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SUBJECT   :   POL 718 – RESEARCH ESSAY

TITTLE   :   PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN THE DRC: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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DECLARATION

I declare that this essay is my original work. The contents have never been presented for any qualification anywhere else.

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Signature   Date

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research essay to my wife and children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has a long history of conflict. It has endured a lengthy, difficult and brutal episode in its history since independence in 1960. The country has been engulfed by civil war, especially in the East. A series of peace agreements have been put in place but to no avail even when supported by the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). Bringing durable peace to the country has proven problematical and highly daunting. Several peace agreements have been signed; these include the Lusaka Peace Accord, the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD) of 2001, under the facilitation of Sir Ketumile Masire, the former President of Botswana, the Sun City Agreement and the Nairobi Peace Agreement.

The study seeks to explore the prospects of peace in DRC; the opportunities that have arisen as a result of the changing environment and positive developments in the Great Lakes Region. The aim of this research essay is to consider the various challenges that peace initiatives are faced with and how they affect peace prospects in DRC. These challenges continue to severely undermine the DRC's successful transition to peace, which has been constantly threatened with a possible return to full-scale war. The study, therefore intends to better understand the drivers and major players in the conflict and thereby come up with what is essential to end continuous violence.

ABBREVIATIONS

AFDL   -Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo (Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo)

AMISOM   - African Union Mission In Somalis

Banyamulenge   - The ethnic Tutsi or the Tutsi Congolese concentrated in South Kivu, eastern region of the DRC along Rwanda - DRC - Burundi border.

CAR   - Central African Republic

ECGLC   - Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries

CIJP   - The Inheritors of Justice or the Congolese Initiative for Justice and Peace

Congolese   - Citizens of DRC

COJESKI   - Collective of Organisations for Youth and Solidarity in Congo Kinshasa

CSO   - Civil Society Organisations

DRC   - Democratic Republic of Congo

DDR   - Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

DDRR   - Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration, Repatriation and Resettlement

FARDC   - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (Government Forces)

FAZ   - Zairean Armed Forces

FDLR   - Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda)

ICD   - Inter Congolese Dialogue

IDPs	- Internally displaced persons
ICGLR	- International Conference of the Great Lakes Region
Intervention	- It's a deliberate act by nations or organisations to introduce change where there is an existing controversy. It's intended to make them aware of their self-destructiveness.
LRA	- Lord's Resistance Army
MLC	- Mouvement de Liberation Congolais
MONUSCO	- United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
M23	- Movement of 23rd March (Mouvement du 23 mars)
PARECO	- Coalition of Congolese Patriotic Resistance
PSO	- Peace Support Operations
R2P	- Responsibility to Protect
RCD	- Congolese Rally for Democracy
RCD-Goma	- Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie- Goma (Congolese Rally for Democracy –Goma)
RCD-ML	- Congolese Rally for Democracy-Liberation Movement
UNITA	- National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
VUCA	- Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1   History of Armed Conflict in DRC

The conflict in Demographic Republic of Congo (DRC) has attracted considerable international attention since 1996. The country has had one of the most ruthless civil wars Africa has seen to date. It's this civil war of 1960 to 1964 which ended up in the murder of the country's first Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and a military coup led by Mobutu Sese Seko. Mobutu ruled the country from 1965 until 1997 when he was overthrown by Alliance for Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL) led by Laurent Kabila. The ADFL had the support of troops from Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi (Kadima, 2000). After a year, a new war broke out between President Kabila and his Rwandan and Ugandan allies. Southern African Development Community (SADC) troops from Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola intervened in support of Kabila. The diplomatic activities by Zambia led to signing of peace agreement. The Lusaka Accord of July 1999 was signed by all the belligerents and called for withdrawal of foreign forces from DRC and provided for cessation of all hostilities. The implementation of this accord was difficult as the belligerents blamed each other for its violation. President Laurent Kabila was assassinated on 16th January 2001 and his son Joseph Kabila took over.

After a series of diplomatic talks hosted by SADC and the UN, the DRC government and the parties to the conflict including unarmed political groups agreed to a transitional government in December 2002 as a step towards peace in the country. By then the war had considerably affected the state of economy in DRC. The conflict is reported to have the highest number of deaths than any other since World War II (McLaughlin 2004). The DRC conflict is sometimes referred to as the "African World War" since at one point it involved nine African countries and about twenty armed groups that were fighting each other on Congolese soil (McLaughlin 2004).   Despite signing of several peace accords by 2003, fighting has continued in the country as all the actors in the conflict are reluctant to consolidate peace. Disappointedly, the actors in the peace process hardly address present ethnic dynamics and engage affected civil society. They are limited only to the state, rebel groups and political party representatives (Sengati, 2014). The recurring conflicts in various regions of the country make any hope of peace to be ever elusive (Nest, 2006).

The country has become synonymous with corruption, violence and plunder. The endless series of conflicts has resulted in human rights abuses, sexual violence, humanitarian disasters and peace keeping failures. Armed groups, both domestic and foreign, are still operating with impunity in the country. Therefore, in peace and security discourses, DRC can also be referred to as a failed state due to its weak state institutions and a dysfunctional political elite.

1.2   Roots of the conflict in the DRC

In order to understand the salient aspect of the crisis, there is necessity to briefly make clear the nature of the conflict, especially the war in the 1990s that started when Rwandan soldiers crossed the border and entered DRC. Following the Rwandan genocide in 1994, Mobutu provided shelter and protection not only to the two million Rwandan refugees who had fled to eastern DRC, but also to the Rwandan Hutu army and militias that directed the genocide. This provoked Rwanda and Uganda to invade DRC in July 1996 in pursuit of Hutu military forces. The Rwandese Tutsi government accused DRC of protecting the exiled Hutu genocidaires, Uganda joined the fray as it accused DRC of harbouring LRA rebels who were causing havoc in Kampala. The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) had fought along with Ugandan President Museveni and helped bring him to power. The Ugandan and Rwandan governments were close allies due to their historical ties (Daley, 2006).

The crisis in the DRC has many layers. Starting from the late 19th century, the vast natural resources of Congo's have started to attract violent interventions from abroad and fuelled internal conflicts. The DRC government often failed to effectively represent or protect its citizens. The political elite and the majority of state employees simply used the power to enrich themselves and their allies. The population saw them as a government whose main aim was to loot public property. The on-going crisis in eastern DRC is rooted both in this history of predation and corruption, and the continuing aftermath of the 1994 genocide in neighbouring Rwanda. Today, DRC continues to struggle with an explosive combination of conflicts at the local, regional and national levels. The actors who are involved in the conflict continue to shape the future of DRC.

As mentioned by Daley (2006) the rise of factions within rebel groups and political top brass led to proliferation of political parties and a wide spread of various rebel movements. Unemployed young men also known as 'Youth Bulge Theory' were mobilised into ethnic militias and other paramilitary groups. Any action by military targeting rebel groups and their supporters led to the forced concentration of the population in villages. According to Daley (2006), over 60% of the population came together due to prevalent cruelty against members of the public

In view of the abundance it's of natural resources, the DRC should be the wealthiest country in Africa and also among the richest in the world. It is unfortunate that these resources have never benefited the Congolese people but rather brought catastrophe as villages were destroyed, people mutilated, widespread diseases and competition for these resources. Masses of the populace died in murders of genocidal proportions (Daley, 2006).

According to Swart (2012), only a handful of combatants truly wanted peace to prosper, as compared to those who had invested in the continuation of the war. Joseph Kabila found himself faced with two factions; one supporting the restoration of peace and one opposed to it and determined to see any peace efforts prevented. Named 'Africa's World War', the conflict in DRC led to a horrific 6.9 million deaths from 1998 (Swart, 2012). These events that were widely spread in the country during this highly destructive period made it being referred to as slow-motion holocaust.

It was declared that more people had been killed in the DRC war than in any war since WW II. The country continues to encounter many challenges that could reverse the successes of the fragile peace efforts and constantly threaten a possible break out of a full-scale war. Swart (2012) mentions that DRC faces the disturbing prospect of becoming a society that is neither at war, nor at genuine peace either.

1.3   Background of the Study

Conflict is inherent in human relations and it is unavoidable. It occurs when two or more actors have serious disagreements or incompatible interests and follow them strictly. It can also be viewed as a struggle in which the objectives are to injure, neutralise or eliminate adversaries (Sengati, 2014). Many Sub Saharan African countries are prone to violent conflicts and others are currently experiencing some

kind of armed conflict. According to Sengati (2014) the continent has been plagued by turbulent history of interstate and intrastate conflicts for almost 40 years.

Most of the African states like DRC, Sierra Leone, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and Central African Republic (CAR) have been identified as fragmented or failed states as they are failing to effectively control large parts of their territories. They also do not command popular loyalty. Since mid-1990s, the DRC has attracted a number of research projects and analysis of the armed conflict. Several renowned persons and scholars have made recommendations. For instance, Manson (2006) recommended synergy and emphasis of each other's qualities between the roles of peacekeepers and human rights activists. Anan (2009) recommended that the UN Council should increase UN peacekeepers mandate in the DRC. The mandate should allow for an increase in the number of deployed troops. The troops should also be allowed to monitor and protect natural resources in Eastern DRC.

International Crisis Group (2013) recommended that there should be a new approach to the DRC conflict. It considered the implemented approach to be out dated and priorities misplaced. In addition, International Crisis Group's report of 2013 emphasised that the root cause of conflict in the DRC is local land disputes. These land disputes have escalated to tribal territories and ownership of mineral-rich areas which various communities and individuals want to have authority over. It recommended that in decision making these land issues must be a part of subsequent peace negotiations. These research came with recommendations that were implemented. Most research focused their attention on competition of resources like cobalt and diamonds as a source of conflicts.

Progress was made in 2003 at Sun City, where a constitution of transition and a protocol on the security sector reform was agreed (Nest, 2006). The South African government has persuaded governments of DRC and Rwanda to sign a peace agreement to end whatever means of support they were giving to armed groups that operated in the region. In 2007, DRC and several other armed groups also signed the Goma Accord that was intended to attain peace in DRC. Even though some of the issues have been addressed, the situation in DRC remains volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous as most of these attempts have only achieved failed cease fire agreements.

Several opportunities for peace in DRC were created after the death of Laurent Kabila when civil war came to an end as the Ugandan and Rwandan troops withdrew from occupied territories within DRC. This opportunity suffered setbacks as no comprehensive political agreement was reached and the Rwandan and Ugandan forces returned to DRC.

