctuations in national economic development, which can translates into a function of dependence on the export of natural resources, weak investment in infrastructure, poor histories of governance and violent conflict. This is why the focal point of the crisis, which afflicts the Great Lakes region, revolves around the struggle for power, and above all, access and control of the enormous natural wealth in the region, and especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has become the epicentre of the conflict in the region

A report by the UN Security Council on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2001), confirms that most of the countries fighting in this country have become involved for economic reasons. Not only are these natural resources the incentive for many of the actors to be engaged in the conflict, but the persistent violence arising over control of them perpetuates the poverty and vulnerability of its citizens, further entrenching the underlying conditions which heighten conflict potential.

Economic performance also affects human development: poor levels of human development lead to a high risk of violent conflict.

The degradation and depletion of natural resources (particularly renewable resources such as fresh water, arable land and forests), can generate a variety of effects that underlie social or political instability and increase potential for conflict. Reduced stocks of natural resources increase their scarcity, heighten competition, and can result in the increasingly inequitable distribution of resources between community groups. The unequal allocation of resources in a climate of scarcity, or the capture of resources by dominant groups, can create or exacerbate cleavages within a society, creating incentives for violent conflict. Environmental degradation or depletion can also result in constrained economic productivity and growth, causing increased poverty and loss of livelihoods, leading to forced displacement or migration (Braeckman, 1996: 174).

Throughout the Great Lakes Region, the range of current environmental issues is broad. Poverty, development challenges, and ongoing conflicts have all been linked to environmental degradation in a vicious circle in which people cannot afford to take proper care of the environment.

The form of a country's engagement with outside actors (bilaterally with other countries or multilaterally through international or regional forums) can serve to reduce or, in some cases, contribute to the potential for violent conflict (Varga, 2002: 38-40). On the one

hand, international linkage can contribute positively to the mitigation of both intra-state and inter-state conflicts if external actors perform in a facilitating or supportive way, and have the operational capacity to contribute meaningfully in terms of mediation and support for reconciliation efforts.

Constructive engagement, whether through diplomatic, political, commercial, trade or cultural relations, can contribute to interdependency and shared vested interests, and creates opportunities for a wide range of support mechanisms. Participation in international regimes and organizations can also help decrease security risks by codifying broad rules and processes by which to resolve disputes peacefully. On the other hand, weak linkages or harmful engagement with partisan actors can contribute profoundly to the potential for the outbreak or escalation of conflict. Countries with fewer diplomatic, political, commercial, trade and cultural linkages with neighbouring states, as well as international and regional organizations, are less likely to benefit from constructive engagement with outside actors in areas such as developmental assistance, mediation, or support in peace processes.

In addition, neighbouring countries might also contribute directly or indirectly to armed conflict by supporting armed protagonists of a civil conflict. Furthermore, the interventions of neighbouring or regional actors can contribute to the potential of a civil conflict becoming inter-state or regional in scale. An observation of the core countries of the Great Lakes Region reveals that there are few bilateral exchanges among them. Moreover, even if the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), established in 1976, did not succeed in promoting the development of its members (Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire), at least, it had served as a forum in which common problems were solved.

Miall et al. (1999: 33-34), maintain that the source of many contemporary conflicts lies as much outside as inside the state, and that increasing interdependence means that contemporary conflicts affect the interests of regional neighbours. This means that many



protracted conflicts can only be resolved when outside influences are brought to bear upon internal issues.

The causes that explain the occurrence of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo come from the internal situation in the then Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) whereas the others, in the regional context of the Great Lakes Region itself.

Some analysts argue that the basic cause for the conflicts in the DRC rests with the deterioration of the authority of the Zairian state in the eastern part of the country as the result of the corruption and mismanagement of the Mobutu regime that left a political and security vacuum (Lund, 1999: 193). In this situation of the breakdown of state authority as a failure of governance, a number of informal and illegal activities including arms sales, drug trafficking, illegal exploitation and trade of valuable commodities, such as diamonds, gold, were able to develop and to increase the possibility of conflict.

Analyzing the causes of the conflict in the DRC, the Congolese National Preparatory Committee of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region concluded that among the causes of conflict in this region, was: a lack of governance in the Great Lakes countries, the existence of cross border populations, the identity conflicts generated by ethnic conflicts within states in the region, the excessive ambitions of certain countries for expansionism, and the porosity of borders (National Preparatory Committee, 2004).

The structural factors underlying the conflicts in the Great Lakes Region examined above explains why conflicts occur in the Great Lakes Region. As conflict has no single cause, a combination of all these factors is needed to understand the conflict in question so as to facilitate its resolution because a better understanding of the causes of a particular conflict may facilitate its resolution. In addition, an understanding of these factors will help the International conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region in applying specific tools of preventive diplomacy in order to bring

about sustainable peace, not only in the Democratic Republic of Congo but also in the Great Lakes region.

### 3.3 Actors and Interests in the Congolese Conflict

The structural factors examined above explain the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo within the context of the Great Lakes Region. Several actors, both internal and external have been, or are still involved, in this conflict with various interests or stakes.

#### 3.3.1 Internal Actors

In the conflict that started in 1996, the internal actors were the government (the Mobutu regime), the AFDL, and the Mai Mai. The AFDL itself was composed of various groups that formed an alliance to fight the Mobutu regime. It involved: the PRP (*Parti Révolutionnaire du Peuple*) led by Kabila, the *Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie* (CNRD) led by Ngandu Kisase, the *Alliance Démocratique des Peuples* (ADP), led by Déogratias Bugera, and the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre* (MRLZ), led by Anselme Masasu Ningada (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002: 225).

If the Mai Mai, as an internal actor, is analyzed as a separate grouping even if they were part of the rebel groups, it is because they were not part of the alliance. The Mai Mai had fought the Mobutu regime since his coming to power and they were also opposed to the presence of Banyarwanda populations in the Kivu, whom they considered to be foreigners. Another characteristic of these groups, is the fact that under the same name of Mai Mai, there were several groups who said they were resisting against a foreign invasion (mainly a Rwandan invasion), but not under the same leadership.

The difference between the AFDL and the Mai Mai is that the AFDL, although composed of several groups, was under the leadership of one person, whereas the Mai Mai operated

heterogeneously and did not have one leadership. It is also important to note that even if the AFDL was led by Laurent Kabila, who started his armed opposition just after the assassination of the first Prime Minister Patrice Emery Lumumba in the early years of Congolese independence, the majority of groups constituting this alliance were led almost entirely by Banyarwanda leaders, fighting for the recognition of their Congolese citizenship.

In the second conflict that started in 1998, there were three internal actors: the government (Kabila regime), the Rally of Congolese for Democracy (RCD) and the Mai Mai. In this conflict, the AFDL, which had much internal dissension, saw some of its members joining the opposition. All the Banyarwanda leaders, who were members of AFDL, left the Alliance and formed, together with those from other ethnic groups, the RCD (*Rassemblement des Congolais pour la Démocratie*).

If, in the first conflict, the Mai Mai fought with the AFDL to overthrow the Mobutu regime, in the second conflict; these groups were allied to the government in order to fight the RCD.

In the conflict that opposes Lendu to Hema militias in Ituri, Woudenberg (2004: 193-195) identifies all the local actors involved in this conflict with the support of foreign countries, notably Uganda and Rwanda, in the game of forming alliances. They are the following: the UPC (*Union des Patriotes Congolais*) led by Thomas Lubanga, and constituted by Hema militia; the FIPI (*Front pour l'Intégration et la Paix en Ituri*) which is a platform of three ethnically based political parties (*Parti pour l'Unité pour la Sauvegarde de l'Intégrité du Congo* (PUSIC), *Front pour l'Intégration Nationale* (FNI), and the *Front Populaire pour la Démocratie au Congo* (FPDC)), opposed to the UPC. This platform includes Hema, which is dissatisfied with the UPC, Lendu and Alur. The PUSIC (*Parti pour l'Unité pour la Sauvegarde de l'Intégrité du Congo*), was composed of Hema, dissatisfied with the UPC and led by Chief Kawa; the FPDC (*Front Populaire pour la Démocratie au Congo*) comprises Alur and Lugara, and is led by Thomas Unen Chen; and the FNI (*Front pour l'Intégration Nationale*) which is led by

Floribert Njabu. This is a political party constituted by Lendu intellectuals and traditional chiefs of the Lendu community; the FPRI (*Force Patriotique de Résistance en Ituri*) led by Dr Adirodo and constituted by the Ngiti community, which was closely linked to Lendu. This group had close ties with the RCD-ML, from whom it received military training and arms; and the FAPC (*Forces Armées du Peuple du Congo*), commanded by Jerome Kakawave.

Another category of actors involved in the conflict in the DRC is the *Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR). As stated above, the coming into power of the Rwandan Patriotic Army in Rwanda, and the genocide that followed the assassination of President Habyarimana, forced many of the Hutus in neighbouring countries, chiefly in the then Zaire and Tanzania to flee. The presence of the ex-FAR (*Forces Armées Rwandaises*,) and the Hutu militias, Interhamwe, in the Democratic Republic of Congo became a matter of concern in relation between the two countries, as these forces were actively destabilizing the security of Rwanda. The ex-FAR and Interhamwe, now known as the FDLR, participated in the Congolese conflict, in that they formed an alliance with the Kabila-led government forces to fight the rebels, backed by Rwanda and even Uganda.

In the first conflict as well as in the second one, government imperatives, as would be the case in every government, were to assure the state's authority over the entire country. The rebellion, under the AFDL coalition, had, as its primary goals, recognition of the Banyamulenge Congolese citizens, increased participation of the population in governing the country, and a change in presidency. The Mai Mai militias have always fought the presence of foreigners (especially from Rwanda) in their territories.

It is necessary to note that while the first war featured only three internal actors, the second war in 1998 began with the same scenario, but the latter's evolution has experienced the appearance of several actors from the main rebel group, such as the MLC, RCD-KML, and RCD-N, with divergent agendas and interests.

At the beginning of the second war in 1998, the main claim of the RCD to justify its opposition to the Kabila's regime, was the same as those who pushed the AFDL to fight Mobutu's regime. But the dissensions occurring in the RCD lead to the formation of various groups and have shown a complexity of interests in this conflict. An analysis of the evolution of the relationships of their backing partners, mainly Rwanda and Uganda can explain the complexity of these interests or stakes that has culminated in the direct fight between the armies of the two countries for the control of Kisangani in 2000. Reyntjens (1999: 241-250) has explained these clashes as a course for leadership in the war in the DRC.

According to scholars such as Colliers (2000: 56), even where the rationale behind the involvement of an organization is essentially greed, the discourse may be entirely dominated by grievances because narratives of grievance are more acceptable to the international community than narratives of greed. Although the claimed motives are common to all the rebel groups, each of them had a hidden agenda that made it divergent from others, explicitly in connection with the backing partner's interests in the conflict.

### **3.3.2 External Actors**

The external actors involved in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo vary according to the conflict. In fact, the external actors in the first war are not the same as in the second war, and even in the case where one finds the same actors, they do not support the same conflicting parties as they did in the past. The case of Angola illustrates this situation in the two wars, and Uganda and Rwanda in the second war. In fact, Angola helped the AFDL (a rebel group) to overthrow the Mobutu regime but did support the Kabila regime against rebel groups. By contrast, Rwanda and Uganda backed the rebel group in the two wars but in the second, they diverged with the evolution of the war to support opposing parties.

These external actors are of two categories: those supporting the government and those backing the rebels. During the first war, the AFDL was backed by Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. According to Reyntjens (1999: 241), countries such as Angola, Ethiopia and Eritrea also have participated in this war in supporting the rebels against the Mobutu regime. On the contrary, the Mobutu government was supported by UNITA (the Angolan rebel group). In the second war, initially, the RCD was supported by Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda whereas the Kabila government received support from Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Sudan and Chad.

As one can see, the same countries did not support the same sides in the two wars (1996 and 1998). If in the 1996 war, Angola, Rwanda and Uganda supported the AFDL to topple Mobutu from power, their interests diverged in the 1998 war during which Angola supported the Kabila government against the rebel group backed by Rwanda and Uganda.

The motivation behind Rwanda, Uganda and, to a lesser extent Burundi, in intervening in the Congo, was related to their national security concerns. Rebel movements from Angola (Unita and FLEC), Uganda (Lord's Resistance Army, National Army for the Liberation of Uganda, etc) and Rwanda (*Ex-Forces Armées Rwandaises and Interhamwe* militia) and Burundi (CNDD-FDD), used the Congolese territory as bases for assault and retreat.

For Rwanda, in particular, the presence of massive Hutu camps, which housed hostile armed elements, close to the border, constituted a major threat. The elimination of this threat was an important reason for the decision of the Rwandan government to intervene militarily in Eastern part of the then Zaire.

In fact, as seen above, the internal situation in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda forced several militia groups (Interhamwe, Lord's Resistance Army, FDD, and so on) to fight their governments from Congolese territory. The assumption that the Congolese government had armed these militia groups explains, in part, their involvement in the conflict in the DRC.

Globally speaking, the major external actors are the governments of Angola, Burundi, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The stated interests of Angola, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda were their concerns regarding the security situation in their border areas with the DRC. By contrast, Namibia and Zimbabwe's intervention in the DRC was motivated by a decision of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to rescue a member state facing a foreigner invasion.

Another motive underlying the intervention of Angola in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, is that of leadership in the region. Indeed, as stated above, the Rwandan Patriotic Front was fully supported by Uganda to assume control over Rwanda. Uganda also played a major role in overthrowing the Mobutu regime by supporting the AFDL. By contrast, Angola, which assisted Sassou Nguesso in Brazzaville in his struggle to topple Pascal Lissouba, and helped Kabila to overthrow Mobutu, aspired to leadership in the region. This struggle for leadership in the region is the reason why during the second war in 1998, Angola fought the coalition formed by Rwanda and Uganda to overthrow the Kabila regime, whereas in the first war, it was part of the coalition that overthrew the Mobutu regime.