There has been some success in ending the interstate war that involved about seven nations and their militaries, but two other dimensions of war being local and national remains unsolved (Nest, 2006). Previous attempts to solve the conflict did not involve some of the rebel groups to participate in the peace accords such as The Lusaka Peace Agreement and The Sun City Peace Agreement. Therefore these excluded groups had nothing to gain in the peace process e.g. PARECO. The peace process was rather characterised by external actors who did not understand deep structural multifaceted issues of the DRC society (Nest, 2006).

The security interests, especially of Rwanda have not been addressed and this has been one of the key reasons for the escalation of violence. Rwanda has been using these unresolved security issues as justifications for maintaining close networks with some rebel groups. The Inter Congolese Dialogue (ICD) is officially based on a system of power relations in which that is not applicable to the present day use since the dynamics of the war has changed considerably over the period. The ICD, which was at one point the sole mechanism for dealing with the DRC conflict worked under the assumption that five participating actors were considered as the only players that should decide the country's political future.

Currently the DRC is in a state of neither peace nor war. The country finds itself plagued by prolonged, deadly and intense conflicts on several areas of its territory. These periodic violent eruptions of local conflicts pose serious challenges to the intended peace agreement objectives. The DRC is still trying to recover from years of extensive misrule and catastrophic civil wars that has claimed many lives. The country could ultimately find a radical change from long standing conflict characterised by violence and mismanagement and move towards a transition of a democratic state and post conflict. There are several obstacles that remain a threat to peace. Further studies need to be done on prospects for peace, so as to provide new generation of ideas for possible viable long lasting solutions.

1.4   Statement of the Problem

The conflict in the DRC has had severe effects on Human Security (HS). Among these are violence, rape, humanitarian crisis, attacks and robbing of villages, corruption, forced labour, extortion, pillaging and displacement of people to mention a few. According to the UN, security and humanitarian crisis in the DRC has been for some time one of the most VUCA in Africa. It is estimated that 6.9 million people have lost their lives since 1998, millions more have also been displaced. DRC and the international community have spent billions of dollars in trying to stabilize the region (Cohen, 2012). Over the last decade DRC has had several attempts by regional and international actors to try to end the conflict and bring peace. But those efforts are not bearing any fruit. Several peace accords have been signed towards attaining peace.

Although there has been several opportunities for prospects of peace that included signing of several declaration agreements, these were faced with steep challenges. Fighting continues and peace remains fragile. Runciman (2014) mentions that throughout 2012 armed groups continued to control large areas of the provinces and districts of Eastern DRC. Factors such as ethnic differences, poor living standards, nationality of Rwandan immigrants, access to state resources, land and natural resources, large territory and mushrooming of new rebel groups among others are the major factors that present challenges to peace prospects.

DRC continues to battle with an explosive combination of conflicts that are at local, regional and international levels and innocent civilians are paying a tragic high cost (Cohen, 2012). Therefore, there is need for a study to be conducted to assess the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous situation in the country.

The environment has shown that, the various PSO programs including peace keeping, peace making and peace building that are put in place are failing. They have failed to end violence and restore peace in the DRC. DRC is littered with armed groups whom their persistent violence presents significant threats to peace stability and the country is the most violent in the world when measured by the number of conflict events. The country has to use the existing opportunities to find new viable strategies to overcome existing complex challenges towards sustainable peace.

The research hypothesis is that the challenges in DRC that make the country fail to take advantage of the opportunities to end the conflicts are caused by continuous interference of developed countries. These countries are attracted to DRC by vast natural resources mainly diamond, cobalt, gold, copper and timber.

1.5   Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine why deadly hostilities persist in the DRC. Its intention is to identify the challenges faced by the prospects of achieving peace and also opportunities that can make it possible to have peace in DRC. The study intents to identify issues that are obstacles to peace by reviewing the available literature and documents. Recommendations derived from this study have the potential to contribute towards bringing peace to DRC.

1.6   Significance and Justification of the Study

This study may help the DRC government and the international community to move a step forward towards solving conflicts and building peace in DRC. Other than that, the study will also provide the international community with other factors of the conflict in order to know more about the critical issues towards the peace prospects. Therefore the condition for attaining peace may improve and DRC may see an end to civil war as it happened in other countries like Kosovo. The Kumanovo Treaty ended the Kosovo war as the Yugoslav forces agreed to withdraw from Kosovo making way for international actors. The Kosovo Liberation Army was immediately disbanded and some of its members went for Demobilisation Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) program while others joined the National Liberation Army (NLA). Others were selected to establish the Kosovo Police (Judah, 2008).

Other than economic improvements, peace establishment will stop loss of life and displacement of populations. This study also might be helpful to understand the causes and dynamics of the conflict, in order to come up with peacebuilding strategies that have prospects of success. The new programmes and strategies are likely to deliver optimistic results in the long term. This study is therefore an attempt to identify the challenges to peace process and the opportunities for prospects of peace that will lead to an end to human suffering in DRC.

1.7   Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to determine the prospects of peace in DRC. The specific objectives are:

a.   The study will identify the main actors in the conflict and their interests.

b.   The opportunities that exist for peace prospects during the conflict.

c.   The challenges which are a threat to peace prospects.

d.   The study will also recommend measures that can be put in place to create opportunities for peace.

1.8   Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study is mainly focused on identifying those major factors that pose challenges to attaining lasting peace and stability in DRC and the opportunities that have existed for possible peace prospects. Since this is a desk research, information can only be acquired from available data which may not be accurate.

1.9   Organisation of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which is the basic information of the study. It consists of history of conflict in DRC, a brief background of the study, the problem statement, the importance and necessity of the study, the objectives of the study and also the hypothesis. The scope and limitations including definitions of key terms are also discussed. Finally, the chapter terminates by explaining the organisation of study which shows the order of the research paper.

Broadly speaking, chapter two presents the literature review related to the study which forms the foundation of the research. It consists of four related sections: section one covers roots of the conflict. Section two focuses on the actors involved in the conflict and their interests; section three covers peace prospects and challenges. Section four covers the opportunities that exist for possible peace accomplishment. The last section is a brief conclusion.

Chapter three, the research methodology discusses how information of the study was collected. This is followed by chapter four which discusses and analyses the results. Chapter five covers the opportunities and challenges facing the peace

process in DRC. Finally, chapter six covers the conclusion and the recommendations of this research derived from the findings of the study.

The secondary data used is only limited to unrestricted and open sources. This limits the study to examine only the available information and no further probing can be done. Babbie (2010) mentions that qualitative analysis method of research also has its own limitations as it is prone to errors when compared with quantitative analysis method.

Due to sensitivity of the conflict, accurate information is not easily available. To validate the information, extensive reading and comparison of data from official documents and scholars have been used. Information from newspapers was linked with other sources to justify it. The practical limitation is that the research was limited to desk research. The researcher could not go out in the field in the DRC and observe the different cultures and societies, interview people there regarding their real life experiences.

The other limitation is that documents found were selective in particular subjects and incomplete. Only selected facets of the study or of the supporting institute were documented which were mainly positive aspects. In a lot of cases, the documents were irregular. They provided details on some activities and nearly nothing on others. However, documents were beneficial in providing an insight at some aspects of the DRC conflict. The reviewed documents added data and hence they were very much useful. Findings from qualitative data are often extended to people with similar characteristics to those in the study population. Generalising the data denies the understanding of complex specific social context or phenomenon. Thus qualitative research could be inaccurate when compared to scientific research in general.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter covers the concept of peace and its origins. It also explores the challenges of peace internationally, regionally, in SADC and in the DRC in particular.

2.2   What is Peace? Different Conceptions of Peace

The idea of peace is considered to be as old as humanity. According to Hwang (2013), peace is conceptualised in various ways across several disciplines. As such, there exist competing discourses and concepts of peace. Some consider peace to be the practical removal of open violence, collective security, emancipation of citizens, the rule of law and balance of power. Others conceptualise peace as a state of goodness where there is harmony and tranquillity. Bratton (2009) argues that peace is when institutions and social standards are compatible with human needs. Galtung (1969) defined 'the absence of war' to be negative peace and 'integrating human society' to be positive peace. Regarding positive peace, Galtung (1969) also introduced the concept that signifies the existence of conditions for social justice and political equality. In order to achieve positive peace, economic inequalities, poverty, political and social injustices must be eliminated. Galtung's concept of positive peace overlaps with Marxist concept of peace that pivots on equality and social justice. Runciman (2014) states that positive peace is compatible with liberal peace theorist idea Francis Fukuyama who argues that peace rests upon the maintenance of a socio-economic order in a community. This all-inclusive and contemporary definition of peace became the mostly used.

Hobbesian realism relates the threat to peace as human beings' natural tendency towards aggression. The human being instinct towards aggression and dominance cannot be suppressed. It calls for control or balancing by an equal offsetting force. Aggressiveness is considered to be the results of human evolution and the survival of the fittest (Ikejiaku, 2011). The human needs theory gives a background of analysis that focuses on the unfulfilled human needs as challenges to peace and source of conflict. The theory specifies that there is more likelihood of deep rooted social conflict and instability as a result of unfulfilled human needs. Ikejiaku (2011) mentions Maslow's human needs hierarchy which are in the order of food, shelter and water. After that it is safety and security then followed by a sense of belonging

and self-esteem. Lastly it is personnel fulfilment. As stated by Ikejiaku (2011) other human needs theorists argue that human needs are not hierarchical but rather equal. They list human needs as safety and security, cultural security, participation, identity, freedom, distributive justice, personal fulfilment and self-esteem. Human needs are important as they are the primary causes of prolonged conflicts due to the people's solid determination to fulfil their unmet needs. e.g. the Palestinian needs of identity and security.

To balance this and safeguard peace, peace movements were formed. The first known advocacy for peace was founded in New York City in 1815(Hwang, 2013). Later on other societies of Societete de la Morale Chretienne in Paris and Socitete de le Paix de Geneve in Switzerland were formed in Europe in 1821 and 1830 respectively. According to Hwang (2013) theses associations were formed in response to the Napoleonic wars and were seeking permanent and universal peace. These movements believed that conflicts will not end until national minorities are at peace and that improved social conditions are the prerequisite for attaining intrastate peace. This led to rise of international organisations including the UN.

2.3 Conceptualising peace

There are two basic conceptualisations of peace. These are the absence of personal violence and the absence of structural violence. In the post-cold war period conflict resolution is now an essential condition. Achieving peace is now required by determined members of international, regional, state and non-state actors (Daley, 2006). Struggles to bring peace and reconstruction have been shaped by a universal model of conflict resolution that has a standard formula designed for peace negotiations. According to Daley (2006) this formula starts with cease fire agreements, formation of transitional governments, DDR and constitutional reform that is followed by democratic elections. Despite signing of peace agreements and the deployment of UN peace keeping missions, peace in the DRC seems elusive resulting in a situation commonly refer to as 'no peace , no war.' This is a condition that includes delayed democratic development and there are no states of affairs grounds for valid complaint. The DRC is in a fragile position where there is no war and yet there is no existence of peace.

There is continued massive violation of human rights. The primary target of the insecurity that engulfs the eastern part of the country is the civilian population.

Daley (2006) sates that peace theorist J. Galtung has associated conflict with unequal distribution of resources. Daley (2006) model of structural violence give details how poverty and powerlessness create an indirect form of violence which can ultimately end up in outright violence like in civil wars. Positive peace becomes an outcome when the conditions stated are eliminated and social justice is the order of the day.

2.4   Conflict Prevention and International Peace

Since their inceptions international peace movements have always had challenges in safeguarding peace. The base of many peace movements was individualistic and too narrow. It did not make political or social change. It never engaged the majority of the public apart from on issues such as compulsory enlistment. Most were state-centric and contradicted global and universalistic goals. They failed to build effective international connections, where they succeeded these were easily ruptured in time of war and The League of Nations was formed. This treaty was not observed leading to World War I. The League of Nations was then formed after WW I.

In 1919 the League of Nations failed to stop Poland and Czechoslovakia combat over Teschen which had valuable coal mines. Poland refused to accept its ruling and the war continued until 1921. In 1923, conflicting to League rules, France and Belgium invaded Germany's most significant industrial region named Ruhr. The League also failed to intervene giving other nations the impression that if you wanted to break League rules, you could. It also had problems as its decisions were not binding and most of the powerful countries were not members as such the league could not prevent the outbreak of World War II. Due to its problems the League of Nations then changed into UN. As the principal custodian of international peace, the UN came up with a revised approach to ensure peace around the world.

Article 1(1) of the UN Charter of 1945 says the main responsibility of the UN is:

> *"To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace"*

The UN mandate of peace enforcement is further spelt out in Chapter 7 Article 39. It states that:

> *"The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security"*

The whole world welcomed these new opportunities for international peace. However, the UN also encountered its own challenges in maintaining peace. The emergence of bipolar competition for power and influence often led to decisions that block policy on international action in conflict areas. UN was also faced with new types of risks and threats to peace (Cilliers, 2000).

The UN faced challenges in taking preventive measures to avoid the violent conflicts in Yugoslavia and East Timor. Conflicts in Kosovo and Iraq are also examples that that the UN may not be able to resolve all conflicts hence failing its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace (Young, 1987). The adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) became an opportunity for peace maintenance. International community was able to condemn genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes like what happened in Yugoslavia and Rwanda. This could also work as a deterrence and conflict prevention tool.

The opportunities for international peace exists where there is mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of another country, there is no aggression, there is equality and mutual gain in international cooperation, respect for another's internal affairs by non-interference peaceful co-existence internally and externally.

In Afghanistan, President Ghani wants to reach a comprehensive deal with Taliban, which is a powerful armed group operating in Afghanistan (O'Hanlon, 2013). He is also seeking improved cooperation with its neighbour Pakistan, the major sponsor of Taliban. Ghani's government is focused on reforming and strengthen his government. This will make it stronger in negotiations and more convincing to the Taliban, that the government can implement the conditions of the reached deal. DRC can learn a lesson from this by improving relations with its neighbours especially Rwanda and Uganda who are the major sponsors of the highly active rebels operating in Eastern DRC. Prominent human rights violators holding top positions in both civil service and military have to be removed from power to restore trust and become convincing to the rebel movements.

2.5   The Role of Civil Society in Achieving Peace in DRC

Barrios (2012) defines civil society as a collection of non-governmental groups and establishments whose mission is primarily to advocate for the interests and will of citizens.   According to Barrios (2012) there are three main characteristics that define civil society and its essential role in a democracy. The first one is that civil society should complement political activity. The second is that it should be non-governmental and the third is that it should be focused on interests, but those interests should not be profit. Civil society groups in the Great Lakes Region have come up with initiatives for reconciling the ethnic Tutsi and Hutu. Their major concern is that the state ignores the critical issues of local conflict on the ground.

The fundamental goal of working with the civil society in any peace process is to make sure that the peace process tackles the roots cause of the conflict and the necessities of the societies affected by the conflict (Barrios, 2012). Inclusion of civil society in a peace building process calls for a robust approach. At first it has to be established whether or not the particular civil society is truly representing the population or it is merely the puppet of international actors or political elites. The conflicts in eastern DRC take place at diverse levels. It starts from local, national, regional and ultimately international.   Peace building efforts that were made only intensified on addressing regional and national issues. They overlooked the local civil society representatives involved in finding solutions to end the conflict.

The civil society in eastern DRC has unique social and bureaucratic structures that are moulded by the colonial administration of previous years. Doyle (2010) mentions that the eastern DRC structures of civil society consist of a network of patron-client. These networks are mutual agreement between a person with wealth, social status and authority and the other person who benefits from the influence or support of that person. According to Doyle (2010) the inflow of humanitarian intervention and international aid into the conflict created local NGOs that are administered by international actors. These actors do not certainly take into consideration the needs of the local population. Other civil society actors are local NGOs who are largely financed by their own members and therefore address local needs only and not for the nation.

The DRC peace process mechanisms stated to include civil society in 2008 (Barrios, 2012). Before then, peace process concentrated primarily on negotiating agreements with rebel group leaders and political leaders. This had little or no effect on realities on the ground. The Goma Agreement of 2008 was the first to include civil society leaders to present their concerns for consideration. The DRC civil society made a significant input by using bottom-up approaches to find a solution to the conflict at the local levels. They were also able to implement practical responses to the physical and psychological suffering brought by the war. The civil society in Kivu province of Eastern DRC is made up of an assortment of leaders. They are connected to the general public and also to the local and international NGO's. This civil society, like other civil societies in DRC, has positively influenced the peace process because they represent the aspirations of the local population.

Kivu Civil society is grassroots civil society that includes members who were marginalised and had little access to the peace process. These members have become the most important stakeholders in the process. They are largely connected to local populations and represent the interests of citizens over those of political elites or international actors (John, 2008).

COJESKI is a nationwide youth civil society. Its membership is inclusive of all geographical and ethnic origins (John, 2008).They are active in organising post-conflict reconciliation sessions. Their priority is to encourage youth generation to attend these seminars and reflect on their experience for the purpose of establishing

the way forward. The society is focused on security, elections and sustainable development.

DRC CSOs is another civil society whose main focus is conflict transformation by engaging local actors involved in the conflict. The society is conducting in depth analysis of the conflict for sustainable peace processes (Feingold, 2014). As a professional centre for conflict transformation they provide training for actors participating in the conflict to make them capable of implementing multilevel, complex conflict transformation initiatives.

CIJP is a civil society that is mostly made up of churches (Barrios, 2012). The faith-based society also works with women's groups and it extends across state borders to arbitrate conflicts and participate in reconciliation and advocacy within their countries. It usually participates in official meetings and where possible it organises protests. The society is mainly overseen by experienced lawyers who investigate human rights violations. They also advocate for the judicial system to hear cases of those accused of war crimes on time and judge impartially since the state does not offer any assistance for legal services to the population. They were very vocal against convicted criminals who were running for local and presidential elections. The major setback to this civil society is that many of its activists and leaders were assassinated over the past years. The society still faces obstacles in the execution of legal decisions and repression is still fierce and widespread in DRC.

The Committee for Human Rights and Development (CODHOC) was formed with an agenda to address five objectives which are: workers rights, youth, cleaning the street, human rights awareness and the rights of women (Feingold, 2014). This society offer services like providing containers and arranging shifts for rubbish removal, to minimise children getting infections from playing in filthy streets. They encourage communities to form neighbourhood groups for the purpose of supporting each other.

2.6 Regional Challenges and Opportunities for Peace – No Peace, No War in DRC.

At a meeting assembled in 1997 to consider peace prospects in Africa, in his speech Dr Salim Secretary General of the OAU said;

> *"OAU Member States can no longer afford to stand aloof and expect the International Community to care more for our problems than we do, or indeed to find solutions to those problems which in many instances, have been of our own making. The simple truth that we must confront today is that the world does not owe us a living and we must remain in the forefront of efforts to act and act speedily, to prevent conflicts from getting out of control". (Cilliers, 2000)*

Africa faces many peace challenges and it is drawing the attention of global conflict management groups. Peace prospects are becoming too costly to attain and there are high risks with non-existent peace to keep. Major regional challenges are regionalised civil wars, corruption and weak democratic institutions and proliferation of small arms. The militant Islamist Somalia group al-Shabaab has continued attacks against AU forces (AMISOM) and the group is constantly carrying out terrorist attacks in Kenya. The DRC is still tormented by ferocious insurgents regardless of the M23 surrender in November 2013. Boko Haram and other armed insurgents in Nigeria continue to carry out attacks in West Africa. There is also an on-going deadly civil war in South Sudan. UN has given a warning of potential genocide in CAR.

Africa relies more on outside help for peace maintenance but the international community especially the permanent members of the Security Council really participate in missions where their interests are not considered to be at risk.

The on-going African initiatives to build regional peace are not addressing the real problem at hand and also lack the capacity. The Peace and Security seminar held on October 2015 in Brussels; Belgium was aimed at reinforcing parliamentary capability in legislation and oversight in Africa. The seminar did not attempt to understand the multifaceted and often inter-linked root causes of war in Africa. The requirements for peace maintenance are complex and multifunctional. They attract enormous costs and run for long periods of time.

Above all the major challenge is lack of political will to adhere to agreements and commit resources (Cilliers, 2000). In Africa coercive methods and use of state agents are used to suppress conflicts. These are employed as a way to create peace in the continent even when the root cause of the conflict is unfulfilled human basic needs such as security, freedom and participation.

As a custodian of peace in the continent, the AU often deploys peacekeepers in the midst of war. Some had peace keeping, peace enforcement and conventional war are all taking place at the same time, in one area. Peacekeepers are deployed into an environment with no cease-fire or peace agreement and if it's there it's hardly observed as in Darfur and Northern Mali. The clientele regimes across Africa often skew the peace mission to impose ill-defined requirements of the international community on some of the belligerents using military means.