As indicated above, even if it is claimed that motives of grievance were behind Angola's involvement in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the evolution of the conflict has shown that it was actually motives of greed, which contributed to their involvement. According to analysts such as Kabemba (1999: 1), the interests of Rwanda and Uganda as well as government's allies (Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe) in the Democratic Republic of Congo developed from purely security concerns to economic interests as well.

In fact, over time, the presence of armed forces has served the emerging war economy interests. This fact was stressed in the report of the United Nations Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In this report, there is ample evidence of the commercial involvement of the Rwandan armed

forces, a nexus of government officials and military officers in Uganda, as well as coalitions between Zimbabwean military commanders and Congolese officials and businessmen. These commercial ventures have gradually become the '*raison d'être*' for these external actors.

The situation in Ituri, and to some extent in the areas controlled by FDLR, is an example of this. Thus, during the course of the war, commercial illicit interests superseded genuine security and strategic motives. As a result, all external actors and their local associates lost all interest in peace because such illicit economies develop into war economies, which support conflict.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo involved several actors: internal actors, as well as external actors. As observed during the two wars (1996 and 1998), the same actors did not support the same conflicting parties. Even if the claim of grievance, as opposed to that of greed, had motivated their involvement in the conflict, the evolution has shown that it was in fact the latter that motivated the actors. Their involvement in the illegal exploitation of Congolese natural resources seems to prove that grievance is secondary to greed in this conflict.

### **3.4 Cycles of the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

As said above, the Great Lakes region is a conflict system in which different countries constitute its sub-systems. But, considering the Congolese subsystem as a system, one will find that there are several sub-systems that constitute the Congolese system.

Hocker and Wilmot (1985: 129-156) have analyzed the system and state that the system theory analyzes conflicts in terms of roles, processes, and patterns. It seeks to discover the rules that govern the system's behaviour, and the function that the conflict serves within the system. The system theory approach starts with the basic principle that the systems operate as interdependent units. Systems analysis focuses on the patterns of



interaction between people. Such patterns of interaction show circular causality: each element of the system is affected by all the others, and affects all the others in turn. Systems are sustained by the cooperation of their members. The cycle can be changed by anyone person changing his behaviour.

A brief overview of the nature of the conflict and its impact on the Great Lakes region will provide the necessary background to understanding these problems. First, the longest-running conflict that weakened central authority in the Great Lakes region can be traced to Uganda in 1986 when Yoweri Museveni (Head of the National Resistance Army) took power in that country. The Lord's Resistance Army has since contested Museveni's political control, with the result that over 1.2 million refugees have taken refuge in the North and fled into the Sudan (Lomo and Hovil.2004: 10-21). Secondly, the eruption of the ethnic conflict and the genocide in Rwanda and Burundi also laid the basis for a complex regional system that has proved immune to several peace agreements. The ethnic-based Tutsi and Hutu struggle in Rwanda, especially between April and June 1994 culminated in a loss of over 800 000 lives. Meanwhile, in Burundi, the same conflict system triggered civil conflict that has claimed 300 000 lives, displaced millions and resulted in millions of refugees living in neighbouring countries. The final event took place in the then Zaire in 1996 when armed groups, with the assistance of neighbouring states Uganda and Rwanda, removed President Mobutu from power (Reyntjens (1999: 253).

Since 1986, the various conflicts in the Great Lakes Region have become enmeshed. The result is that of complex and intertwined interests: individuals exploit natural resources illegally which help to finance the wars; civil wars in one state are fought on neighbouring state territory, creating casualties and the displacement of millions; people fleeing war zones have, in turn, become refugees in neighbouring states. This community of refugees generates regional and cross-border instability, which threatens to destabilize the countries that host them. Intense political and military competition means that most governments pay little attention to long term national development or regional integration and rely almost solely on military means.

According to Lund's typology (1996: 39), the Congolese conflict as a whole cannot fit into the different stages described because, while certain parts of the country, such as the western part enjoy peace, other parts such as the Ituri District, the North and South Kivu and the North Katanga are in a stage of unstable peace and even reaching stages of crisis and war.

In analyzing the conflict in the DRC, one can ask if it is wise to analyze this conflict as one conflict, or in its different conflicts, as it appears that the Congolese conflict is made up of a set of different conflicts. In fact, according to the actors involved, the motives of their involvement and the intensity of the conflict, one can say today that there are three ongoing conflicts in the DRC.

The current so-called ethnic conflict in the Ituri district between Hema and Lendu ethnic groups provide a succinct example of the overlap of the various conflict levels and interests at stake. In fact, a power struggle has evolved between Rwanda, Uganda and the incumbent government of Kabila for the control of the strategic town of Bunia. This struggle may be related to the fact that significant quantities of crude oil have recently been found at the Albert Graben close to Lake Albert. Also, at local level, land tenure issues and the issue of who can lay claim to the oldest land rights, have become politicized. In a context of a very unstable regional insecurity setting, a kind of local proxy war has materialized that demonstrates the powerful interrelation between power elite struggles at the macro level, and the local inter-ethnic disputes. The current violent crisis therefore feeds on all the factors simultaneously. However, both contending ethnic groups represent only a minute fraction of all ethnic groups in the DRC, and it would be stretching the issue to generalize these crises to the level of the entire country.

In the eastern part of the country, local ethnic militia (the so-called Mai Mai) control vast rural areas. Some are genuine self-defence forces but a growing number of these groups have adopted warlord characteristics preying on population groups and local resources.

This phenomenon signals the proliferation of the predatory state at local levels, and as such, seems firmly embedded in the broader political culture of the DRC

Remnants of the Rwandan Armed Forces and Hutu Militia (involved in the 1994 genocide in neighbouring Rwanda), as well as fresh Hutu recruits from the East of the DRC have reintegrated into the *Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), that wander the countryside to seek out a living, further complicating the regional security setting. Although the FDLR has formally relinquished any connection with the genocidal project, they are still largely portrayed as having been involved in it by the incumbent regime. Finally, armed Hutu opposition to the Burundian army used a part of South Kivu to launch military campaigns.

This situation shows the complexity of this conflict. Indeed the first factor of complexity is the sheer number of actors involved in this conflict. In fact, in the Great Lakes region, the conflict system involves four government armies, two former government armies and over a dozen rebel groups and ethnic militias are engaged in violent confrontation. This confrontation is taking place in a region with extremely porous borders, unstable states and considerable uncontrolled flows of weapons.

The motivations of the actors involved add another degree of complexity to the Congolese conflict. Officially, the presence of foreign countries in the Congolese conflict is motivated by security concerns for Angola, Rwanda and Burundi, or to assist a SADC country member state. But, economic interest seems to be a great motivation to explain the involvement of these countries in this conflict. This fact has been stressed in the United Nations' Report on illegal exploitation of natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo (2001). All the actors involved in the Congolese conflict are accused in this report of illegally exploiting Congolese natural resources.

The natural wealth of the DRC also constitutes yet another complicating factor in that, according to scholars, it can generate, as well as result in, further wars and conflicts. In the case of the DRC, Mayraud and Katunga (2002: 181-182) have argued that the two

successive conflicts in the DRC have become a lucrative business for some conflict parties, in the form of resources exploitation and extraction. Therefore, the issue of illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the DRC must be addressed in the wider conflict in order to bring about sustainable peace in the region. In fact, the conflict in the DRC may have developed into an economic instrument for some conflict parties, including Uganda and Rwanda. Although security and political considerations were the initially professed reasons for the intervention of these countries in the eastern parts of the DRC during the 1988 conflict, the access to, as well as possible exploitation of natural resources, may have been a determining factor in the decision by external actors to enter the conflict.

Finally, the position of the DRC in the map of Africa is itself a factor of destabilization. In fact, most of its nine neighbours are endemically or acutely unstable. Therefore, even if the DRC were to re-emerge as a centrally controlled coherent country, this would not necessarily lead to regional stability. Thus, for instance, as long as the present Rwandan regime pursues its prevailing mode of military management of a domestic and regional political space, with its policies of ethnic domination and exclusion, the East of Congo will remain unsettled, whatever the evolution in the Congo. Similarly, spill-over effects emanate from other neighbouring countries.

The analysis of the cycle of conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo reveals that this country is in several stages of the conflict cycle, as labelled by Lund. The Ituri district, North and South Kivu and North Katanga are not in the same cycle as the western part of the country. It would thus be a mistake to apply the same tools of preventive diplomacy throughout the entire country. Every conflict must be treated as unique in order to maximize the chances of its resolution.

## *Chapter 4*

# **DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES IN THE CONFLICT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

In the unstable international conditions of the post-Cold War, the role of diplomacy has become overwhelmingly important with the increase of the complexity of relationships between international actors. The importance of diplomacy becomes more significant when considering that the post-Cold period has seen a mounting number of intra-state conflicts, in comparison with the Cold War period, which saw more inter-state conflicts. As these conflicts pose a threat to the international system, their resolution by diplomatic means becomes the concern of the international community, through the United Nations and/or other regional organizations.

Although the majority of civil wars end when one warring party achieves a victory over the other, negotiated agreements are growing more common as a means of ending intra-state conflicts. Analyzing boundary conflicts between 1947 and 1996, Zartman (2000: 28-47) found that a large majority (two-thirds) has de-escalated through negotiation. Diplomacy is the practice of verbal discussion with the intent to influence, transmit a position, or negotiate on a given issue or situation, for a mutually acceptable outcome. That is why it is often called an art because each situation requires a unique mixture of understanding, persuasion, threatening and cajoling amongst others things (Aiken and Brahm, 2005).

This study is a case study of preventive diplomacy for the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo by the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region. According to Lund (1996: 42), preventive diplomacy operates between peacetime diplomacy and crisis diplomacy. In fact, as said above, peacetime diplomacy is the mode of diplomacy conducted by states

that enjoy more or less stable relations. It involves joint efforts to promote the material well-being of the states involved. In peacetime diplomacy, the probability of conflict between parties is nil due to the ties established between them (Lund, 1996: 41). This kind of diplomacy has characterised the relations between Burundi, Rwanda and the then Zaire since the establishment of the *Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs* (CEPGL) in 1976. The CEPGL had created a framework for the promotion of common interests between them. During this period the probability of conflict was nil until the change of regime in Rwanda and Burundi froze the activities of this organization in 1994.

By contrast, crisis diplomacy involves efforts to manage tensions and disputes that are so intense as to have reached the level of confrontation (Lund, 1996: 42). The relations between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo after the genocide in 1994 were characterized by high tension. The failure to disarm soldiers among civilians in the refugee camps was denounced by Rwanda. Facing frequent assaults by the ex-FAR and Interhamwe from the Congo territory, the Rwandan government threatened to send its troops in Congo in order to solve this problem.

From 1996 onwards, the Democratic Republic of Congo entered into a cycle of violence, firstly with the rebellion led by Laurent Kabila and secondly, with the second rebellion initiated by the RCD. According to Lund's definition (1996: 37), the escalation of violence observed this time could not allow the application of preventive diplomacy for conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Therefore the priority for the international community was to negotiate a settlement of this conflict, that is, the reaching of an agreement between the parties that would enable them to end the armed conflict. Conflict settlement is differentiated from conflict resolution, which implies that the deep-rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved: conflict management implies the handling of the causes of conflict, in order to contain violence. However, conflict settlement and conflict management create conditions for conflict resolution.

According to Zartman (2000: 51), the reaching of the agreement that enables the parties to end an armed conflict is determined by the existence of both a perception that the

present course of the conflict is unsustainable, and the perception that there is a suitable way out of the conflict. Conflict settlement refers to a working out of a mutually satisfactory agreement between the parties involved. It is aimed at bringing the conflict to an end, without necessarily dealing with its fundamental causes (Burton and Dukes, 1990: 83-87).

How the conflict in the DRC was dealt with by the international community in order to bring it to a cycle of unstable peace that was favourable for preventive diplomacy is the main focus of this chapter.

The analysis of this conflict reveals that many diplomatic initiatives were undertaken by the international community, showing how concerned the different parties were that this conflict be resolved. This concern can be seen by the number of recommendations adopted by the United Nations Security Council and by the number of agreements signed by the parties involved.

Efforts to resolve the conflict began virtually simultaneously with the onset of hostilities. Since 1997, this conflict had already seen approximately twenty-three peace initiatives (Swart and Solomon, 2004: 7). These diplomatic initiatives were aimed at ending the hostilities in this country, and addressing the concerns of neighbouring countries, mainly Rwanda and Uganda as the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has regional dimensions.

From 1998 to December 2005, thirty-four resolutions were adopted by the United Nations Security Council and four peace agreements were signed, namely the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in 1999, the Pretoria Agreement in 2002, the Luanda Agreement in 2002, and the Global and All inclusive Accord in 2002. Several other mechanisms were also put into place in order to address the security concerns of neighbouring countries. This is the case of the Joint Verification Mechanisms between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Tripartite Plus Commission sponsored by the

United States of America and including the four countries (DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi).

This chapter focuses on the analysis of these different diplomatic initiatives in order to assess their failure to bring about peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Great Lakes Region as a whole.

#### **4.1 Analysis of Diplomatic Initiatives in the DRC Conflict**

According to Malan and Boshoff (2002), peacemaking has become a favoured response to regional conflicts. It may be defined as the diplomatic process that involves the techniques of persuasion, negotiation and political manipulation to persuade adversaries to do things that they do not wish to do.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo had generated a bewildering array of peacemaking responses by a wide variety of actors who were all bent on ending the conflict as soon as possible.