Lack of appropriate resources and the necessary political will often frustrates peace. Nevertheless, the AU continues to call for the dire need of peace (Ikejiaku, 2011). In some occasions, AU does not reach a consensus on a specific reaction to vigorous and dynamic military conflicts, or lack the resolve to pursue what was considered to be an appropriate course of action. Thus, no considerable progress has been made towards the attainment of peace. Most African countries participating in peace keeping missions are perceived to be acting out of self-interest under the cover of regional peacekeeping and that is why they are viewed with suspicion by the belligerents.

The complexity of conflicts has made regional actors significant as neighbouring countries are often participants, weapons suppliers and recipients of refugees. As such AU engages regional actors in peaceful solutions like SADC Standby Force. AU has provision of a quick response such as Early Warning organs but lacks appropriate tools to proportionally address the level of conflict (Cilliers, 2000).

The challenges of peace prospects facing AU are lack of respect for international law and human rights, lack of democracy and non-existent of social and economic justice. The manipulation, control and suppression of opponent's leadership style have further deepened Africa into retrogression (Agbude, 2011). Most countries that have weak and unstable institutions seek security in cooperation through deterrence.

The economic dependence of African countries on their former colonial masters and foreign companies creates room for foreign interference fuelling African conflicts. The traditions, culture and corporate identity continue to be strongly influenced by the discourses of the West. Post-Colonial States and the elites do not to honour and abide by peace commitments made.

There are good prospects for peace in Africa. According to Imbovah (2014), there are several factors that account for this. The first is that there are the booming economies of some African that were affected by war countries e.g. Angola and Mozambique. The second is improved governance as in Guinea which has a turbulent political past. The third is continuous commitment to regional integration which results in infrastructural integration and economic integration. Infrastructure integration has the potential to deter war. Jimson (2014) states that Africa is considering looking within the continent for sourcing of services and trade of goods. It intends to produce and distribute for markets within the continent. This is done to ensure that external actors cannot interfere in the internal procedures and policies of the continent. Africa is rising up to reclaim its status from the dictators and the exploiters, who often serve foreign interests. This is shown by the Arab uprising in North Africa up to the current demonstrations in Burundi against President Nkurunziza's third term. There is also conflict in Burkina Faso after the removal of Compaoré's regime (Bloomberg, 2015). Former President Compaoré, who has been in power for twenty seven years until 2014, wanted to amend the constitution to allow him to run for third term. This sparked mass demonstrations in all major cities and the parliament building was set on fire.

There is a marked reduction in armed conflicts in Africa. Although this is a positive development for Africa, the significance and durability of this cessation of hostilities is still questionable. According to Barrios (2012), AU has shown commitment to improve governance. It has relentlessly pursued diplomatic efforts and peacekeeping to resolve the continent's political crises. The Peace and Security Council is empowered to intervene militarily in troubled areas, using the proposed African Stand-by Force. The New Partnership for Africa's Development intends to build Africa's capacity for conflict prevention and resolution that includes peace making and peace enforcement (Bellamy, 2013). There is now greater willingness by Africa and the international community to hold rebel leaders and governments accountable

for committed war crimes. e.g The War Crimes Tribunal in Rwanda. Since the September 11 attacks, the global context of peace-building in Africa has changed. Feingold (2014) mentions that the U.S. government considers collapsed states and some war zones as potential safe havens for terrorist activities. Local actors do not want to be viewed as spoilers of Western efforts to end wars and resuscitate effective government.

2.7   No war, no peace in DRC

Autesserre (2011) has observed that many conflicts that terminated in negotiated peace settlements often went back into war within a short period of time. "Interventions by third-party regularly turned out to be fruitless in obtaining a durable peace. 'No war, no peace' societies like Somalia and Eritrea have gone through a prolonged and brutal period of conflict that was trailed by extensive and difficult mediation efforts that ended in the signing of a broadly recognised peace agreement, but has not necessarily yielded the beginning of sustainable peace" (Autesserre 2011: 57). According to Autesserre (2011), this is so because some actors in the conflict who have unresolved disputes deliberately prolong the conflict since they do not view peace as favourable or beneficial. The 'No War, No Peace' societies continuously replicate institutions and structures and also norms and values that generate conflict possibilities both internally and between neighbouring countries (Autesserre, 2011). Peace settlement is embracing the necessity for a coexistence with traditional enemies, but little concern for tangible transformative peace. The situation in the DRC characterises a nation with an unfinished peace process and an unresolved conflict. The endless incidents of possible breakout of war cast doubts over acquiring sustainable peace. The vital gains and successes towards peace might be lost and this will be a convincing sign to the general argument that DRC is developing towards a state of 'no war, no peace' which is mainly happening in the Eastern region of the DRC.

2.8   Sub regional (SADC) Challenges and Opportunities to peace

Chapter 8 of the Constitutive Act of the AU allows for delegating of tasks to regional organisations that are closer to the conflict source and best suitable to address them. Peace and Security Architecture has instructed setting up mechanisms and instruments for peace maintenance and stability in regions. This created the SADC

Brigade as part of the African Standby Force to be deployed to peace support missions under the sponsorships of the AU. According to Muyakwabo (2013), SADC soldiers were deployed in the DRC to help maintain peace through peace keeping. It was later carried out as Joint Force Intervention Brigade with the UN. The challenges faced by SADC are that armed conflicts are profitable to government officers, army officers and rebels. Due to these earnings, there is reluctance by all the actors to end the war because they all stand to gain from instability. Instability allows them to loot mineral resources such as diamonds.

The prospects for peace in DRC are that there is recognition of the basic role of peace keepers which is to keep peace. DRC approach is that peace can only be kept after it has been made if possible through non-military action. Mediation is the preferred mechanisms in conflict resolution. DRC is probably exhausting all options that will address the root causes of the conflict.

This was applied to mitigate the conflict in Lesotho through the Regional Early Warning System (REWS) at the SADC Secretariat. SADC avoids military intervention as there is always a possibility of a change in the objectives of the mission, often resulting in an unintended long term commitment. e.g the US war in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan and also UN in DRC which all prolonged far more than intended. (Muyakwabo, 2013)

The regional power struggle between South Africa (SA) and Zimbabwe became a challenge due to differing opinions on how to keep peace in DRC. South Africa wanted peaceful settlement through talks while Zimbabwe preferred military intervention. Former South African president Nelson Mandela opted to engage in peace negotiations and turned down Mugabe's resolve to send military contingent. Zimbabwe went on with its resolution as it committed more troops in eastern DRC in 1998 (Grebrehiwot, 2015). In effort to promote peace South Africa has opted not to play according to the realist theory of being the hegemony within SADC even though its power places it as a country of influence in the region and also in the continent. The regional block opts for peace talks since military intervention increases the possibility of worsening the social tensions and risk of leaving the community with more grievances and further divided.

SADC leaders have now made a robust commitment to maintaining peace and preventing conflict, something that was completely lacking from the SADC political scene until lately e.g. SA response to Lesotho. (Botswana Guardian, 2014/12/02). The mutual defence act adopted by SADC allows for security cooperation in military training, research and intelligence exchange e.g. Joint Military Exercise; Ex-Thokgamo. This makes SADC a collective security body which can be used to terminate DRC conflict.

SADC is also challenged with silent diplomacy. Heads of states do not come out in the open to condemn others for wrong doing. It was only Botswana that was vocal against the violence committed by Mugabe's government against its own society. (Sunday Standard (2012/3/12). There is discrepancy in condemning some countries of their wrongdoing. SADC is tight-lipped about actions of other countries whilst raising an alarm for the same action done by a different country. Before formation of SADC Brigade, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia used military intervention to protect Kabila regime in accordance of article 51 of UN Charter. Botswana and South Africa launched military operation Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa (BOLEAS) to restore peace in Lesotho post 1998 election civil unrest. Operation BOLEAS managed to restore peace in Lesotho, preventing a coup de etat and political parties managed to resume governance negotiations.

SADC reaction to the coup attempt in Lesotho was a series of talks led SADC Organ on Politics Defence and Security currently chaired by Mozambique. SADC acted swiftly and decisively to prevent further violence in Lesotho. (Malebang, 2014).The Namibian President, Hifikepunye Pohamba facilitated the talks and the leaders to worked together to restore political stability, peace, security, law and order in the country. SADC is also faced with several challenges which are also applicable to DRC. There is still inter and intra state conflicts as in Mozambique and Lesotho. Zimbabwe has a problem of consolidating democracy and good governance. A large number of illegal immigrants still cross from Zimbabwe into Botswana and South Africa. There are also some from Mozambique into South Africa.

2.9   Challenges of the Great Lakes Region

The Great Lakes Region of Africa consists of by Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and DRC. This region has been a field of prolonged civil discord from 1960 onwards. Attempts to bring peace to this region have ended in several ceasefire agreements that were never adhered to. There are three main factors that have led to failed peace in the Great Lakes Region. Firstly OAU principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another country and respect for the territorial integrity of member states has contributed to foot dragging that hindered the suggested peace initiatives (Daley, 2006). Secondly, the poor logistical support and the lack of funds for African countries have been a limitation to sufficiently support regional peace missions. The mission is usually handed over to UN e.g. MONUSCO who lack local expertise and this further complicates the problem.

Thirdly, the international community are often implicated in the conflicts of the region. From 1960 the colonial regime of Belgium was involved in the Katanga Region. The US was also accused for the assassination of Patrice Lumumba. The Rwandan genocide of 1994 also implicated the French government. The self-interests of western countries are often difficult to separate from humanitarian actions. The US, EU and NGO are involved in peace negotiations and each with its own agenda of seeking peace and most operating in an opportunistic way. These multinational corporations and security agencies have made peace keeping a very lucrative business for international, regional, state and non-state actors. Most supply equipment or get paid for participating in peace processes.

Structural violence, which is an indirect form of violence as a result of poverty and lack of power, is still wildly practiced in Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC. The peace negotiations in the Great Lakes Region are mainly between international actors, the local political elite and armed groups and exclude the civil society. The lack of political will among the belligerents in the Great Lakes Region is the major challenge to peace in the region. There are spoilers of peace who find insecurity and war more profitable than peace. There is extreme factionalism among belligerents. What is agreed by one group is totally unaccepted by another group and these stalls the peace negotiations. It resulted in leadership crisis and breakaway factions. e.g In Burundi there were 17 political parties that were formed by breakaway factions (Namikas,2013).

2.10 Conclusion

There are hopes for the new dawn in DRC and the Great Lakes Region. The root causes of the conflict are ethnicity, greed and poor governance. The beliefs of political repression established in dictatorships or one-party systems that prevailed in Africa for the past two decades has slowly but surely given way to competitive multi-party democratic. The existing opportunities are used to overcome challenges.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter lays out the methodology of the study used for research. This methodology will be used to guide the research to address the study questions.