As said above, the diplomatic initiatives in this conflict resulted in the signing of several agreements and mechanisms, namely, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in 1999, the Pretoria Agreement in 2002, the Luanda Agreement in 2002, the Global and Inclusive Agreement in 2002, the Joint Verification Mechanisms in 2004, and the Tripartite Commission in 2004.

This section analyzes these peace agreements and different mechanisms in that they paved the way for the use of preventive diplomacy as a technique for the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Great Lakes region.



#### 4.1.1 The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement

The Lusaka Agreement is a ceasefire agreement aimed at ending the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It has been regarded as a success of African diplomacy inasmuch as SADC leaders mainly mediated the process. The Lusaka Accord is the first step towards settlement of the conflict, both regionally and domestically. Indeed, it deals simultaneously with both internal (the absence of effective state authority and inclusive governance) and external factors (such as the continuing threat posed by ex-FAR and Interhamwe militia). It poses the principles of internal negotiations in the DRC to resolve the political crisis while simultaneously attempting to provide mechanisms to resolve the security concerns of Rwanda and Burundi.

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement provides for the establishment of a ceasefire, the freezing of the territorial control of all conflicting parties and subsequent withdrawal of all armed groups operating in the territory of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the establishment of a Joint Military Commission made up of African countries to monitor the implementation of the agreement as well as the disarmament of destabilizing forces, and the initiation and setting up of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, aimed at bringing about a new political order in the Democratic Republic of Congo and based on the participation of the Congolese armed groups, the non-armed political opposition and representatives from civil society.

Despite the signing of this Agreement, its full implementation took time. Even if some foreign troops withdrew, such as those from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia, others such as the Rwandan and Ugandan forces remained in Congolese territory. Meanwhile, 'negative' forces are still threatening neighbouring countries. According to Solomon and Mngqibisa (2000: 37), the manner in which the Lusaka Agreement was reached contributed significantly to its failure, because while it succeeded in keeping the belligerents in their positions, it did not stop the fighting.

Even if the ceasefire is generally observed, there is still fighting in some parts of the country. Hence, the question of why the Lusaka Agreement was so difficult to implement?

The answer to this question leads to the assessment of the Lusaka Agreement by examining whether or not it took into account all the parameters necessary to bring about a holistic solution to the Great Lakes region, notably the causes, the actors and the stakes underlying the conflict.

It has been argued above that the causes of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo must be explained not only in terms of grievances such as developed by Burton (1987: 63) or Azar (1983: 81-99) but also in terms of greed. Whatever the explanation, it is acknowledged that it is a conflict in which the external factors play a large part. Therefore, its resolution should consider the internal and external factors in order not only to end the conflict in the DRC, but also to bring about a holistic solution to the problems of the whole Great Lakes region.

According to Burton (1987: 140), “any situation of conflict has many components, and in conflict resolution it is necessary to break down the whole into its separate parts and issues”. In order to understand the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it must be broken down into its separate parts in order to be able to distinguish the actors involved and their interests, the third-party interventions, etc. The parties in these conflicts are: the DRC government and its allies (Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe), the rebel groups (RCD, MLC, RCD/K-ML, RDC/N) backed by Rwanda and Uganda, and also the different militias (Mai Mai, Interhamwe, ex-Far, FDD-CNDD, etc) whose impact is considerable in this conflict. The pertinent issues are those of unity and integrity within the DRC, the question of Banyamulenge citizenship, political participation through democratization of the country, security concerns for Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, the

massive exodus of the Hutu population from Rwanda and Burundi, and internal problems in Uganda, underlying the struggle of armed groups fighting the Ugandan regime.

The main criticism levelled at the Lusaka Accord is that it did not take into consideration all these parameters. Selebi (1999: 6) explains this situation by the fact that there is

a general tendency that emerged during the 1990s for political negotiators to introduce a self defeating dynamic by ignoring the finer details of an envisaged peace process. The Lusaka process provided a prime example of the tendency of peacemakers to gloss over detail.

Therefore, the unresolved details become operational problems for peacemakers on the ground when the agreements are implemented. In fact, the peacemakers in their goal to reach an agreement seemed to ignore the militia phenomenon in the negotiations. This forgotten detail has become an obstacle in the implementation of the agreement because, even if the main belligerents (RCD, MLC and the government) have stopped the fighting, the militias did not. This has forced the signatories to respond at times to the attacks launched against them after the ceasefire, therefore violating the provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, and thus rendering difficult the implementation of the whole agreement.

In fact, the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement had faced a certain number of problems that had been minimized or ignored during the process of negotiation. Among these problems, were:

- The exclusion of certain actors. The Lusaka Accord, negotiated and signed only by the main actors (DRC government, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, RDC/Goma and MLC), did not encompass other rebel groups such as the Ugandan or Burundian rebels, UNITA, and other militia groups operating

from the DRC, especially the Hutu militia and the Mai Mai. The approach taken in the Agreement was to disarm these Hutu militias and to repatriate them to Rwanda. Despite the fact that the negotiators recognized the existence of these militias and their role in the conflict, they have minimized their impact in the global process. The evolution of the conflict has shown that, in spite of the respect of the ceasefire by the main actors, the war has continued through the actions of these militias.

- The Lusaka Agreement did not address the causes underlying the existence of foreign armed groups in Congolese territory. Although the security concerns of neighbouring countries were addressed, the agreement treated the question from a Congolese angle only. In reality, the existence of armed groups in Congolese territory is the manifestation of deep-lying causes. The Agreement should address these causes and not only their consequences. If the Agreement recommended a national dialogue in the DRC in order to set up a new political order, it could also recommend the same for Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda in order to resolve the deep-seated reasons that brought these armed groups into Congolese territory in the first place. In fact, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement chose to repatriate the Interhamwe and ex-FAR militias but did not envisage a political avenue to allow these combatants to return freely to Rwanda. The same scenario prevails for the LRA and NALU/ ADF in Uganda.
- The Lusaka Agreement failed to take cognisance of the greed factor as opposed to the grievance factor. In the analysis of the causes of the conflict, it has been argued that greed motives have also guided the involvement of actors in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement only addressed grievance factors such as the security concerns of neighbouring countries. No reference was made regarding the illegal exploitation of natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo. This fact explained the ambiguity of some actors such as Uganda to withdrawing its troops from Congolese territory because according to Lind and Sturman (2002: 182), the two

successive conflicts in the DRC (1996 and 1998) have become a lucrative business for conflicting parties, in the form of resource exploitation and extraction.

- Finally, the Lusaka Agreement did not envisage the setting up of a regional framework in which regional problems could be resolved. In fact, in the past, the CEPGL was a framework that helped to deal with problems of regional scope between Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. This organization contributed to ensuring the stability of the region until 1994.
- In the preamble of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, the parties recognise that addressing the security concerns of the Democratic Republic of Congo and neighbouring countries would contribute to peace. But the lack of will in the implementation of this agreement did not allow this provision to be implemented. Indeed, one of the criticisms made about the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is the fact that it left its implementation to the good will of conflicting parties. As these conflicting parties had some interests in protecting the ‘negative’ forces, this provision could not be implemented without a third party intervention.

Globally speaking, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement provided little room for peace, as it could not prevent the outbreak of further violent conflict. The negotiations seemed to have been regarded as a platform for securing international recognition rather than representing a commitment to peace by the signatories (Fourie and Solomon, 2002: 15). However, seen in the broad perspective, it had the merit of ending the hostilities among main conflicting parties, therefore creating an environment of unstable peace for the use of preventive diplomacy, to address the underlying causes of this conflict.

### 4.1.2 The Pretoria Agreement

In 1999, the parties in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo signed a comprehensive ceasefire agreement in Lusaka. As mentioned above, the agreement provided for the cessation of hostilities within 24 hours of signature, and for the establishment within one week of a Joint Military Commission (JMC) for the purpose of overseeing the implementation of the agreement until such time as a UN peacekeeping force could be deployed. The Agreement also provided for the initiation of an Inter-Congolese Dialogue on the political future of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The commitments made by the parties to the conflict in this Agreement, especially on the issue of the disarmament of ‘negative forces’ and the withdrawal of foreign forces in the Congo, have not been respected. According to the Agreement, this should constitute a mechanism for disarming the militias and armed groups, including genocidal forces. In order to achieve this, all parties committed themselves to the process of locating, identifying, disarming and assembling all members of the armed groups, and to taking the necessary measures to facilitate their repatriation.

The Lusaka Agreement is an example of the tendency of peacemakers to gloss-over details. According to Malan and Boshoff (2002), the ceasefire agreement placed a heavy burden of expectancy on the United Nations peacekeeping forces. It also envisaged a number of peace enforcement tasks, including the tracking down and disarming of armed groups, screening mass killers, perpetrators of crimes against humanity and other war criminals, and handing over suspected perpetrators of genocide to the International Criminal Court of Rwanda. Implicitly, these tasks would be carried out by United Nations peacekeepers.

With regard to such a situation, the Brahimi Report (2000) notes,

The outlines of a possible United Nations peace operation often first appear when negotiators working towards peace agreement contemplate UN implementation of that agreement. Although peace negotiators (peacemakers) may be skilled professionals in their craft, they are much less likely to know in detail the operational requirements of soldiers, police, relief providers or electoral advisers in United Nations field missions.

In such circumstances, the seeds of destruction soon become obvious, when agreements are translated into mandates and actions, and the unresolved details become the operational problems of the peacekeepers on the ground. The lack of troop commitment by member states is likely to be one of the biggest impediments for the implementation of the Lusaka agreement. In fact, in a country like the Democratic Republic of Congo, the United Nations sent only 90 military observers to monitor implementation of the agreement.

According to the Brahimi Report (2000), certain minimum conditions should be met before the Security Council seriously entertains requests for UN assistance with implementing a ceasefire or peace agreement: including the opportunity to have advisor-observers present at peace negotiations to ensure that the envisaged UN tasks are operationally achievable.

The Pretoria Agreement signed by the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda in July 2002, constitutes a return to the principles of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement but adds the benefits of introducing those components essential to implementation. In brief, the Pretoria Agreement committed Rwanda to withdraw its troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Congolese government to support the disarmament, demobilization and repatriation of those groups identified in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement as 'negative forces'. In fact, as said above, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement

did not take into consideration the fact that militias were actors in this conflict. The Pretoria Agreement recognized their existence and committed the Democratic Republic of Congo to their disarmament, demobilization and repatriation.

According to this Agreement, the Government of Rwanda reaffirmed its readiness to withdraw from the territory of the Democratic Republic of Congo as soon as effective measures to address its security concerns, in particular the dismantling of the ex-FAR and Interhamwe, are taken. These measures that had to be verified by the Third Party defined in the Agreement as the Secretary-General of the United Nations and South Africa according the paragraph 3, are detailed in a programme and timetable for implementation. They include, *inter alia*:

- The finalization of the *Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo* (MONUC) phase three deployment within fifteen days of signature;
- The establishment and operationalization of the assembly points for the holding of Ex-FAR and Interhamwe militias, including securing of the assembly points in terms of MONUC and Joint Military Commission (JMC) processes, within 25 days of signature;
- Tracking down, disarming and dismantling Interhamwe and Ex-FAR leaders and troops, to be completed within 90 days of signature;
- Repatriation of ex-FAR and Interhamwe forces, and verification of the process of repatriation within 90 days of signature; and
- Withdrawal of Rwandan troops, also to be completed within 90 days from signature.



The Pretoria Agreement (2002) also provides room for implementing earlier plans for the creation of a security curtain along the common DRC/Rwandan border. Indeed, paragraph 8.10 of the Agreement states that,

the parties further agreed that their respective governments would put into place a mechanism for the normalization of their security situation along their common border. This mechanism may include the presence of an International Force to cooperate with the two countries, in the short term, to secure their common border.

The issue of tracking down and disarming armed groups appears even more problematic than locating International Forces for border security. Although the tracking down, disarming and dismantling of the Interhamwe and ex-FAR forces is beyond the scope of MONUC's mandate, the implementation programme assigned responsibility for this to MONUC, DRC, JMC, Rwanda and the 'Third Party' or South Africa.

However, according to paragraph 7 of the Agreement, this will be the responsibility of the DRC government in collaboration with MONUC and the JMC in the territory under the control of the DRC government whereas those in the territory under the rebels control would be done by the MONUC.

Most of the responsibility for the implementation of monitoring and verification of the Pretoria Agreement, was given to the Third Party

The benefit of the Pretoria Agreement resides in the fact that it brought Rwanda back into the peace process. It has again committed the DRC government to cease arming and supporting the Interhamwe and ex-FAR. Therefore, it restored a degree of integrity to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

### 4.1.3 The Luanda Agreement

The Luanda Agreement, signed in September 2002, between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda, is one of the diplomatic initiatives that has addressed the security concerns of neighbouring countries referred to in the Lusaka Agreement signed by the conflicting parties of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1999 in its preamble and Article 2.

After the signing of the Pretoria Agreement in July 2002 and the commitment made by Rwanda to withdraw its troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda remained the only foreign belligerent without a plan for withdrawal. Angola took this opportunity to broker a deal between Kampala and Kinshasa. On 6 September 2002, both parties agreed on the withdrawal of the Ugandan troops from the North-Eastern Congo within three months, against the establishment of a joint security mechanism at the border and a Pacification Commission for Ituri, involving Uganda.

In fact, the district of Ituri suffers from ethnic strife over communal access to land, mineral resources and local positions of power. In this district the Hema and Lendu community are both the actors and victims of this tragedy. The conflict between Hema and Lendu is an illustration of the political instrumentation of ethnicity. It is also an illustration of the proxy war waged by Kampala, Kigali and Kinshasa through various militias.