3.2   Types of Research

A thesis can be developed using two types of research. These are:

Field Research: This approach is an experimental study of the subject under research and primarily involves hands on method. This consists of first hand research which can be done using surveys, questionnaires, interviews and observations (Barbie, 2010).

Desk Research: This is a non-experimental method of research. It generally involves reading of published works which could be researching through records of libraries and printed academic journals (Babbie, 2010).

3.3   Types of Research methodology

3.3.1 Quantitative Methodology

Quantitative research method involves measurable data that involves numerical and statistical descriptions. This research method is used to attach a figure on the problem by producing numerical data or data that can be converted into functional statistics. It is used to quantify behaviours, attitudes and opinions including any other defined parameter (Braun & Clark, 2006)

3.3.2 Qualitative Methodology

This form of research method consists of describing a situation in details by means of research tools like interviews, observations and surveys. Qualitative Research is mainly a fact-finding research. It is applied to gain an understanding of fundamental details, inspirations and opinions. The method offers insights into the issue and assists to cultivate ideas for potential quantitative research. Qualitative Research is also used to reveal tendencies in thought and opinions and go deeper into the problem.

The research method used in this study is qualitative research of secondary data. Barbie (2010) describes qualitative analysis as the interpretation of observations in a non-numerical examination for the purpose of determining fundamental meanings and designs or relations. Data is collected into some form of understanding, explanation and analysis of the general public and the circumstances that are studied. Qualitative analysis is found to be the best method to deal with the prospects and challenges of peace in DRC as this cannot be quantified. This research looks at the complex issues from individuals to states in peace and security in order to understand the problems surrounding the DRC conflict and this can be best presented using qualitative analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006).

This research investigates and search for answers to a question. It systematically gathers evidence and produces findings that are related to limitations of the study.

Barbie (2010) illustrates the dimensions of Qualitative research are as follows;

- Understanding the setting
  This is how political, cultural, economic, environmental and institutional factors influence the prevalence of conflict in the DRC. The research is able to find definite cultural information concerning the behaviours, opinions, values and social contexts of particular inhabitants.
- Understanding the people
  This is how people view the conflict, perspectives and also their experiences of the war. It seeks to understand the conflict from the perspectives of the local population it involves.
- Understanding the interaction
  This is how the various actors involved in the DRC conflict interact with each other.

The strong point of qualitative research is its capacity to offer composite textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. The method is also effective in identifying vague factors like socioeconomic status, social norms and ethnicity in relation to the DRC war. This method will also be used with quantitative data to assist in interpretation and better understanding the complex reality of DRC conflict. This quantitative data will include the number of deaths, rapes, displaced persons and those prosecuted for war crimes.

For the conflict in DRC, most of the literature is already available. The research will investigate data that is already available regarding DRC conflict. This type of data, also known as secondary data has already been collected by other researchers earlier. Literature research will also serve as primary research to meet the goals of the research. Some general and more conceptual questions can be answered by the existing previous studies and research. The study of this area is mainly based in researching in the library.

3.4   Data Collection

Qualitative desktop method will be used for this research. In this research method data is mostly obtained by sitting at a desk. Desk research is essentially involved in gathering facts from existing resources and as such it is greatly considered a cheap technique when compared to field research (Braun & Clark, 2006). This research method is very effective and mostly used in initial phase of research. It is quite quick as a lot of the basic material could be easily found and be used as point of reference in the research development.

The two types of desk research techniques are:

3.4.1 Internal Desk Research

Internal desk research involves use of internal and institutional resources to bring together the collected data. (Braun & Clark 2006).

3.4.2 External Desk Research

External Desk Research consists of research prepared outside the organisational boundaries. The external resources are:

a. Online Desk Research - There is large amount of data accessible online on internet. It's vital for the researcher to be data specifics while collecting this information since there are billions of sources obtainable on internet. There are possibly two procedures for fetching the relevant material from internet; one is openly looking through the specific information from social sciences or business sites and digging out the data out of these sites. Secondly, it's by use of several search engines e.g. www.googlescholer.com, www.edu.co etc., for controlled searching. It is important to perfect the searching methods to obtain results that are significant and appropriate to the prospects of peace in DRC.

b. Institutional published data - Institutions regularly publishes an unlimited amount of data online for use on the research processes. This information normally covers various fields of economic, social and financial aspects. The institutional websites mostly contain recognisable material. Thus, it's the preferred method of collecting the information. The primary data was collected from books and secondary data gathered mainly from journals, conference proceedings and newspaper articles.

Other data sources are radio news form Gabz FM, Duma FM and television news update of British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). However, data from these sources may at times be biased as the media normally circulate information that is not affirmed.

3.5   Data Analysis

Thematic qualitative analysis is used by recognising significant activities in the data. This method examines and observes patterns of behaviour. Its emphasis is on patterns across data that are significant to the explanation of an occurrence. This analytic method identifies and report themes surrounded by data. It organises and defines collected data sets in details. It regularly it goes further by inferring several features of the research topic (Braun and Clarke, 2006)

Yardley (2006) refers to thematic analysis as an aim to gain an understanding of society's observations of prevention failure. It also looks at how best to come up with an advice. Analysis of the collected data is done in accordance with the literature review. It will look at why DRC continues to be engulfed by conflict and how regional and international countries managed to deal with the conflict.

3.6   Conclusion

Research methodology explained the organization of the research. It explains the research design, how data is collected, validated and its limitations. Qualitative research method was used as it's the appropriate method to gain an understanding of vital details, inspirations and opinions of what happens in the DRC conflict. The method offers insights into the prolonged civil war and assists to cultivate ideas for potential quantitative research. This method logically defines how to develop outcomes of this research. The research methodology helps in providing an analytic narrative.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the data on the causes for continuation of war and the patterns of behaviour. It will also analyse how the conflict has affected the communities and the actors who are involved in the conflict.

4.2   Effects of the war on the society.

This has been fueled and supported by various national and international actors with vested interests in the outcome of the conflict. e.g. Rwanda and Uganda were accused of sponsoring FLC and RCD. These rebel groups were protecting their illegal mining of resources in DRC. From the start of the conflict in 1998, it is estimated that about 6.9 million people have been killed as of January 2013. As a result it has been considered to be the world's deadliest conflict ever since World War II (Feingold, 2014).

Even though lots of people have died because of the conflict there is a considerable number that died due to non-violent causes which are preventable under normal circumstances e.g. malnutrition and malaria. Children amount to about 50% of the total deaths. UN estimated that about 40,000 people die in DRC every month and the population of internally displaced persons is estimated at 2 million (Feingold, 2014).

The conflict has subjected civilians in the DRC to human rights abuses. According to O'Hanlon (2013) rape is used as a weapon of war in the DRC. It exists on a large scale that is seen nowhere else in the entire world. Accordingly Feingold (2014) stated that the DRC is the rape capital of the world. This statement was also supported by the UN's data estimation that in eastern Congo in 2009 alone about 15,000 women were raped. This statement was further corroborated by UN data from 2011 to 2012 which showed a   rise in reported rape cases from 4,689 to 7,075 in 2012 (O'Hanlon, 2013)

According to United Nations (2010) about 7,000 child soldiers continued in government forces (FARDC) and armed rebel groups. Children are frequently recruited from refugee camps and employed as porters, sex slaves, and combatants.

Feingold (2014) states that in 2012, the UN estimated that 1,500 children continue to be mobilised by M23 and FARDC forces in eastern DRC alone.

The Institute for Global Policy (2015), indicated that as of January 2014 there are about 2 million DRC citizens that have been displaced. It is also estimated that about 500,000 have become refugees in neighbouring countries such as Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania. The conflict has not left the Great Lakes Region unaffected, since by August 2014 almost 80,000 refugees from Rwanda, CAR and Burundi did seek refuge in DRC and benefitted from UNHCR's shelter and aid activities.

4.3   Root Causes of the Conflict in DRC

The catastrophe in the DRC is multifaceted. From the late 19th century DRC's massive natural resources have persistently attracted violent external involvement and fueled internal conflicts. DRC's government has never successfully represented and provided security for its citizens. It has worked as a foundation of unrestricted rule and individual enrichment for select elite.

The predicament in eastern DRC is embedded both in its history of corruption, predation and the ongoing repercussions of the 1994 Rwanda genocide. DRC continues to fight with a volatile mixture of conflicts at the local, regional and national levels. Below listed have been found to be the major root causes of the conflict.

a. Colonialism and Post Independence Events

DRC went through a ruthless colonial history. King Leopold II of Belgium brutally exploited DRC's massive natural resources by application of punitive autocratic rule. After personally controlling DRC for some time he handed it over to Belgium in 1908 (Rothschild, 2002).

During the Cold War tensions the U.S. were concerned that Patrice Lumumba who was the first democratically elected Prime Minister of Zaire (now DRC), would allow Soviet Union supremacy of DRC. U.S. and Belgium took part in the dismissal and arrest of Lumumba. He was assassinated in 1961.This brought instability to the Great Lakes Region.

b. Dictatorship

Mobutu Sese Seko ruled Zaire for 32 years with support from the US and Belgium. He used DRC's mineral wealth to enrich himself and his close allies through a corrupt system that made DRC's to be viewed as a kleptocracy; which is a government thieves, whose primary purpose was to steal public property. As a dictator, Mobutu is estimated to have embezzled at least $5 billion from DRC. After the Rwandan genocide of 1994, Mobutu gave protection to Rwandan Hutu army and militias that were the master mind of the genocide who had run away to eastern Congo. This triggered Rwanda and Uganda to attack DRC in 1996 in pursuit of Hutu armed forces (Prunier, 2009).

c. Regional Rivalry

Conflict broke out in 1998 when President Laurent Kabila tried to break ties with his regional supporters and moved to remove Rwandan components from his government. This provoked Rwanda and Uganda to re-invaded DRC and also supporting rebel proxies to fight Laurent Kabila. Rwandan and Ugandan forces that were initially focused on pursuing the Hutus shifted their interests to control and exploitation of the mineral-rich eastern DRC. Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia brought their military to support Kabila (Namikas, 2013).