The Luanda Agreement provides for the withdrawal of Ugandan forces from the Democratic Republic of Congo, the putting into place of Joint Pacification Committee on Ituri to govern the district with the assistance of the MONUC in order to avoid a power vacuum in the district, and the acceptance by the Democratic Republic of Congo for Uganda to remain on the slopes of Mount Ruwenzori until the parties put in place security mechanisms guaranteeing Uganda's security.

The parties have committed themselves to:

- Work toward the restoration of the dignity and sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as address Uganda's security concerns;
- Refrain from all types of military and logistical support including the provision of bases sanctuary to armed groups, inter-ethnic militia, subversive organizations and all rebel movements against the interests of the parties;
- Work closely together in order to expedite the pacification of the Democratic Republic of Congo territories currently under the Uganda control and the normalization of the situation along the common border; and
- Exchange intelligence on all matters of security interests among them.

The Luanda Agreement, brokered by Angola, shows many parallels with the Pretoria Agreement, mediated by South Africa. The main difference resides in the provision allowing the Ugandan army to withdraw in a gradual manner, thereby allowing a force of one hundred soldiers to remain in Bunia until 15 December 2002. This also prevented a power vacuum, military setbacks, and the eruption of violence following the withdrawal of the Ugandan army. Hence, the Ituri Pacification Committee was expected to fill the gap while the Democratic Republic of Congo was given the task of securing the area militarily. The Ituri Pacification Committee failed to work normally because of the opposition from local militia. The power vacuum left remote areas in the North of the Democratic Republic of Congo vulnerable to local fighting.

#### 4.1.4 The Global and Inclusive Accord

If the Pretoria Agreement brokered by South Africa, and the Luanda Agreement brokered by Angola, had the merit of addressing the security concerns of neighbouring countries as expressed in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, giving therefore a beginning to its implementation, the diplomatic initiatives also focused on the internal situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In fact, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement noted the commitment of the Congolese Government, the RCD, the MLC and all other Congolese political and civil organizations to hold an all-inclusive national dialogue aimed at bringing about national reconciliation and a new political order. In Chapter Five, of the Modalities for the Implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is stipulated that “the parties agree to do their utmost to facilitate the inter-Congolese political negotiation which should lead to a new political dispensation in the Democratic Republic of Congo”. In other words, the Inter-Congolese Dialogue was aimed at producing a negotiated settlement to end the war and consolidate the process of democratisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Despite the difficulties faced in the process of grouping together all the Congolese parties, the diplomatic initiatives succeeded in assembling these for the 25 February 2002 Inter-Congolese Dialogue in Sun City, South Africa, in an effort to establish an agreement on a power sharing formula (Mans, 2003: 200-202).

The first attempt at negotiations had been concluded by a partial power-sharing agreement between the Government and the *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC), the Political Agreement on Consensual Management of the Transition in the DRC (PACMT). Unfortunately, the RCD/Goma and some political parties rejected this Agreement and formed the *Alliance pour la Sauvegarde du Dialogue Inter-Congolais*, which recommended the continuation of negotiations, while keeping in mind the two core

principles adopted in Addis Ababa during the preparatory phase of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue – inclusivity and consensus.

The Agreement concluded between the Government and the MLC also did not enjoy full support from the international community. According to Naidoo (2002: 15), while Belgium, Canada and France favoured a partial agreement to bring forward the stalled peace process through a potential political authority in the DRC, South Africa and the USA rejected the deal as non-inclusive and therefore unacceptable. For these countries (South Africa and USA), lasting peace required an overall accord including all the parties to the conflict. It took almost eight months to gather again all the Congolese parties to negotiate an agreement in which every body would safeguard its interests.

The diplomatic initiatives finally resulted in the signing of an Inclusive Agreement in 16 December 2002, which was accepted by all the involved parties. In this Agreement, parties agreed to the cessation of hostilities and the organization of a Transitional Period of twenty-four months, with the possibility of one extension of six months.

The signatories of the Global and Inclusive Agreement agreed on the objectives of the Transitional Period. These objectives include:

- The unification and reconstruction of the country, the re-establishment and the restoration of territorial integrity and State authority in the whole of the national territory;
- National reconciliation;
- The creation of a restructured, integrated national army;

- The organization of free and transparent elections at all levels allowing a constitutional and democratic government to be put in place; and
- The setting up of structures that will lead to a new political order.

This Agreement paved the way for the Interim Constitution and for the formation of the Army. The Final Act of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, in March 2003, formally endorsed the Global and Inclusive Agreement, as well as the Interim Constitution for the Transitional Period.

Contrary to the Pretoria Agreement and the Luanda Agreement, the Inter-Congolese Dialogue was aimed at addressing the internal dimensions of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This formed part of the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

As can be deduced from this section, each and every provision of the Agreement (the Ceasefire, Joint Military Commission, deployment of MONUC, withdrawal of foreign troops, and the Inter-Congolese Dialogue) faced obstacles on route to implementation.

However, despite major setbacks, it constituted and still forms the backbone of subsequent diplomatic initiatives. In fact, all the afore-mentioned agreements were initiated as means to implement the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

#### **4.1.5 Different Mechanisms**

As mentioned above, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement addressed, among others, the security concerns of neighbouring countries, namely Rwanda and Uganda. In fact, these countries motivated their involvement in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in terms of

security concerns. Burundi, even if not being a signatory of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, joined some bilateral agreements that will be analyzed in a later section of this study. The other neighbouring countries were also concerned as long as the Democratic Republic of Congo could use the existing agreements or mechanisms to track down all destabilizing forces operating from its territory (Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, 1999).

In the implementation of provisions relating to this issue, a certain number of bilateral agreements were signed between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda (Pretoria Agreement, 2002), and between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda (Lusaka Agreement, 1999).

The implementation of these agreements resulted in a series of mechanisms that dealt with the question of foreign armed groups, operating in the territory of the Democratic Republic of Congo and causing insecurity in neighbouring countries. These mechanisms are the Joint Verification Mechanism between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, and the Tripartite Plus Commission, uniting the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and later Burundi.

#### *4.1.5.1 The Joint Verification Mechanism*

The Joint Verification Mechanism was established between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda on 22 September 2004. The aim of this mechanism was to verify, and investigate any allegations made by any of the parties. According to the Terms of Reference of the Joint Verification Mechanism (2004), the Mechanism shall:

##### *A. With Regard to Ex-FAR / Interhamwe, ALIR, FDLR:*

- provide information relating to Rwandan rebel groups;

- formulate recommendations to eliminate the presence of Rwandan armed groups in the Congolese territory;
- verify Rwandan allegations on the Congolese support to Rwandan armed groups; and
- verify the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation or reinsertion of Rwandan rebels.

*B. With Regard to Allegations on the Implications of Rwanda in the DRC:*

- verify the allegations on the presence and infiltrations of the RDF in the Congolese territory, and
- verify allegations of illegal exploitation of natural and mineral resources by Rwandan nationals.

For the purpose of verification, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda have set Joint Verification Teams, which are deployed in specific points along the common borders in order to verify allegations made by them. The main objective pursued in this mechanism was to build trust among the parties as it is demonstrated that one of the causes of tension between these countries is the lack of trust.

The Parties were committed to cooperate with the Joint Verification Teams, constituted for that purpose, in order to facilitate their task. It was agreed that MONUC would provide logistical support for the accomplishment of this mission.



#### *4.1.5.2 The Tripartite Plus Commission*

On 23 September 2004, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda, signed the Memorandum of Intent on Regional Security in the Great Lakes. The objectives of this memorandum brokered by the Government of the United States of America, are to strengthen relations between the parties, to create a mechanism to address regional instability and a process of political and diplomatic rapprochement, to neutralize and eliminate any security threat prevailing at the parties' common borders among and between the parties and to ensure respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries in the region and cessation of any support for armed groups or militias, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the United Nations and other rules of international law.

In order to neutralize armed groups, Article 2, paragraph 2 of the Memorandum of Intent signed by the three countries, provides that

the parties commit themselves, on the basis of national efforts, in accordance with international law, in consultation with each other, and with the assistance of a regional force and/or with MONUC, to disarm, demobilize, reintegrate and resettle all armed rebel groups and militias operating on the territory of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The implementation mechanism provides the establishment of a Commission named as the Tripartite Joint Commission (Art. VII). The primary objective of the Commission is “to complete the tasks of the 1999 Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, the 2002 Pretoria Agreement, and the 2002 Luanda Agreement, specifically those provisions relating to the tracking down, disarming, demobilization, repatriation, and resettlement of armed groups, with particular reference to the ex-FAR/Interhamwe present on the territory of the DRC as well as normalization of the situation along the borders”. The Commission had the

mandate to address the obstacles that have hindered effective government authority in the Eastern parts of the DRC. It has also to implement the Memorandum and to ensure that its objectives are being met.

The Tripartite Joint Commission comprises two sub-commissions: the sub-commission of Diplomatic Affairs that works for the rapprochement and the normalization of relations between the parties and the sub-commission on Security and Defence Matters that deals with the security and defence questions of the parties.

After Burundi joined the Commission in 23 October 2005, the Tripartite Joint Commission was renamed the Tripartite Plus Commission, which shares the same objectives.

Despite the multitude of diplomatic initiatives having taken place in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, this country still does not enjoy stable peace. The North East of the country, its Eastern part, and the North Katanga have now moved to another stage according to Lund's typology. The question is thus to establish why all these diplomatic initiatives did not bring about peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in particular, and the Great Lakes Region, in general.

## 4.2 Assessment of the Diplomatic Initiatives in the DRC Conflict

The assessment of the diplomatic initiatives undertaken in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo reveals that there are many shortfalls as regards the peace process in the country. Firstly, there was no action undertaken to avoid the conflict in this country and secondly, when the conflict had begun, there was no diplomatic understanding of the complexities of the war, and consequently no peace initiatives emerged. Faced with the growing insecurity caused by ex-FAR and Interhamwe, the Congolese government warned the international community to assist in separating soldiers from civilians in refugee camps. But no international action was undertaken. When the conflict became violent in 1996, the diplomatic actions undertaken were insufficient. The South African diplomatic initiative in 1996, for instance, was focused on the negotiation of a ceasefire between Mobutu and Kabila, ignoring Rwanda and Uganda in these negotiations.

The diplomatic initiatives undertaken in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo are accused of having been exclusive. The only non-state actors to be included in the negotiations of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in 1999 were the rebel factions MLC and RCD/Goma, as Uganda and Rwanda insisted on their participation. The Pretoria Agreement and the Luanda Agreement respectively in July 2002 and September 2002 excluded the rebel groups despite their role in the issue at the centre of negotiation between the countries. This restriction to track-one diplomacy opened the door for the active manipulation of developments. In general, track one engagement introduces a certain degree of sensitivity to a peace process. In the case under study, President Frederic Chiluba was rejected as mediator because of his alleged links with the Angolan rebel group Unita, and Masire's office was shut down by Laurent Kabila on allegations that he was connected to rebel groups. Similar issues surfaced time and again, making track-one diplomacy a delaying factor in peacemaking.

Bilateral consultations carry the danger of diplomatic exclusion and overlooking important factors, yet the apparent simplification of the conflict proved valuable for the following months as implementation focused on two main components: the Rwandan

withdrawal, and the tracking down of the perpetrators of genocide by the DRC government. For instance, the Mai Mai militias, although well known, were excluded in the whole process of negotiation because the international community was in doubt about their size and their military capacity. An early recognition of the Mai Mai could have provided the international community with the information on Hutu rebels hiding in the forests.

Another shortfall is due to the fact that the peace initiatives in the Democratic Republic of Congo have been handled according to an overall assessment. Such an assessment can be useful and provides a political framework for both belligerents and brokers. However, as argued by Mans (2003: 219), the provision of valuable information still needs to find political will to produce results. And even then it might not be possible to prevent any given conflict from emerging. But, with maximum information available, it is feasible to predict the intermediary consequences of diplomatic actions.

Put differently, in-depth background research should be executed on belligerents, geography, culture, ethnical contexts, etc. When it comes to precarious circumstances in a crisis, it is essential to know what to expect. Accordingly, it is important, for example, to keep track of the political brokers of uncontrolled armed groups, their communication networks, and their short-term and intermediate goals. Lack of expertise and research of this nature, hindered diplomatic efforts.

As a result of the marginal impact of track-two diplomacy on the DRC peace process, much needed information from the field did not trickle up to the political level. The most promising resource for a thorough analysis was MONUC staff members. However, their numbers were too small (only 90 military observers) to cover the ground satisfactorily. But also its restrictive mandate and strict UN guidelines have prevented MONUC from playing a more supportive role in the peace process.

Peace initiatives in the Democratic Republic of Congo have consistently been behind the times and proven incapable of addressing the imminent difficulties at the right time.

Diplomacy should find ways to retrieve more information to create political awareness of the crucial details of a crisis.

Diplomatic initiatives undertaken in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo cannot be assessed in terms of conflict resolution as they did not address the underlying causes of this conflict as analyzed earlier in this study. But in terms of preventive diplomacy, they have succeeded in putting an end to the hostilities in this conflict, thereby creating an environment in which conflicting parties can address the root causes from which violence can arise.

In fact, these diplomatic initiatives benefited from creating conditions in which preventive diplomacy could be used in the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These diplomatic initiatives have brought this conflict to a stage of unstable peace in which preventive diplomacy works according to the typology labelled by Lund (1996: 39).

Such an environment, therefore, is favourable for the use of preventive diplomacy in the framework of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, to address the root causes of this conflict in order to bring about sustainable peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the whole region, as this conflict has regional dimensions.

## *Chapter 5*

# **THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo will have a positive impact on the whole region as it has been recognized that the conflict in this country has external or regional dimensions. In fact, this conflict is a subsystem of the Great Lakes conflict system. As said above, systems operate as interdependent units. Each element of the system is affected by all the others, and affects all the others in turn (Hocker and Wilmot, 1985: 129-156). The Great Lakes conflict system is composed of several conflicts and the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is one of these conflicts. The resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo will affect the conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda such it is affected by these conflicts. The analysis of the causes of this conflict has shown its interdependency with the other conflicts in the region. As long as the conflicts in these countries exist, the Democratic Republic of Congo will suffer as a result – for example, there will be constant inflows of refugees. Also, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo will continue to affect the neighbouring countries if this country is unable to put an end to the activities of armed groups operating from its territory.

Since the beginning of this conflict in 1996, several diplomatic initiatives have been undertaken. From the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in 1999 to the Final Act of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue at Sun City in April 2003, the efforts were aimed at restoring peace in this country.

Despite addressing the security concerns of the neighbouring countries and the internal issues (power sharing, Inter-Congolese Dialogue), the Democratic Republic of Congo is not enjoying peace, at least in its totality. In fact, the North and South Kivu, the North

Katanga and the Ituri are in a stage of crisis and even war. The FDLR is still operating in the DRC, especially in the North and South Kivu, thereby compromising the security of Rwanda; in Uganda, the ADF/NALU and the LRA are still fighting the Ugandan government from the North Kivu and the Eastern Province and in Burundi, in spite of the positive developments that have occurred, the FNL is still in armed opposition against the government sometimes launching its attacks on government positions in Burundi from the South Kivu. As can be seen, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is affected by the internal conflicts in neighbouring countries but also affects these conflicts in turn.

According to analysts, the diplomatic initiatives undertaken in the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo could not bring about peace in this country and sustainable peace in the Great Lakes region because they did not address the underlying causes sustaining conflicts in this region. However they have the merit of having ended the hostilities in the Democratic Republic of Congo and therefore, created a propitious environment in which the underlying causes can be addressed in order to bring about sustainable peace, not only in this country, but also in the region as a whole.

This propitious environment is what Lund (1996: 39-42) called in his cycle of conflict a stage of unstable peace during which preventive diplomacy can be applicable. In fact, this technique “concentrates on troubled, unstable places and at times where the potential is high or rising that regimes or peoples will take up arms or use other forms of coercion to resolve emerging political differences”.

The situation of the Democratic Republic of Congo, except the North and South Kivu, the North Katanga and the Ituri and the Great Lakes Region, illustrate this environment. In reality, the cessation of hostilities in the Democratic Republic of Congo does not mean that this conflict has been resolved because the causes of the conflict have not been remedied. The lack of participation, the political exploitation of ethnicity, the flow of refugees, the presence of foreign armed groups (FDLR, ADF/NALU, LRA, FNL, etc),

etc are factors that can, at any time, cause the escalation of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular and in the Great Lakes Region in general.

Despite the existence of peace agreements among different competing parties, peace and stability are far from being sustainable. The threat of the re-ignition of violence and insecurity remains high. While domestic efforts to ensure the implementation of peace agreements are very important, there is a need for additional efforts by regional and other external actors. Hence the need for an approach that would be responsive to the particular challenges of the individual conflicts, while also contributing to a comprehensive regional peace.

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region is another diplomatic initiative aimed at resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the whole region of the Great Lakes. According to the concept paper of this Conference, the Conference is an acknowledgment of three issues. Firstly, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has regional dimensions. Secondly, the people of the Great Lakes region are so interlinked socially, economically, culturally and linguistically. Instability initially generated by internal causes in one country could quickly spread to create a dynamic of conflicts in the entire region. Thirdly, solutions to the conflicts and instability in each of the countries concerned can be effectively addressed only within a regional framework, as this would offer an opportunity to tackle the interlocking root causes of the region's conflicts in a comprehensive manner and consolidate peace at a national level.

The origins of conflict in the Great Lakes region lie within both the individual states and the region. A regional dimension of conflict management thus constitutes a precondition to the attainment of durable peace in the constituent states and the region.

In the particular case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, conflict resolution in this country must address the underlying causes of this conflict as these causes are rooted in the internal situation of this country as well as in the region. Indeed, the weakness of the



Congolese state led to the loss of any authority, moral or coercive, in most parts of the national territory. This state of affairs attracted foreign interference and provided fertile ground for the proliferation of various non-statutory armed groups from all the sub-region.

The Democratic Republic of Congo has become the theatre of intense activity for a number of African states (Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia), and non-statutory armed groups (ex-FAR, Interhamwe, UNITA, ADF/NALU, LRA, FNL, etc). This situation has created destabilizing military alliances among both the state and non-state actors (Rwanda-Uganda, Angola-Zimbabwe-Namibia-DRC, DRC-FDLR-Mai Mai, etc.).

While the Democratic Republic of Congo contends that the neighbouring states, namely Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi take advantage of unresolved contradictions of Congolese society to promote their own respective interests, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi also tend to attribute the difficulties they face, not to contradictions within their own societies, but to the Democratic Republic of Congo being an unreliable neighbour. In fact, the governments of Rwanda and Uganda have maintained that their military involvement in the Democratic Republic of Congo was a defensive strategy to prevent armed incursions from the DRC, and to rescue minorities threatened by genocide. But the UN report on the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo proved that economic interests also motivated the involvement of these countries in this conflict.

The DRC and its allies (Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia) have argued that the invasion of the DRC by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi violated international law and the principles of the UN and AU Charters. They have argued that although it was incumbent upon the government of the DRC to ensure that rebels would not use the DRC territory to launch attacks on neighbouring states, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi must deal with their opponents, armed and unarmed, within their respective territories and stop at the international borders.

The complex causes of conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo point to the need for an integrated approach to conflict resolution, an approach that considers not only the interests of relevant political actors, but also the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental factors that have contributed to and sustained hostilities.

The Great Lakes region comprises the core countries, that is, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania together with the neighbouring countries: Angola, Congo Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Sudan and Zambia. Egypt was co-opted also as a member of the International Conference.

By its resolutions 1291 of 24 February 2000 and 1304 of 16 June 2000, the United Nations Security Council confirmed that the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo constituted a threat to international peace and security. Therefore, the United Nations Security Council stated in the above-mentioned resolutions the need for an international for peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region that would help to tackle the interlocking root causes of the region's conflicts in a comprehensive manner (UN Security Council: 2003).

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region is an initiative of the United Nations and the African Union, from which it is funded. It is designed as a process that will bring together the countries of the Region to reach an agreement on a set of principles, namely good neighbourly relations, stability, peace, development, etc. and articulate and launch a selected programme of action with a view to helping to end the cycle of conflict and ensure durable peace, stability, democracy and development in the whole region.

The main objective of this Conference is to establish a regional framework that would facilitate the adoption and implementation of a stability, security, and development pact around four main areas: peace and security, democracy and good governance, economic development and regional integration, and humanitarian and social issues.

This chapter will deal with how this Conference addresses the regional dimension of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and consequently, how to strengthen peace in the Great Lakes region.

As detailed in this study, preventive diplomacy is based on the notion that diplomacy is better applied prior to the outbreak of violent confrontation, as opposed to other forms of diplomacy, such as crisis diplomacy. This preventive action replaces the possibility of using the threat of hostility in times of conflict. Considering the conditions of the countries of the Great Lakes region, the technique of preventive diplomacy becomes evident as “it comes into play when policies, institutions, and procedures between states and groups at the local, national, or regional levels that could handle disagreements and maintain a process of orderly resolution either do not exist, are breaking down, or fail to regulate political disputes and conflicts of interests, thus creating considerable risk of the threat or use of armed force and other forms of coercion or the outbreak of widespread violence” (Lund, 1996: 42).

In the case of the Great Lakes region, what are the destabilizing factors that the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development must tackle in order to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion? Furthermore, what is the way forward and the necessary steps to be taken by the International Conference for this purpose?

## **5.1 Destabilizing Factors in the Great Lakes Region**

In Chapter Three, an analysis of the causes of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo was made. In this analysis, a distinction was made between structural factors and triggering factors and the emphasis was on structural factors as they are pre-conditions of crisis.

The situation in the Great Lakes Region is a consequence of a complex and interconnected set of interacting and accumulated problems. These include bad governance, lack of democracy, monopolization of political power by an individual or ethnic group, a policy of exclusion, widespread corruption, nepotism, violation of basic human rights and deepening poverty. These negative factors lie at the root of each and every cycle of political and ethnic violence and the almost perpetual instability in most states of the region.

The states of the Great Lakes region are characterized by weak institutions, which have a direct impact on their ability to manage conflicts. As weak states, they cannot adequately protect minority groups or vulnerable ethnic groups or reconcile rival groups, manage democratic institutions effectively, provide checks and balances in their governing systems, or establish transparent governing procedures. As a result, participation and trust in governance is diminished. Thus, although Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo are at various states of post-conflict transition to democratic states, conflict between ethnic groups will be resolved outside the state's systems, increasing the risk of violence. In fact, the institutions are not able to manage conflict as they represent the monopoly of one ethnic group. In these countries, between 1994 and 2004, the change of regimes was by non-democratic means. The institutions usually are in the hands of the new power just to serve its interests. The existence of these institutions brings the risk of violence for those people who do not recognize them as a political framework to settle disputes. Hence political reform becomes paramount to ensure the success of the proposed democratic transitions in these countries with legacies of inter-communal violence, institutionalized inequality, and privatization of the state resources by the elite.

The states of the Great Lakes region are required to improve their terrible economic conditions through the creation of regional economic communities (RECs). The RECs in turn form economic institutions that are charged with integrating the sub-region's economies. Currently, the Great Lakes region hosts a number of regional institutions with overlapping memberships: ECCAS, CEPGL, the EAC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Preferential Trade Area (PTA). Although the

RECs have not succeeded in fostering economic integration or in generating economic growth, stronger efforts toward economic integration would not only end the region's economic stagnation, but such economic relationships may help to repair political problems as well. However, the major existing institutions for economic integration are neither efficiently nor satisfactorily defined, nor adequately institutionalized. Furthermore, many states belong to more than one sub-regional organization. Such divided loyalties to numerous regional economic organizations has consequences: while national economies falter, ethnic rivalries and conflict inter-linkages drain depleted resources and further weaken efforts to link economic reforms to conflict management (International Peace Academy, 2003: 20)

Thus, in order to strengthen the RECs and increase their effectiveness, it is important to either establish new and larger organizations that would meet regional economic challenges, or strengthen existing organizations. But the overlapping regional affiliations would make difficult to decide on the options.

In addition to the pressing matters of national governance and economic self-sufficiency facing the countries of the Great Lakes, trans-national issues such as flows of refugees and large numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs), impoverishment and the proliferation of illicit trade of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) are challenges that require a coordination of regional and international efforts to ensure peace and security.

The Great Lakes region is today one of the world's largest regional concentrations of people displaced by war with a number of refugees and displaced people totalling almost 900,000 who are distributed among the six core countries. Tanzania and Uganda have the biggest refugee problem as the Democratic Republic of Congo has been in a conflict situation since 1996. Violence and rape continue to push many people out of their communities. The Democratic Republic of Congo has experienced the most displacements, particularly in its eastern part where almost half a million people left their communities.

Refugees and internally displaced people have often been seen as an economic problem and security threat to those countries that host them. In order to develop relevant and durable solutions for reducing the number of refugees and IDPs, as well as improving their living conditions, it is imperative to distinguish between immediate causes of displacement, namely armed conflict, and root causes such as unmet basic social and economic needs and the denial of identity and autonomy (Rotberg, 2002: 85-90).

Poverty is one of the root causes of conflict as well as a result of the region's political violence. In the Democratic Republic of Congo for example, the looting committed by the neighbouring states that intervened on both the government and rebel sides has exacerbated the economic devastation of the civil war. Outside of war, to a large extent, the economies of the Great Lakes region have remained underdeveloped due to state-centric policies pursued in the post-colonial period, the tendency for politicians to use the state as a means of personal enrichment, and lack of appropriate investment in human capacity development and other factors that encourage economic development.

Specifically, privatization of state resources by ruling elites, the persistence of shadow markets, and the erosion of social services have brought about the underdevelopment of national and regional economies. Weak national economies, in turn, lack the dynamic impetus necessary to provide the resources to be channelled towards resolving regional conflict. The poverty in some of the states of the Great Lakes region is even more paradoxical given the rich endowment of natural resources in countries of the region. Such poverty is due to mismanagement and lack of transparency in accounting for the revenues generated by these natural resources. According to the United Nations Development Programme Report (2003: 241-244), ten of the fourteen countries comprising the Great Lakes and Central Africa regions fall in the low human development category and never rise above the level of 116 out of 175 on the scale of development.

Another area of continued vulnerability for the Great Lakes region is the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Though estimates vary from one state to

another, it is widely recognized that the Great Lakes region is inundated with SALWs, which allow conflicts to persist. According to Tusingwire (2004), in the Democratic Republic of Congo itself, an estimated one million Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) are in private hands. This situation owes much to the weakness of local government capacities for law enforcement and border control as it does to the multiplicity of avenues for the illicit global arms trade more broadly.

Another trans-national issue in the Great Lakes region during the conflict is HIV/AIDS. In fact, in this region, where regionalized conflict has existed for more than a decade, this risk is particularly acute as armed groups travel across borders and use rape and forced marriage as weapons of war. Although this factor is not a direct factor underlying conflict, it has a significant impact on human resources and the consequences on the economies of the states of the region. According to UNAIDS reports (2003), in the Great Lakes region, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among adult population is as follows: Kenya: 14%; Rwanda: 11%; Burundi: 11%; Tanzania: 7%; and the DRC: 5%.