For this duration DRC was accommodating various armed forces from across Africa. They abused the public using their deployment as an excuse to loot massive natural wealth and coerce civilians. The foreign armies withdrew after treaties were signed but both government and rebels groups continued to use sexual violence against civilians. They terrorized, controlled and ethnically cleansing targeted inhabitants.

d. Elections and Weak governance

Untamed militias, rebel groups and their dissident members continued to roam freely in eastern DRC. They fight the local enemies and the government forces seeking to establish and maintain control of mineral rich territories. The government is failing to implement robust civilian protection. The level of violence and lack of security forced large number of people to flee their homes.

After the national elections the new government was weak and hardly functioning in many areas. It faced continuous political and security challenges. Greedy and destructive armed rebel groups, including FARDC and Rwandan rebels continue to lurk in eastern DRC with impunity (Graham, 2003).

e. Resource Curse

Resource curse refers to a paradoxical condition in which countries with abundance of natural resources especially fuels and minerals experience less economic growth and poor development outcomes as compared to countries with less natural resources (McLaughlin, 2004). The exploitation of natural resources is considered to be a key factor in propagating and prolonging the DRC conflict. The illicit trade provides the essential income for the government and rebel groups. These revenues collected from the illegal trade fuels continuation of conflict in the region. "DRC unused deposits of natural resources value are estimated to be over USD 24 trillion" (Gilpin, 2014: 2).

The government in DRC is unable to govern the entire country and this has given the rebel armed forces the opportunity to exploit these resources and fuel the endless conflict in the DRC. Rebels controlling these areas retain the profits of this illicit trade and rape women as a way of imploring terror in their controlled mining zones. The DRC government is also deeply involved in the exploitation of conflict natural resources. Multinational businesses and neighbouring countries have also capitalised on the inability of the state to enforce authority in the DRC mining areas (Bratton, 2009).

They have established associations with local rebel groups to gain access to lucrative mines. Rebel groups have used profits from these relationships to purchase weapons and further declare their authority over the population by means of violence. This is the major contributor to the continuation of conflict in the DRC. According to Gilpin (2014), the crisis in eastern DRC demonstrates that as long as the DRC government is unable to control its territory, deliver elementary services, effectively provide security to its population, and armed rebel groups make money from illegal trade in natural resources and multifaceted regional associations. To this day, eastern DRC remains an arena for conflict and instability.

4.4   Actors in the Conflict

4.4.1 DRC Government

The DRC government has also been entangled in corruption regarding exploitation of conflict minerals in the Eastern DRC. The government is also unable to provide basic services and failing to govern its entire territory leaving most of Eastern DRC uncontrolled. This has given rebel forces an opportunity to exploit resources and also take advantage of governing themselves in some areas. All these fuelled the protracted conflict in the DRC. The various reasons why the government contributes to continuing conflict are as follows: the military plunder of public revenues, political reform, resource curse and weak state institutions.

Military. Military commanders were blamed for human rights violations and the DRC government refused to act in accordance with the UN to substitute them. (Institude for Global Policy, 2015). The report argues that the military not only fails to offer security but aggressively targets the inhabitants making them one of the main perpetrators of human rights violations across the country. The report found out that lack of political will from parts of the DRC government is the major reason for the army's failure to reform, particularly those characters which have benefited from the prevalent corruption. This is a major risk to the much needed stability of the country.

Plunder of Public Revenues. Ever since independence, public revenues steadily declined due to kleptocracy. Kleptocracy is a government of thieves. It's a situation whereby those in power exploit national resources and steal public property. The leaders in DRC government took policies that steadily ensured that public revenues benefit only the few political elite (Herbst, 2000).

The declining economy did not generate enough funds for investments in state building and the delivery of public services. As an alternative, the government gradually resorted to business like formal authorisation to extract revenue from society. The producers reacted by looking for ways to evade the instructions of the state by stopping to produce surpluses or trafficking them across international boundaries. This led to tax evasion and loss of tax revenue by the state, further worsening the economic difficulties of DRC (Bratton, 2009).

Political Reform. The coming together of global and domestic pressures forced the superpowers to stop supporting puppet states and client regimes. These are states that are controlled and dependent on outside power. Mass protests by Africans for better governance forced rulers to accept multiparty political participation. This brought politically insecurity to dictatorial leaders as there was now possibility of defeat at the polls. The foot dragging of Kabila regime in political reform and governance has ensured that he builds a strong support among the political elite and reinforces his stay in power. The military and one-party presidents and former state officials started to grab private property. The delay of the 2016 general elections that will prevent President Kabila to participate due to a two-term limit escalated the disorder (Institute for Global Policy, 2015). The fact remains that the DRC government consistently failed to give sufficient political backing for serious change. Most importantly, it did not take steps to end corruption, indiscipline and weak command structures. The record of reform failure shows that the government has never wanted a professional and effective military, as it would become a threat to the entrenched political and financial interests of the DRC elite, especially those around the President.

The DRC government did not appoint senior personnel to key organisations as agreed on effective strategic reforms. They turned a blind eye to corruption, hindered the passing of crucial legislation, and regularly undermined donor coordination. Many government and military senior officers continue to profit from corruption, either through salaries, accepting kickbacks, or being involved in illegal mining rackets.

Resource Curse. The resource curse is also referred to as the paradox of plenty. This refers to the puzzle that regions or countries that have an abundance of natural resources, specifically non-renewable resources like fuels and minerals, have a habit of having less economic growth and inferior development outcomes as compared to countries with less natural resources. They go through stagnant growth and even economic shrinkage when their economies should instead be booming. The resource abundance in these countries stimulates theft, violence and looting by financing rebel groups and civil wars (Mehlum, 2002). The abundance of natural resources makes them readily available for predation. Since the economy of DRC is based on the production of precious minerals, the incentives to resort to looting these valuable primary commodities are irresistible.

There is fierce competition for control of land and strategic raw materials between the leaders currently holding office and insurgent movements. Farmers have been pushed from fertile lands into less fertile areas. This bred conflicts between communities and they easily worsened into conflicts of national significance. The outcome of these led to predation and political disorder among politicians. The guardians of these territories were made warlords. Violence spread to the communities and as a means of self-protection and the poor farmers had to join the armed conflict. Authorities lost administrative and military control over most rural areas and certain places of their regions leading to widespread disorder.

Weak State Institutions. Orievulu (2010) refer to state as an institution that governs and takes responsibility over a group of people who are located within a terrain that exist in both space and time and holds sovereignty, legality and autonomy. The state also implements some form of bureaucratic control over its people and commands the monopoly of the legitimate use of force. A weak state is unable to perform these duties and these are the circumstances that the DRC finds itself in. It is unable to govern its large territory mainly the eastern region.

The DRC, like several African countries has been labelled as a weak state. The DRC government has been unable to accomplish its responsibilities of providing the essential security and provisions as required by its citizens. The country has lost the status of being a state since they lack the characteristics practical to the notion of an effective state (Orievulu, 2010). This failure infers to the non-functioning of institutions and government structures within the DRC territory. The DRC government is failing to exercise territorial sovereignty and has lost authority over most of its territory especially in the East. The weak state cannot provide institutions to maintain governance and uphold economic growth.

The weakness of governance apparatus attracts foreign intervention with the view to reconstruct and resuscitate the collapsed structures. Since state lacks the capability to govern its territory, it thus relies on NGOs and the UN other to perform its responsibilities. The end process of this is possible de-legitimisation of the state. This will happen in DRC because other actors become operative and become shadow states that provide essential necessities which the DRC state fails provide to its citizens.

Thus NGOs, international aid organisations, rebel groups, state and non-state actors validate their stay in DRC and these reduce the legitimacy and sovereignty of the DRC government. These groups also become quasi-states inside the DRC state. They win loyalty and respect of the citizens than the state itself, therefore dividing allegiances and further worsening the weakness condition of the already weak state. Therefore the weak state creates a platform for prolonged war.

4.4.2 The RCD-Goma and RCD-ML

The RCD, a Tutsi dominated rebel group is comprised of former Mobutu soldiers of FAZ and Banyamulenge troops that were members of the AFDL. They came together and started a military campaign to overthrow Kabila with the support of Burundian, Ugandan and Rwandan troops.

The RCD accused Kabila of dictatorship, favouritism, corruption and stimulating the massacre of Tutsis in the DRC. The regional supporters of the RCD blamed Kabila for regional instability because of his backing of rebel movements that were directly in armed combat with their governments. The RCD later split to form RCD-Goma and RCD-ML factions. This resulted in failure to sign the Lusaka Agreement when heads of state did so in 10 July 1999. Both factions claimed to be the legitimate representatives of the RCD and declined to recognize the others signature (Bratton, 2009).

According to Bratton (2009), the split in the RCD led to a fallout between their military supporters, Rwanda and Uganda. The RCD–ML which wanted negotiations was supported by Ugandan and the RCD-Goma rebels who wanted military overthrow were supported by Rwanda.

4.4.3 The National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP)

CNDP was formed by Laurent Nkunda to protect the Congolese Tutsi of the Eastern DRC and the main aim of the CNDP movement was to eradicate of FDLR rebels, whom they accuse of stimulating the perpetration genocide of the Tutsi. The movement reinforced the perception of imminent genocide amongst the Tutsi and it increased fear among the Tutsi community. This increased greater inter-ethnic hostility and rivalry and it endangered the Tutsi minority's security in North Kivu. CNDP became a significant problem for Kabila's government. The sense of suspicion and hostility that existed between government and CNDP was too strong

and a major threat to fragile peace. CNDP strongly believed that Kabila was involved in an uneasy struggle to protect thousands of Tutsis that were still being targeted. As a result, CNDP made peace talks difficult.

4.4.5 The Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC)

The rise of splinter factions among the rebel forces led to the formation rebel group, the MLC. It increased the parties to the conflict and negatively intensified the task of the peace negotiations in the conflict. It also increased the number of major belligerents to be included in the negotiations. With this, the prospects for peace in the DRC remained elusive. The MLC became one of the rebel groups carrying out sporadic skirmishes and attacks against the population and opponent combat groups. Therefore the appearance of MLC increased the number of rebel groups to be recognised in peace talks as such making the negotiations more complex.

4.4.6 Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)

The FDLR is one of the most persistent and destructive rebel groups in Africa. The FDLR was formed by Rwandan Hutu extremists who arrived in Eastern DRC after the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The group is made up of almost entirely of ethnic Hutus who are opposed to Tutsi rule and power in the Great Lakes Region. It was formed after the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda and the remnant Hutu military command from Rwanda agreed to form one group. The group has repeatedly attacked villages as it did in January 2012, killing twenty-six people in South Kivu. As reported by Institute for Global Policy (2015), from April 2012 to May 2013, the FDLR has murdered 314 citizens in several attacks and has also been taking part in the recruitment of child soldiers. The FDLR remains a significant actor in the DRC conflict.