In sum, the proliferation of conflicts in the Great Lakes region have negated national and regional stability needed for economic integration and regional development and continues to damage relations among the core states of the region. Conflicts have represented both the cause and the consequence of the absence of the enabling environment needed to nurture participatory democracy and good governance in the countries of the region.

These destabilizing factors analyzed above are areas in which the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region has to take action to avoid the threat or use of armed force or related forms of coercion to settle the political disputes that can arise from them.

How then will the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes addresses these destabilizing factors, in order to prevent the re-escalation of conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and therefore, bring

about sustainable peace in the region? This is the pertinent question for which the section below seeks a feasible response.

## **5.2 Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

The definition of preventive diplomacy suggested by Lund (1996: 37) restricts the moment that this technique is used in a given conflict, that is, before a dispute has become a violent conflict. In other words, after a conflict escalates into violence, the concept of preventive diplomacy ceases to apply because the conflict enters in a new cycle, where another type of diplomacy is applied: crisis diplomacy. According to this definition, preventive diplomacy can be applied in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo only after the cessation of hostilities among belligerents. Therefore, all the diplomatic initiatives undertaken before the cessation of hostilities were not preventive diplomacy. From the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to the Final Act of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, the efforts aimed to put an end to this conflict. These diplomatic initiatives do not fall under preventive diplomacy because they were undertaken during the course of the armed conflict. However, considering the cycle of conflict labelled by Lund, they have succeeded in bringing the conflict from the stage of crisis and war to the stage of unstable peace, thereby creating conditions that can bring conflicting parties to address the root causes of the conflict.

Conflict resolution on the other hand, implies that the deep-rooted sources of the conflict are addressed, and resolved. This implies that the behaviour of conflicting parties is no longer violent and attitudes are no longer hostile (Miall et al., 1999: 27). The resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is the final objective of preventive diplomacy, must therefore address the root causes underlying this conflict to prevent the threat or use of armed force and related form of coercion to settle the political disputes that can arise.



As preventive diplomacy targets an existing dispute and aims to avoid its worsening into violent conflict, Mans (2003: 185) argues that this concept was never applied in the Democratic Republic of Congo as, before the outbreak of violence, no preventive action was undertaken to prevent violence. For instance, the rebellion led by Laurent Kabila might have been avoided if the issue of the refugees had been addressed before the escalation of violence in the East.

If it is agreed that this technique has never been applied in the country, for the purpose of avoiding the escalation of conflict, how will preventive diplomacy be useful in preventing the re-escalation of violence in this country?

In terms of the intensity of violence, it is important to note that the Democratic Republic of Congo is in different stages of the cycle of conflict. While the rest of the country enjoys stable peace, the North and South Kivu, the Ituri and the North Katanga are in different stages where there is violence. In reality, in the North and South Kivu, the activities of foreign armed groups operating in these areas (FDLR, NALU/ADF) and local militias (Mai Mai) keep these areas at a stage of violence. In Ituri, local militias (UPC, PUSIC, FNI, etc.) but also, to some extent, the LRA have maintained the areas at a stage of violence. Despite the improvement observed, in recent times, violence still exists. In North Katanga, the increasing activities of Mai Mai have meant that this area is in a state of permanent warfare.

More significantly yet, is the concept of preventive diplomacy applicable to the whole country?

At first glance, according to the Lund's definition quoted above, the concept of preventive diplomacy cannot be applied in these situations because it aims to resolve an existing dispute before the situation worsens into a crisis or even war situation. As there is already violence in these parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo, preventive diplomacy cannot be applied. However, this concept is applicable for the prevention of

violence in the rest of the country. In this context, it is necessary to establish what should be done and how this is to be achieved, so as to prevent violence in the conflict.

In analyzing the causes of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it has been observed that they are rooted in the regional environment of the Great Lakes. Therefore, preventive diplomacy must address the structural factors analyzed above that form the pre-conditions of crisis situations such as the number of refugees and internally displaced persons, governance and political instability, the high militarization or the predisposition of the recourse to military solutions, the political exploitation of ethnicity, poverty, the composition of the population, the weaker economic performance, the degradation and depletion of natural resources, the environmental degradation or depletion, the lack of cooperation between states, etc. To these structural factors are added the internal factors namely the deterioration of the state's authority as a failure of governance that had brought as consequences, the development of a number of informal and illegal activities including arms sales, drug trafficking, illegal exploitation and trade of valuable commodities, such as diamonds, gold, etc.

The resolution of these causes or these destabilizing factors from which conflicts arise can greatly contribute to the avoidance of conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular and in the Great Lakes region in general.

With regard to how to address these underlying factors, analysts such as Lund (1996: 148-151) argue that preventive diplomacy uses tools, that is, methods to prevent or mitigate conflicts and to build peace. This method concerns the design and implementation of policy tools that can address the underlying causes, and in so doing, prevent violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

How the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region is intending to address the root causes of the conflict in the region in order to bring about peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo and sustainable peace in the whole region, is the focus of the following section.

### **5.3 The International Conference and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region**

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region was initiated to address the root causes of the conflict in the Great Lakes region from regional and domestic perspectives. For that purpose, it must design policy tools that can tackle the destabilizing factors from which conflicts arise in this region.

These policy tools are methods to prevent or alleviate a conflict and build peace. They consist of projects, procedures, programmes, policies or mechanisms. Each tool operates on a conflict's source and it can be implemented through different organizational channels: some are sponsored by actors outside the region in conflict, some by national governments, and some locally. Tools vary in the aspects of conflicts they address and in their efficiency in achieving results.

Tools directed at the same causes of conflict can be operated through different functional areas. According to Lund's toolbox (1996: 202), there are military approaches, non-military approaches, development and governance approaches.

#### *1. Military Approaches:*

- The limitations on the used of armed forces such as arms control regimes, confidence-building measures, non-aggression agreements, arms embargoes, etc., and
- The threat or use of armed force such as deterrence policies, security guarantees.

## 2. *Non-Military Approaches:*

- Coercive diplomatic measures such as diplomatic sanctions, economic sanctions moral sanctions, war tribunals, trials, etc., and
- Non-coercive diplomatic measures such as non-judicial measures (international appeals, propaganda, fact-finding missions), etc. and judicial or quasi-judicial measures (mechanisms for peaceful settlement of disputes, arbitration, adjudication).

## 3. *Development and Governance Approaches:*

- Policies to promote national economic and social development such as prevention economic development aid, private investment, economic trade, economic integration, etc.,
- Promulgation and enforcement of human rights, democratic and other standards such as political conditionality, election monitoring, international human rights standards, etc., and
- National governing structures to promote peaceful conflict resolution such as power sharing, consociation, federation confederation, etc.

Some policy tools aim directly at triggering factors such as an ethnic group leader's hostile rhetoric. Others target potential sources of conflict, such as anti-poverty programmes intending to rectify disparities in resource distribution and living standards. As mentioned above, each policy tool works on a conflict's source. Thus, in order to prevent violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Great Lakes region, every source of conflict analyzed above will be tracked by a specific tool.

It is important to underline that any tool offers strengths and weaknesses. Successful application depends on the conflict context and associated conditions. Effective conflict prevention requires choosing tools with care and this choice in turn must rest on a thorough understanding of how each tool operates (Jentleson, 2000: 13).

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes has taken into consideration the conflict context in the region and has elaborated different policy tools in order to prevent the escalation of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and to bring about sustainable peace in the whole region.

For this purpose, four thematic groups were established according to the four themes of the International Conference: Democracy and Good Governance, Humanitarian and Social issues, Economic Development and Regional Integration and Peace and Security.

This section presents the policy tools designed by the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development on the Great Lakes region in order to prevent violence in this Region. An overall assessment will be made in the next section with regard to their effectiveness. Data used in the following sections are collected in the reports of the four thematic groups on the agreed programmes of actions and different projects to tackle the destabilizing factors that underlie conflicts in the Great Lakes region.

### **5.3.1 Policy Tools Addressing Economic Development and Regional Integration**

This cluster focuses on two programmes of action: cooperation in poverty reduction and harmonization, and strengthening of regional cooperation policies. Projects designed range from trans-border collaboration initiatives to those dealing with all facets of infrastructure development. For instance, a regional micro-credit support facility will have an immediate impact in triggering the rise of small and medium enterprises by the people of the region. In addition, the regional mechanism for the certification of natural

resources will curb the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Any efforts to stop the illegal exploitation of resources will not only have a positive impact on the security in the region, but will also make way for more transparent practices (ICGL, 2006: 8-9).

The programmes of action focusing on cooperation for poverty reduction comprises thirteen projects (ICGL: 2005): Regional production of fertilizers, Northern Corridor, Trans-African highway (Mombasa-Lagos), Lobito Corridor (Angola-DRC-Zambia), Southern Corridor (Great Lakes Region Railways Project), Mombasa-Kisangani Railways, Rehabilitation and navigability of River Congo, Rehabilitation and connectivity of Inga Dam, East African optic fibre project and Integrated tourist network (Kenya, Tanzania, DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda).

The programme of action on harmonization and strengthening of regional cooperation policies comprises seven projects, namely Mechanism for debt management, Revival of CEPGL and its specialized agencies, Regional finance institution, Study on macro-economic convergence, Regional mechanism for technical cooperation, Regional mechanism for certification of natural resources and Trans-border development zones.

These programmes and subsequent projects are aimed at reducing poverty in the countries of the region by the revitalization of the economies of the region with a direct impact on the communities. The implementation of these programmes will create jobs, speed up the development of the region and therefore reduce poverty with as a positive consequence the reduction of the use of violence.

### **5.3.2 Policy Tools Addressing Democracy and Good Governance**

The main root cause of the socio-political conflicts experienced in the Great Lakes region is the protracted lack of political and economic governance. This has been further compounded by the failure of efforts made for democratizing and liberalizing the economies in the region.

In this regard, the aim of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Governance in the Great Lakes region was the restoration of peace and stability, as well as the building of pillars of democracy, good governance and sustainable development in the region (ICGL, 2006: 6-7).

For this purpose, the International Conference has designed five programmes (ICGL, 2005):

- Rule of law, fight against crimes against humanity, human rights;
- Rational management of resources;
- Strengthening democratization processes;
- Communication, information and education; and
- Equal participation and empowerment of women and youth as well as persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

From these programmes, twelve projects were designed in order to bring about peace and stability in the Great Lakes region. The programme on the Rule of Law, the Fight Against Crimes Against Humanity and Human Rights, comprises three projects: Establishment of a regional centre for democracy, good governance, human rights and civic education; Harmonization of policies and strategies in the field of judiciary and security services; and the Great Lakes initiative for the prevention of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and the fight impunity (ICGL, 2005).

The programme on Rational management of resources comprises three projects, namely, the Setting up of a regional anti-corruption mechanism, the Regional initiative against the illicit exploitation of natural resources, and the Promotion and monitoring of the

Millennium Development Goals in the region. The programme on strengthening democratization processes comprises two projects: the Capacity building of political leadership and consolidation of political pluralism and electoral systems and Setting up a regional forum for parliamentarians. In the programme on Communication, information and education, only one project is designed, the Creation of a regional council on information and communication. Finally the programme on Equal participation and empowerment of women and youth as well as persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups comprises three projects, namely the Establishment of a regional mechanism on gender equity, the Setting up of a multifunctional regional centre for youth and the Establishment of a regional framework for the empowerment of indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups.

According to *The Informer* (ICGL, 2006: 6-7), all these projects seek to promote the sustainability of the political and social dialogue. In fact, through them, it will be possible to consolidate strategies of good cooperation, to maintain relations of neighbourliness, to forge new positive alliances between States and the peoples so as to consolidate social solidarity. It is also planned, through these projects, to put in place key instruments for curbing the impunity of political and economic crimes, which are experienced in the region. These instruments will help States to deter the illegal exploitation of natural resources, consolidate the capacity of national institutions, recover embezzled financial resources and break down the culprits.

### **5.3.3 Policy Tools Addressing Humanitarian and Social Issues**

Protracted conflicts, civil disturbances, natural and man-made disasters have been the main cause behind the humanitarian tragedy of the Great Lakes region. In addition to large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, victims of sexual violence, orphans, separated children, etc. these conflicts have also rendered most of the people in the Great Lakes region extremely vulnerable and weakened an already fragile social structure. In fact social services, health facilities and other social infrastructures have



collapsed in a number of areas in the region (ICGL, 2006: 6-8). In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for instance, the degradation of health and education facilities is very advanced in the North and South Kivu as a result of conflict and economic crisis.

Resolving the humanitarian and social challenges facing the countries of the Great Lakes region has been, therefore a central stake of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region. Obviously humanitarian and social issues cannot be resolved in isolation from the broader questions of peace and security as well as good governance and economic development.

The activities envisaged under this cluster are action oriented and carry with them the potential of addressing the particular needs of the most vulnerable populations, the majority of them being women and children.

In order to address the humanitarian and social issues, the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region has designed four programmes of action (ICGL: 2005): Legal and principle framework on humanitarian and social issues, Protection of Refugees and displaced persons during their displacement and return, Assistance to host communities, restoration of the environment, Rehabilitation of human settlements and disaster preparedness and response, Rehabilitation of basic social services, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other endemic diseases, Capacity building, psycho-social, support to groups with specific needs.

The programme on the Legal and Principle framework on humanitarian and social issues comprises six projects namely, the promotion of international instruments on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and Refugee Law, the Protection and assistance to Internally Displaced Persons, the Protection of stateless refugees, the Legal framework on issues relative to the issuance of identification documents, the Legal framework on matters pertaining to the recovery of properties and the Humanitarian access and protection of humanitarian workers. The programme on Protection of refugees and displaced persons during their displacement and return has four projects: Ensure

physical safety of displaced persons and refugees during and upon their return, Demining of areas of settlement and resettlement for displaced persons and refugees, and Safeguard the civil and humanitarian character of camps and settlement areas for displaced persons and refugees.