In October 2013, the movement was reported to be still committing human rights abuses (Institute for Global Policy, 2015). They carry out attacks on those they believe are providing intelligence on their locations and activities. They apply threat of violence to extort money from societies they are conquering. They use guerrilla style attacks to attack FARDC and MONUSCO. They are challenging existing authorities at village and territory level for financial reasons.

According to Institute for Global Policy (2015) the UN Security Council has reported that as of January 2015, the FDLR was still in the process of recruiting new

combatants. There have been renewed attacks by FDLR rebels in North Kivu forcing more than 30,000 people to flee their homes throughout. About 100,000 civilians have been displaced in North Kivu and a large number of villages were pillaged and set on fire in FDLR dominated areas of South Kivu. This on-going harassment and recruitment of combatants illustrate that peace talks are still faced with challenges.

4.4.7 Mai Mai Militias

The Mai Mai group is a community based militia that is active in Eastern DRC. It originated from eastern DRC from 1990s. It was primarily formed to protect the Mai Mai local territory from attack by other armed groups especially the annexation by Rwandan forces and Rwanda sponsored rebel groups (Nzongola, 2004).

The Mai Mai rebels are one of the most dominant militant groups in the DRC conflict. The loose and disconnected Mai Mai is another player in the already complex web of actors. The Mai Mai community has at least thirty different groups operating in DRC. Considering their actions together, the community has been the most violent non-state player in the DRC by count of ferocious events. Mai Mai militias played a key role in defeating AFDL rebellion and operated as a proxy for the national military forces, opposing Rwandan supported RCD militants. Mai Mai groups operate on loose organisational structures and they are often shifting alliances and gradual developments of leadership fights (Koko, 2011). The groups operations are mainly active in the Kivu region. Since late 2012 several Mai Mai militia groups have intensified clashes with military forces and also targeted civilians. Again like other rebel groups their actions further complicates peace realisation processes.

4.4.8 Lord Resistance Army (LRA)

This group was formed in Northern Uganda in 1986 led by Joseph Kony. It claimed to protect the rights of Acholi tribe who are located in politically and economically marginalised Northern Uganda (Turner, 2007). This is a rebel group and cult operating in DRC, Northern Uganda, South Sudan and the CAR. Its specified goals include ruling Uganda according to the Ten Commandments. The group is not motivated by any recognisable political policy and basically operates along the behaviour of its leader Joseph Kony.

Under the command of Joseph Kony, the Ugandan based rebel group has been active since the mid-1980s. The movement has conducted several military

operations in Southern Sudan, Uganda, CAR and the DRC. The LRA has been primarily targeting the civilian population, particularly women and children.

The LRA was initially given protection and sponsored by the government of Sudan to start and carry out war in Southern Sudan and Uganda. They were forced out of Sudan through the Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and in 2005 some LRA units went into DRC, looking for a new place after the Sudan People's Liberation Movement took power in Southern Sudan. The movement is currently present in some parts of DRC.

The LRA have been mainly active in Orientale province and most of the group's violent activities took place there. They have also been engaged in sporadic low-level attacks in Kivu and Ituri (See Annex A). The group has been by far considered the most violent group from 1997 to September 2013. LRA is known globally for the bad reputation of extremely brutal attacks on citizens and forced recruitment of child soldiers. Even though the LRA is still active, its military activities have decreased in the DRC. However, the group has with long-standing militant links throughout central Africa and it remains a force to be recognised in the DRC conflict (International Crisis Group, 2015). As a result confronting   LRA is challenging as it is spread across central Africa.

4.4.9 DRC Entrepreneurs

These are citizens of DRC who take advantage on lack of state authority in the mining sectors of the DRC. They have formed alliances with rebel groups to gain right of entry to lucrative mines. These individuals thrive on the continuation of the war, since the violence and political instability have shaped conditions such that they are able to proclaim authority over mineral rich regions.

The DRC entrepreneurs regularly use armed forces to protect trade and to increase commercial opportunities and create new markets (Hwang, 2013). On the other hand warlords have also needed companies to finance and supply their combat activities. Congolese entrepreneurs saw war as a business opportunity because it offers exclusive freedom to pillage and creates black markets for merchandises that the war made scarce. The entrepreneurs have ensured that business play a role in causing and sustaining armed conflict. This resulted in civil wars driven by commercial greed just like by political grievance. To the entrepreneurs civil war is

economic. Congolese Entrepreneurs use war to take land and resources for their own use and few elite within their close circle without the owner's permission (Slim, 2013).

These entrepreneurs copied and employed violent rebel practices to exploit business opportunities existing locally. These violent tactics are also used to control territory. They use forced labour and unlawful violence by hiring militias for collusion with state or other non-state combatants.

Their methods of doing business by extorting, taxing and taking over other businesses became a shadow economy within a state. Some businesses became highly adaptable in the civil war. For example; property, hotel, and restaurant market flourished as they were rented out to international aid agencies. Companies dealing with arms, food and construction benefited from the war. Banks also became critical in sustaining the war as they pay for the equipment used in war. They also pay and feed the fighting forces (Slim, 2013).

4.4.10   Zimbabwean Government

The interests of Harare in DRC are not that much destructive of peace than the interests of Ugandan and Rwandan governments. Zimbabwe's interests are not likely to cause renewed fighting that will threaten any peace prospects. The country's ambitions in the DRC have resulted in Zimbabwe having key Congolese frontmen in DRC government. These government hardliners became obstacles to the negotiation process and success. Harare has also approached Kinshasa to ensure the security of its interests. This ended with signing of a number of contracts which were not to be the subject of any review by any commission.

Some Zimbabwean generals have formed private security companies that are tasked with the surveillance of diamond concessions controlled by Zimbabwean interests. The security companies played the same role as the Zimbabwean Defence Force had before its withdrawal. "Zimbabwe had spent about US $220 million in military support of the DRC government" (Nest, 2006: 42). Given the bad situation of Zimbabwean economy, the government had been pressing DRC to repay the money that the Zimbabwean government spent while supporting them. This unpaid debt the DRC owes Zimbabwe was used by Zimbabwe to legitimise its operations in DRC (Sengati, 2014).

4.4.11   Angolan Government

Angolan government and Angolan companies have been involved in DRC on a smaller scale as compared to Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The Angolan National Fuel Company, Sonangol was exploring for oil in the Angolan-DRC coast. In compensation for military expenditures it sustained for supporting the DRC government, the Angolan government is reported by UN to have urgently demanded diamond concessions. Angola needed to protect its diamond and petroleum exploitation zones, mainly the oil-rich area which is separated by a portion of DRC territory.

The occupation of the Atlantic region of DRC by the anti-Kabila alliance was a clear and present danger for Luanda, especially in view of the alleged collaboration between the alliance and UNITA. Angola also feared that UNITA rebel leader Jonas Savimbi would again use an unstable DRC as a rear base for UNITA, as he once did during the Mobutu regime. Angolan government was enthusiastic to establish its identity as a regional power in central Africa and wanted to protect the border it shares with DRC (Ndabure, 2004).

4.4.12   Rwandan Government

Rwanda justified and defended its involvement in DRC by advancing reasons that Rwandan rebels and genocidaires who took part in Rwandan genocide of 1994 were staying in the DRC territory. They were using the country as a launching pad for their attacks in Rwanda (Hintjens, 1999).

According to Sengati (2014), South Africa and Angola sponsored DRC President Joseph Kabila to successfully sideline the rebel movements and reintroduced the importance of DRC's position and reasoning in resolving the crucial issues of the DRC conflict. Unfortunately the government did not honour its part of the deal. Joseph Kabila was unable to disarm and disband FDLR and this failure gave the FDLR the opportunity to consolidate its position in Eastern DRC. FDLR also merged with other expatriate Rwandan militias that are hostile to Rwandan government. Thus FDLR became strong and intensified its aggressive campaign against Rwanda. An estimated 10 000 members of the FDLR militia continued to be active in Kivu region in eastern DRC along the borders of Rwanda (See Annex A).

These forces became one of the greatest threats to Rwanda. Rwanda considered this to be a security concern and it opted to elevate its influence in Kivu inside DRC.

Sengati (2014) mentions that Rwanda influenced the appointments of certain community leaders in the positions of provincial administration. A governor of North Kivu was appointed to lead Tous pour la Paix et le Development (TDP) a parastatal NGO that has links to the Rwandan Military Intelligence. The TDP implemented local development projects in an effort to address socio economic grievances experienced by the local population. It also worked as substitute political authority and was vetting almost all the appointments in the provincial administration, including that of RCD's military arm. Rwanda provided the backbone for governor's authority in Kivu. These ensured tight security arrangements intended to prevent infiltration of FDLR into Rwanda and maximised Rwandan support and influence in eastern DRC (O'Hanlon, 2013).

Under the umbrella of RCD, Rwanda built a strong power base in eastern DRC. The region had strong economic and political allegiance to Kigali rather than to Kinshasa. "Rwanda also entrenched a permanent and effective surveillance system. It also pursued quiet and highly lucrative administration of all existing economic resources irrespective of the commitments that were made under the peace agreement. In such setting, it became very difficult for the central government in Kinshasa to have any administrative control over the eastern sector" (Sengati, 2014: 119). The effective regional control meant that autonomous forces aligned to Rwanda that were excluded from the peace agreement will never accept the results of the agreement. This further cemented the firm control of eastern territory by Rwanda.

The Rwandan government had also negotiated several deals with the Mai Mai leaders to prevent any FDLR and DRC government alliance. It also wanted to consolidate Rwandan control over the eastern region. The Rwanda government has sponsored autonomous movements and offered to share power and resources with local leaders independent of political relationships with Kinshasa. This was done to attract strategic allies to support its military operations in the territory of Kivu to fight against FDLR. The Kivu territory has therefore turned out to be an ideal ground for the multiplication of DRC armed groups driven by desire to have economic and political control of the region. The high profile and intensified secret involvement of

Rwanda in these immoral acts repeatedly brought peace prospects on the brink of collapse (O'Hanlon, 2013).

4.4.13   Ugandan Government

Spear (2013) mentions that the Ugandan government has different interests and strategies from those of Rwanda. Kampala does not have any considerable security threat from eastern DRC but seek to remain influential over North Kivu and Orientale province. Their influence will ensure that Uganda continues to benefit from the natural resources exploitation which it started after the Ugandan Peoples Defence Force's occupation of the DRC. To achieve this goal, the government of Uganda has created a confederation of allies to guarantee the protection of Uganda's interests in DRC's territory.