The programme on Assistance to host communities, restoration of the environment, rehabilitation of human settlements and disaster preparedness and responses has three projects, namely, the Assistance to host communities, the Restoration of the environment and rehabilitation of human settlements, and the Disaster management and contingency plans. The programme on Rehabilitation of basic social services, HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and other endemic diseases, capacity building, psycho-social support to groups with specific needs has seven projects, namely the Resource mobilization for the rehabilitation of basic services, the Access to quality education and modernization of the education system, HIV/AIDS and other endemic diseases, the Strengthening of health programmes with a particular focus on “neglected diseases”, the Extremely vulnerable groups, and the Sexual exploitation and abuse, and other forms of violence against women.

As can be deduced, this cluster deals with issues of forced population displacement and human settlement rehabilitation on the one hand, and on the other hand, they deal with other social issues, including but not limited to HIV/AIDS, sexual violence and support to victims, basic education, assistance to vulnerable groups, as well as social cohesion.

#### **5.3.4 Policy Tools Addressing Peace and Security**

In his address to the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region in Dar es Salaam, the United Nations Secretary-General affirmed that “any national peace process or development strategy that does not address the region’s cross border challenges will be incomplete at best, and remain vulnerable to reversal” (ICGL, 2006).

To address the peace and security issues, the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region (ICGL, 2005) has designed four programmes of action: the programme of action on proliferation and circulation of illicit arms and light weapons, the programme of action on border security, the programme of action on trans-national crime and terrorism, and the programme of action on promoting conflict prevention, management and resolution.

The projects related to the programme of action on Proliferation and circulation of illicit arms and light weapons are the Harmonization of approaches to address the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in the Great Lakes region, and the Demobilization, Disarmament, Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants in the Great Lakes region. Those related to the programme of action on Border security are the Joint border security management, the Development of border zones and promotion of human security, and the capacity enhancement in dealing with border security. The programme of action on Trans-national crime and terrorism comprises two projects, namely, the intensification of cooperation to fight trans-national crime in the Great Lakes region and the intensification of cooperation to fight terrorism in the Great Lakes region. The programme of action on Promoting conflict prevention, management and resolution comprises two projects: Conflict prevention and confidence building, and conflict management and resolution.

#### **5.4 An Assessment of Preventive Diplomacy in the International Conference**

The programmes and projects designed by the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region are aimed at addressing the underlying causes of conflicts in this region. The question now is about to know if these tools are effective to prevent violence in the Great Lakes.

This leads to an assessment of preventive diplomacy in relation with the guidelines for tasks and methods of intervention designed by Lund (1996: 139-160) in order to conclude if the tools designed by the International Conference are able to prevent the escalation of violence in the Great Lakes region in general and in the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular.

It is important to recall that in the cycle of conflict, preventive diplomacy works in the stage of unstable peace. Its objectives are, when the dispute is near crisis, to block violent acts, freeze hostilities, reduce tensions, improve relationships, foster positive communications, enhance cross-cutting ties, maintain basic security, create non-violent means for addressing issues in conflict and to limit arms. During low-level conflict, preventive diplomacy has as objectives to address disputes, channel specific grievances into negotiations, engage parties in dialogue, discourage extreme actions that can precipitate violence, create processes to improve relationships and reduce tension. In very unstable peace situations, preventive diplomacy works to create channels for dispute resolution, build or strengthen political and civic institutions, and alleviate the worst conditions breeding conflict (Lund, 1996: 149).

To each task to be performed by preventive diplomacy matches a specific tool. Thus, diplomatic and economic sanctions, pre-emptive peacekeeping forces, multilateral peace conferences, economic assistance, track-two diplomacy and arms control regimes and their monitoring are tools to perform tasks in a dispute near crisis. By contrast, in a low-level conflict, the tools are arbitration by the International Court of Justice, track-two problem-solving processes, conciliation, elections monitoring, special envoys and good offices, third-party mediation, conciliatory gestures. In an unstable peace situation, conflict resolution training, human rights standard setting and monitoring, peace committee structures, fact-finding missions, commissions of inquiry, economic reform, standards, and integration, collective security regimes, and rules of law programs are tools of preventive diplomacy.

In the first section of this chapter, the destabilizing factors from which conflict are caused in the Great Lakes region are discussed. Although they constitute the root causes of conflicts in this region, they do not bring necessarily violence by themselves. According to Lund (1996: 140-143), six factors make a conflict become violent: the lack of restraints on violence, the lack of process, the lack of resources, the lack of solutions, the lack of incentives and the lack of trust.

Thus in the assessment of the preventive diplomacy strategy of the International Conference, one must analyze not only whether the different tools have been efficient in preventing conflicts in this region, but also how this Conference has managed these six factors in order to keep conflicts from becoming violent.

When the assessment shows that there is a lack of restraint on the use of violence among conflicting parties, this means that, in order to achieve the opposing parties' goals, these groupings do not have institutions or structures in place that limit the use of armed force. The objective for preventive diplomacy, in this situation, is to suppress or contain violence, to remove arms and to discourage the use of arms. For this purpose, the tools would include the deployment of a peacekeeping force, a targeted deterrence, enforceable demilitarized zones, the implementation of emergency measures, the establishment or strengthening of permanent political institutions, war crime tribunals, military assistance, etc.

If one considers the four countries mainly involved in the conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda), it is observed that there is no mechanism in place which limits the use of armed forces among them. In the past, the CEPGL (Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries), with its specialized institutions, succeeded in creating a framework in which Rwanda, Burundi and the then Zaire (now DRC) resolved their disputes. It created common institutions such as the BDGL (Development Bank of the Great Lakes Countries), the financial instrument which funded several common projects between the three countries. According to Lukunda (2004: 50-52), this bank financed numerous

projects among which twenty-five took place in the DRC. However, the lethargy, which overtook this organization following the change of regimes in both Burundi and Rwanda, reduced its influence in this region.

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region has proposed the revival of the CEPGL and its extension to other countries of the region in order to serve as the permanent institutional framework capable of designing, coordinating and implementing any programme of common interests.

The 'lack of process' exposes the conflicting parties to resort to violence, in that when there are no procedures or institutions through which the disputes can be resolved, conflicting parties are inclined to use violence as a means to resolve the dispute. Preventive diplomacy will focus on engaging the parties in communication and dialogue, creating channels and processes for discussion or negotiation, setting up or strengthening permanent political institutions through which such negotiations can be regularized. The tools in this case are good offices, mediation, peace conferences, arbitration, adjudication, institution building, problem-solving workshops, democracy building, etc.

The Great Lakes countries do not have a framework in which their disputes can be resolved. Even the CEPGL that was made up of three of the six core countries did not have such a structure for dispute resolution. In analyzing the memberships of the countries of the region, one observes that the only organization that includes all the countries of the region is the African Union, at the continental level. At the regional level there is a dispersal of membership in different organizations such as SADC (Southern African Development Community), EAC (East African Countries), and ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African Countries), etc. To fill this gap, the International Conference suggests the establishment of an effective regional security framework for the management and peaceful settlement of conflicts and a framework for confidence building and the prevention of conflicts in the region to ensure long-term regional stability. But its form and structures are yet known at this stage.

Another factor is the lack of resources. The conflicting parties may have neither an immediate desire to use violence nor the means to do so, but they lack the material resources to engage in any effort to keep the dispute from worsening. Preventive diplomacy, in this situation, is aimed at providing elemental needs, alleviating extreme social and economic conditions that provide the occasion for incitement to armed force. Technical assistance, humanitarian relief, and economic assistance are efficient tools in this situation. In the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it has been proved that many Ugandan soldiers and officials are involved alongside militias in the extraction of gold and other resources in the Ituri. This attraction keeps the conflict violent, as violence will maintain the continuity of this extraction.

The International Conference has designed projects aimed at alleviating poverty in the region such as the establishment of a regional micro-finance bank to allow the poorest in the region to have access to credit, or the fertilizer development project aimed at improving food and cash crops in the region.

A significant problem throughout the process was that of conflicting parties coming to the negotiating table to resolve conflicting issues, but lacking the presence of a defined proposal for settling the divisive issues. In other words, the opposing parties found themselves in a situation that lacked suggestions for the resolution of disputes. The objectives of preventive diplomacy focus on addressing the particular dispute, and generating a range of possible settlements. In this case, the tools consisted of brainstorming, as well as alternative options for governance, emanating from similar experiences in the region, throughout the continent, and globally.

The issues of foreign armed groups operating in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo and threatening the security of the neighbouring countries, mainly Rwanda and Uganda, is the main preoccupation that explains the involvement these countries in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The negotiations have never succeeded due to the lack of proposal/suggestions to settle this issue. In the framework of the International Conference, projects such as the joint border security management to ensure

security at common borders through a coordinated management approach, or the capacity enhancement in dealing with border insecurity are proposals to deter parties in the Great Lakes region from using violence to resolve a dispute.

Another factor is the lack of incentives, that is, a situation in which there are many possible solutions but the conflicting parties lack sufficient motivation to accept them. Preventive diplomacy in this case will perform the task to induce parties to accept solutions. Positive inducements (security guarantees, provision of foreign aid, offers of membership in international organizations, etc.) and negative inducements (coercive diplomacy, threats of exclusion from international organizations, elimination of foreign aid, etc.) are tools to prevent violence. In case the of the illegal exploitation of the DRC natural resources, the regional mechanism for certification of natural resources will be very relevant. The exclusion of the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) from the Kimberly Mechanism is a proof that this project can help to prevent conflict. Indeed, this country was excluded from this Mechanism in 2004 because it was unable to justify that the diamonds exported from its territory were mined there.

When conflicting parties are in a situation of a lack of trust, the perceptions and attitudes of the parties toward each other are so negative that they are unable to contemplate particular solutions or to comply with them. The objective of preventive diplomacy will be to provide mutual assurance, change attitudes and perceptions, and reduce tensions when they arise by non-official dialogues, educational and informational efforts, media programmes, etc.

The lack of trust is among the factors that have undermined the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo: lack of trust between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda and also between Uganda and Rwanda. One of the objectives of the International Conference is to build confidence and mutual trust not only among the states involved in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but also among the states of the Great Lakes region. Several initiatives have also been undertaken in order to build trust. The Fusion cell



sponsored by the United States Government and comprising the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, is aimed at that purpose as the information about the armed forces operating in the borders of each country will be treated and shared among the states concerned. For instance, in August 2005, Uganda alleged that there were almost four hundred LRA in the North of the DRC. Despite confirmation from MONUC and the Congolese Government regarding their withdrawal, the Ugandan Government continually threatened to send its troops to the area, due to mistrust between the DRC and Uganda. The same situation often also occurs between the DRC and Rwanda.

The importance of needs assessment rests in the fact that it can assist those who seek to prevent the escalation of a specific dispute by establishing precisely where preventive actions are required. In fact, many preventive efforts often neglect to establish a connection between the actions and the actual needs of a conflict situation.

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region, as seen above, has globally taken actions that can prevent violence in this region in that it tried to match preventive efforts to the needs of the region. In fact, by addressing the underlying causes of violence in the Great Lakes region, the International Conference has set up preventive strategies for sustainable peace, not only in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but also in the whole region if all the parameters are taken into account.

These preventive strategies need to be modulated as a single conflict situation evolves. Hence the importance of an individual, a government, or a multilateral group, team, or a task force that orchestrates the design and implementation of a multifaceted preventive strategy.

The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region is a process that will take some time before the completion of its work. In fact, since its inception, only one summit of Heads of State was held in Dar es

Salaam in 2004. The criticisms made at this point of its progress toward the strategies already designed are also recommendations to be taken consideration for this forum to succeed in bringing about sustainable peace in the Great Lakes region.

One of the weaknesses of the preventive strategies designed by the International Conference is that they do not pay more attention to the mechanisms of the implementation of these strategies. Apparently, the implementation of these strategies depends on the good will of the countries of the region themselves. If one considers certain factors such as the lack of trust, one wonders if these strategies have a chance to be implemented because the implementers are the same actors involved in the various conflicts. The fundamental element for the success of preventive strategies in the Great Lakes region is the setting up of a structure that will be responsible for supervision of the process. Such a structure must have the political authority to impose decisions among the members and must have the capacity for early warning in the region.

The International Conference did not consider the obstacles for the implementation of these strategies. One of these is the presence of forces opposed to their implementation such as the 'negative forces' as they will not benefit from these strategies. Can the FDLR allow the implementation of projects that can expose them in the Democratic Republic of Congo or the LRA, in Uganda? Furthermore, what will happen if a head of state is the obstacle for the implementation of a project that undermines his personal interests, such as in the case of the illegal exploitation of natural resources, or state sponsorship to rebel groups in other countries, such as in Rwanda and Uganda in the Democratic Republic of Congo?

Another weakness is the fact that the International Conference has focussed on the cross border issues and has designed preventive strategies for the prevention of violence at a regional level. Less attention was given to strategies to prevent the escalation of violence at the local level. Despite the fact that it is recognized that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has regional dimensions, this framework did not design preventive

strategies to avoid escalation of violence in the DRC in issues such as the presence of foreign countries was not addressed from a local perspective.

Finally, the issue of resources has not been taken into consideration. The main reason for the failure of African international organizations is a lack of resources, which renders their status to nothing but a ‘talk shop’, with little or no action. The first impression that emanates from the analysis of these policy tools is that their implementation requires a great deal of resources. Are the countries of the Great Lakes region themselves capable of funding these projects? Even if the international community agrees to contribute to their implementation, in terms of the procurement of resources, this support should not be exclusive but rather supplementary to the input of the Great Lakes member countries.

## *Chapter 6*

### **CONCLUSION**

Since its initial mention by the then Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld in 1960 (Lund, 1996: 32), the concept of preventive diplomacy has attracted a great deal of interest over the years, especially within the contemporary global society, which is essentially characterized by structural change. Contrary to the Hammarskjöld's era of the Cold War, distinguished by inter-state conflict, the post-Cold War era is dominated by intra-state conflict. Whatever the era, the idea underlying this concept is that it is better to prevent violence than to cease it.

For more than a decade, the Great Lakes region has been in turmoil due to intra-state conflicts in Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. These conflicts are so interlinked that the conflict of one country has negative effects on other countries, making the Great Lakes a conflict system. In this conflict system, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo appears as the epicentre.

Many diplomatic initiatives have been undertaken in order to resolve this conflict and bring about sustainable peace in the whole region. But none of these has thus far succeeded. In the case of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, these initiatives have, at least, triumphed in ending hostilities in the mostpart of the country.

This dissertation has dealt with the highly significant International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region and the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo by means of preventive diplomacy. Given the fact that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is typified by external dimensions, the International Conference was motivated by the fact that the Great Lakes region constitutes a conflict system and as such, all the conflicts in the region are intertwined. Thus, one cannot consider the resolution of one of these conflicts without taking into account the others.

Therefore, this Conference was convened for the purpose of addressing the Great Lakes region as a whole in order to bring about a holistic solution to this region.

According to Lund (1996: 37), preventive diplomacy

is action taken in vulnerable places and times to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion by states or groups to settle the political disputes that can from the destabilizing effects of economic, social, political, and international changes.

This dissertation has aimed at analyzing the policy tools designed by the International Conference to address the destabilizing effects and consequently, to prevent violence in this region. The theory also suggests that these policy tools must be applied before conflicts escalate into violence. Otherwise, preventive diplomacy cannot be applied – when violence has already occurred, the appropriate diplomatic technique is crisis diplomacy.

The rationale for adopting the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region as a case study is that it represents a new diplomatic initiative in the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Great Lakes region. In fact, most diplomatic initiatives in the resolution of the DRC conflict have focused on how to put an end to the hostilities in this country, whilst ignoring the interactions of neighbouring conflicts.

The main preoccupation in this dissertation has been to explore how the International Conference is equipped to address the regional dimension of the conflict in the DRC, in order to prevent a return to violence, and therefore bring about sustainable peace within the region. In addition, the research has aimed at providing recommendations as to how to strengthen this peace.

The basic premise of this study is that the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region is the first gathering of all countries in the region, namely the core countries (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya,

Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania) and the other neighbouring countries (Angola, Congo Brazzaville, the Central African Republic, Sudan and Egypt, which were also co-opted as members). Considering the fact that the objective of the International Conference is to address the interlocking root causes of the region's conflicts in a comprehensive manner, it can thus be viewed as a framework to prevent violence from flaring up again in the DRC, in that it provides an opportunity to address the fundamental causes of this conflict, and especially its regional dimensions.

In order to prove this hypothesis, the dissertation has been structured into six chapters. The first, which is the general introduction, paves the way for exploration of the subject at hand, by identifying the research theme, formulating the research problem, surveying the existing literature, and clarifying the methodology.

With regard to methodology, a distinction was made between approaches and methods, and units and levels of analysis. Thus, the descriptive-analytical and historical approaches were used to trace the background of the conflict in the DRC and to analyze the primary causes of the conflict. The method of research was inductive, although a deductively constructed conceptual framework was used for analytical purposes. Furthermore, priority was given to the qualitative and not the quantitative method, due to the political nature of the issue under consideration. As for the unit of analysis, this constituted the Democratic Republic of Congo but the complexity of the conflict also required regional considerations. Therefore, the level of analysis oscillated between national and regional levels, due to the complex nature of the issue under study.

The literature survey has shown that the existing works largely comprised secondary sources (books, articles, documents, etc.) as well as primary sources (United Nations Resolutions), which focused on how to resolve the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The literature study revealed the complete absence of studies on the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region, which precipitated this research project. Therefore, this study is demarcated by previous studies on the subject in two distinct ways. Firstly, it gives priority to the means of resolving the conflict in the DRC,

specifically by way of preventive diplomacy. Secondly, it is the first study to focus on the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region as a framework around which to design preventive strategies, in order to bring about sustainable peace in Great Lakes region.

The second chapter has dealt with the theoretical framework. It analyzed the concepts of conflict, conflict resolution and preventive diplomacy, the main variables of this study. Indeed, the international system has witnessed a structural change in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a predominance of intra-state conflicts in comparison with the previous century, which was characterized by the predominance of inter-state conflicts. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which commenced in 1996, is one such example of these changes.

The causes of the conflicts are often explained in terms of grievances or greed. In the case of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it has been demonstrated that even if there are motives of grievance to explain the involvement of actors in this conflict, greed motives seem to justify the involvement in the conflict. Therefore to understand the causes of the conflict in this country, a combination of both grievance and greed must be taken into account. In fact, if the issue of the citizenship of Banyamulenge population and the lack of democracy were among the reasons that motivated the rebellion led respectively by Laurent Kabila and the RCD, the evolution of the conflict has shown that the exploitation of natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo attracted many actors in this conflict.

These conflicts evolve in cycles comprising different stages, classified according to the intensity of violence experienced at any given time. Thus, according to Lund (1996: 38), the cycle of a conflict comprises five stages: durable peace, stable peace, unstable peace, crisis and war. Durable peace is a stage during which there are high levels of reciprocity and cooperation based on shared values, goals, and institutions, economic interdependence and a sense of international community. During the period of stable peace, there is communication and cooperation, within the context of basic order and stability. Unstable peace is a stage in which tension and suspicion among parties run high but violence is either absent or sporadic. Crisis is

a stage of tense confrontation between armed forces, without the exertion of any significant force, and war is a stage of sustained fighting between organised armed forces.

The period of durable peace, pre-1990, was a time in which diplomatic relations between the Democratic Republic of Congo and other countries of the Great Lakes region flourished. In fact, before 1990, there was a high degree of cooperation between these countries and all disputes between them were settled within the framework of existing institutions. The period of stable peace was characterized by relations between these countries, from 1990 until 1994. Disputes between them were resolved in the absence of violence although the existence of suspicion in their relations. From 1994, to the first half of 1996, the conflict was in a stage of unstable peace, during which one could observe high tensions, especially between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, on the issue of refugees along common borders. The period of crisis commenced prior to the outbreak of war in 1996, with the mobilization of Rwandan forces along its borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo. From 1996 to 1999, this conflict was in a stage of war with sustained fighting among belligerents.

Conflict resolution, as discussed, is a political process that requires a combination of actors and institutions from the grassroots level through to the international level and implies that the deep-rooted sources of conflict have been addressed and resolved. It differs from conflict settlement, which signifies the reaching of an agreement between parties, which enables them to end an armed conflict, and can also be distinguished from conflict management, which involves the deployment of peacekeeping forces.

In the cycle of conflict, preventive diplomacy comes into play when tensions in the party relationships are about to shift from a situation where they enjoy peaceful relations, to a stage of unstable peace, characterized by tension and suspicion, but where violence is either absent or only sporadic. In other words, preventive diplomacy operates between peacetime diplomacy and crisis diplomacy. In the case of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, preventive diplomacy would apply between 1994 and 1996, before Rwanda began amassing its troops along its borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo. It could also apply after the



signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in 1999, as the fighting among belligerents had ceased, even if tensions among them remained.

Preventive diplomacy uses tools or methods to prevent or mitigate a conflict and to build peace. Policy tools can comprise several projects, procedures, programmes, policies or mechanisms. Each tool operates on a conflict's sources and manifestations. To every stage of the conflict, there is a corresponding intervention method or tool. Thus, in the unstable peace stage, which is the main realm of preventive diplomacy, the priority for this form of diplomacy is to block violent acts, freeze hostilities, reduce tensions, to improve relationships, foster positive communications, enhance cross-cutting ties, maintain basic security, create non-violent means for addressing issues in conflict and to limit arms. For this purpose, the tools used in preventive diplomacy comprise diplomatic and economic sanctions, pre-emptive peacekeeping forces, multilateral peace conferences, economic assistance, track-two diplomacy; arms control regimes and their monitoring. But the choice of which tool to employ at a specific stage of the cycle, depends on the analysis done for each conflict situation.

The third chapter has analyzed the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This analysis proved that the conflict occurred within an environment of ethnic identity construction and mobilization in Rwanda and Burundi, which culminated in the genocide of Rwanda, in 1994, and the corrosion of state authority in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This conflict occurred due to a number of structural factors, such as governance and political instability, demographic stress, economic performance, human development etc. The conflict has witnessed several actors, ranging from state actors such as Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, to armed groups, namely the RCD, MLC, RCD/K-ML, RCD/N, Mai Mai, Interhamwe, NALU/ADF, LRA, FNL, and others.

As for their interests in the conflict, these extend from grievance (security concerns, governance, citizenship, etc.) to greed. The Report of United Nations Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo, has proven the existence of the 'greed factor' in the involvement of actors in this conflict.

The analysis of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has also shown the existence of other conflicts that are not at the same stage according to the cycle of conflict labelled by Lund. In fact, while the majority of the country is enjoying stable peace, the Ituri, the North and South Kivu and the North Katanga are at other stages of the conflict cycle, making it difficult to apply Lund's theory to this conflict. In fact, in the Ituri district, an ethnic conflict opposes Hema and Lendu over the control of land and resources. This conflict illustrates the proxy wars led by Kampala, and Kigali through various militias operating in this area. In the North and South Kivu, local and foreign militia, namely the Mai Mai militias, the FDLR, NALU/ADF have taken on warlord characteristics preying on population groups and local resources. The same situation is found in North Katanga, where various Mai Mai are operating. These areas are at a stage of crisis or perhaps even war.

In the fourth chapter, the diplomatic initiatives undertaken in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo were analyzed in great detail. From the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in 1999, to the Final Act of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in 2003, the diplomatic initiatives undertaken were not successful in resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, they managed to put an end to the hostilities of this conflict and therefore, creating the conditions in which preventive diplomacy may be applied.

The fifth chapter has dealt with preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the framework of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region. The aim of this chapter was to answer the question of how the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region has addressed the regional dimension of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in order to prevent the use of armed force or other forms of violence in this country.

As the diplomatic initiatives undertaken before this Conference have paved the way for the application of preventive diplomacy, by transforming the conflict from a stage of crisis or even war, to a stage of unstable peace, the International Conference has designed policy tools to

tackle the destabilizing factors or structural factors that have engendered violence in the Great Lakes region. These policy tools consist of projects, procedures, programmes, policies or mechanisms, which address the direct sources of the conflict.

In concrete terms, the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region has grouped the sources of conflict in the Great Lakes into four main clusters: democracy and good governance, economic development and regional integration, humanitarian and social issues, and peace and security. In each cluster, a certain number of programmes and projects have been designed in order to tackle the primary causes of conflict in the region.

The assessment made in the concluding chapter revealed that the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and development in the Great Lakes region globally took action to prevent violence by designing preventive strategies to tackle the destabilizing factors underlying conflict in the region.

However, the International Conference's shortcoming has been that it not concentrate on the implementation mechanisms. Furthermore, it only focused on cross-borders issues leaving the national causes of violence to be dealt by the states themselves. Finally, the issue of resources is a significant factor in the equation, in that it has the potential to jeopardize the implementation of the afore-mentioned preventive strategies in the region.

Globally speaking, this study has proven that the International Conference on Peace, Security Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region is a feasible framework for preventive diplomacy, and therefore is able to contribute to the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Through effective policy tool design and implementation, this Conference seeks to address the underlying causes of conflict in the region – the implicit regional dimensions of the situation. This empirical study supports Lund's notion that the efficacy of the Conference is, in fact, that it is taking place during a time when violent hostilities are no longer occurring in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The timing of the Conference is thus

crucial in addressing the destabilizing effects of economic, social, political, and international change in the country.

However, despite the design of policy tools, and the opportunity to apply preventive diplomacy in the life cycle of a given conflict, the issue of gathering the means for the implementation of this strategy is very crucial as this can annihilate its efficiency. The International Conference, although being a framework to apply preventive measures for the resolution of conflicts in the Great Lakes region, will not reach this objective if this issue is not taken into account. For this to occur, a revolution in the behaviour of the regional countries is required, as many programmes designed by African international organizations have not yielded any fruit because they were unable to mobilize the necessary means for the funding of these programmes, thereby relying exclusively on external assistance, mainly from the Western superpowers.

Furthermore, the success of preventive diplomacy depends on a thorough analysis of the specificity of each country and within the affected countries, each relevant conflict. In the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, it would be a mistake if preventive diplomacy were to be applied from a global analysis of the country as a whole, as it constitutes a conflict system with several unique sub-conflicts. In fact, the conflict in Ituri differs from that in North Kivu and South Kivu, which can also be distinguished from that in North Katanga. Therefore, for preventive diplomacy to succeed, it is entirely dependent on a deep analysis of the conflict, in order to explore and understand its specificities. The International Conference, taking into consideration the national perspectives of each country member of the Great Lakes region, has accordingly designed preventive strategies to put an end to the ongoing conflict in this part of the African continent. As a consequence of this process, the strategies risk the possibility of not fitting in with the specificities of the corresponding internal conflicts in the region.

It is envisaged that this study will draw the attention of national, regional and international decision-makers and policy-makers, specifically aimed at those involved in the conflict issue in the Great Lakes region, through the new and innovative diplomatic initiative of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

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