Uganda created a joint political movement named Front for the Liberation of Congo (FLC) within its sphere of influence. The intention of FLC was to unite MLC, Mai Mai leaders and three RCD factions of RCD-K, RCD-National, RCD- ML but the agreement was short lived. The groups continue to fight each other supported by either the DRC government or the Uganda government. Ugandan government has been a political and economic ally to all the actors that played a part in the developments of Orientale province. The Ugandan government continues to supply the militia of its choice with weapons and ammunition and also to take part in marketing the natural resources they routinely loot. The behaviour and relationship of these actors involved in Ugandan coordinated situation are driven by power, political and economic motives. The Ugandan government has opted to provide regular support to breakaway factions and various ethnic leaders to continue the hostilities in order to have territorial and resource control. It uses them as powerful incentives for rebel groups to entice them to reject any power or resource sharing between the government, other groups or community leaders (Swart, 2012).

4.4.14   Foreign Companies Exploiting Natural Resources in DRC

The UN Panel of Experts report of 2014 listed companies and individuals from twenty six countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America that have operations involving exploitation of natural resources in DRC (Xiaofang,2015).

Congo has suffered grievously from outsiders attracted by its vast mineral wealth. Soco International, a British-registered company is one the latest of many outside

entities lured by Congo's natural riches, and willing to take their chances in a notoriously corrupt and violent state. They claimed that the soldiers stationed in the area were deployed by the government to keep the peace while at the same time giving protection to a racket for illegal natural resources smuggling. Zanker (2014) states that the company has secured the backing of some powerful officials, distributed cash and beer at public meetings and commissioned a popular pop song that runs, 'Welcome to our Soco and we all love you since you have brought home development…' (Zanker, 2014: 84)

Zanker (2014) mentions that permitting a foreign oil company to openly disobey the law will crash any efforts to restore peace and stability in the region. Zanker (2014) argues that oil will jeopardise the fragile peace that has held since M23's rebellion ended in 2013 because every armed group would want a share. 'Renewed oil interest in the DRC represents a real threat to stability in a still vulnerable post-conflict country,' the International Crisis Group warned in a report entitled Black Gold.

4.5 Conclusion

The conflict in DRC is a complex and multifaceted. It involves a diverse range of participants and belligerents. It is characterised by extensive and cruel violence against civilians, ethnic competition for control of land and natural resources. This has undermined the already weak institutions. Conflicts with spoils of war are difficult to solve. These conditions provide lucrative opportunities that offer stake holders with more and greater incentives to keep those conditions instead of seeking peace. Belligerent may intentionally harm any peace efforts since violence allows them to attain their political goals and economic survival. For foreign belligerents post conflict environment is unattractive since any peace deal will require their repatriation hence stopping their continued exploitation of economic benefits and opportunities. They will also lose military control of their regions and cross border trade (Nest, 2006).

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS ON CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEACE PROSPECTS IN DRC.

5.1   Introduction

This Chapter presents findings on circumstances that make it difficult for DRC to achieve a positive outcome. It will also look at those circumstances that enable the situation favourable to end the persistent conflict. For DRC to achieve lasting peace, it has to embrace the following: democratic governance, power sharing of political groups, globalization and regional integration of neighbouring states.

5.2   Tenets of Peace in DRC

5.2.1 Good Governance: Its Meaning and Significance

Good governance includes the embracing of multi-party policies, multiparty politics, credible democratic elections and increasing of the civil society organizations (Imbovah, 2014). This process of democratic governance is regarded as one of the vital features in conflict resolution and peace building. Implementation of democratic governance eliminates undesirable aspects that are related with conflicts. These aspects mainly include dictatorship propensities, ethnic marginalization and exploitation and oppression.

According to Graham (2003), some of the tenets of good governance are:

a)   Popular Participation.   All men and women, including those physically challenged, should be allowed to express their opinions in decision-making. It can be done through appropriate intermediate associations that represent their interests. In DRC the communities have mobilised their members to form community self-organising governance initiatives. These are mechanisms that are designed to help community members to ascend to political power. Through these community members they can participate in decision making. The physical closeness of the representative to the population makes the leader act in public interests (Zanker, 2014).

b)   Rule of Law. The Laws and codes of conduct should be respected. They should be fair and imposed with impartiality. There has been steady increase in soldiers and police salaries in DRC. These put the police and the military in a better position to ensure that the rule of law is upheld. DRC government has committed

itself to security sector reforms in the army and police who are the main perpetrators in disobeying the rule of law. (Donnelly, 2013)

c)   Transparency. It's the free flow of information. Procedures, establishments and information must be directly accessible to the concerned. The DRC government has published reports to disclose the revenue earned by the government from its natural resources especially oil and mining. Parliament is also expected to discuss fundamental laws on how the natural resources will be managed. This will include openness and measures to combat corruption.

d)   Accountability.   Accountability ensures that the government acknowledges and assumes responsibility of decisions and actions taken. The public officials should be subject to oversight.   Decision-makers in public institutions and private sector must be accountable to the public and to institutional stakeholders. There is growing recognition among the DRC electorates that they have been doing a mistake by voting on the lines of gifts and hand-outs since the elected did not bring the much needed change. The populace now elect candidates based on accountability. Training and resources are provided by the government and donors so that people understand their role and public officers can be held accountable (Donnely, 2013).

e)   Equality.   All men and women must have equal opportunities to develop or sustain their welfare. The focus groups in the villages are mainly concerned with removing barriers that are faced by women especially in rural areas.

Peace negotiations should be determined to lead to transition period then ultimately peaceful, free and fair multiparty elections. Imbovah (2014) argues that constitutionally elected government of DRC should be committed to establishing new constitutions that support democratic functioning of the governance system. Democratization process should embrace reconciliation between various belligerents involved in the conflict as this will avoid future outbreaks of the conflict. Reconciliation process was used in South Africa to restore friendly relations between the wrong doers and those who were wronged during the apartheid era, thus DRC could learn from this. Political leaders in DRC should have democratic tendencies and commitment to peace. These are essential characteristics for good governance (Imbovah, 2014).

f)   Responsiveness.   Responsiveness to the preference of society is a fundamental principle to democracy.   Citizens should be able to influence their preferences upon officials making decisions.   This ensures that all the citizens not only those who are powerful or politically linked are allowed to exercise influence on the process of making policy. Responsiveness exists where there are prevailing democratic provisions.

5.2.2 Power Sharing by Various Political Formations

DRC is one of Africa's most politically unstable and insecure countries. Power sharing is used as a tool to end conflicts caused by grievances concerning elections. According to Traniello (2008) this instrument was effective in mitigating the existing conflict and stabilised South Africa into a democratic government. Institutions that permit power sharing are generally stable and known to uphold democracy. South Africa was able to create functional public institutions despite deep-seated ethnic rivalries and economic inequalities of social foundation. Power sharing agreement forms the basis for a political transformation process leading to important reforms. At the same time, there are limitations connected to power sharing. Conflicts are rarely solved through negotiation, but instead are suppressed.

The disputed elections of December 2007 in Kenya and those of Zimbabwe held in March 2008, led to violence and tension that was mainly divided along various ethnic groups. However, the international community managed to control the conflict by successfully negotiating power sharing. This has been generally considered as having prevented the outbreak of violence. The main actors were brought to table to talk over issues through diplomacy and a viable democratic order was attained (Traniello, 2008). Imbovah (2014) states that in Kenya power sharing has been successful but in Zimbabwe power sharing was not as good as Kenya hence, there is still a threat to peace in Zimbabwe. Decentralization in DRC is vital to power sharing among several government organisations. Political and administrative reorganisations are the appropriate solutions to assist solving conflict and build peace. A decentralized government encourages participation that is more representative (since it includes minor communities), democratic and accountable. Democratic institutions provide voters with opportunities to take part in the democratic governance. There is better accountability, transparency and reduced corruption among elected officials.

5.2.3 The Involvement of External Actors in the Great Lakes Region.

Regional integration is an arrangement in which neighbouring countries enter into agreement for the purpose of improving cooperation through mutual institutions and procedures. It is working together of neighbouring countries or other organizations to develop international influence or start operating businesses in other countries. This process is enabled by advanced technological improvements and connection of independent and unrelated of cultural practices. The Great Lakes Region act as one institution on socio-cultural, political and economic procedures that are facilitated by countries policies and agencies. It basically enhances the individual countries economic and political power (Imbovah, 2014).

Regional involvement leads to economic and political reform and positively contributes to development. A peaceful environment in DRC would attract developed countries to invest in the country. The environment would lead to co-operation between Kinshasa and other governments, corporate sectors and civic societies in combining resources for development. Foreign investors and businesses are deterred from investing or opening up businesses in DRC due to its volatile situation. "Despite cheap labour and raw materials, generally operating costs in DRC are very high because infrastructure and road network are very poor and security is a major concern" (Xiaofang, 2015: 22). This disadvantages the country form benefiting through regional integration and globalisation. China has taken a leading role in investing in Africa. DRC can benefit from China as an important investor and development partners in projects like transport, infrastructure, energy, health and education.

The West is accused to be involved in the Great Lakes Region by supporting mainly both Rwanda and Uganda. These countries are major players in destabilising the resource rich DRC. The US supports the Rwandan military and Rwanda shares intelligence information against extremists groups with US. According to Slim (2013) the US and European countries involvement in the Great Lakes Region is about interests and not allies. The west only apply R2P when their national interests are threatened. The countries have long known about the illicit involvement of Rwanda and Uganda in DRC but decided to ignore that since it was not threatening their political interests.

5.2.4 Regional integration in the Great Lakes Region: A powerful force for Peace?

Regional integration is considered as one of the significant approaches in the minimising conflicts. It is also critical in building peace amongst neighbours. Annex B shows DRC's neighbours whom together they have formed a regional body called ECGLC. The organisation was formed to build economic development and consolidate peace and security in the region. It builds environments of regional loyalty which are likely to reduce the possibility of conflicts (Imbovah, 2015). Regional integration can positively improve conditions of economic inactivity and poverty which are the major causes of political turmoil, hostilities and fighting. Regional integration melts away ethnic tensions existing between groups and integrates the social and economic status people from different countries hence behaving as one. Due to this integration, DRC can succeed in creating conditions that do not favour the operations of warlords. The cooperation between neighbouring member states will put an end to support of various rebels groups by Rwanda and Uganda. There will also be considerable reduction in the level of self-protection against neighbouring countries as in the case of Rwanda validating its actions to protect itself against rebels in DRC. According to Imbovah (2015) trade in Africa and also with developed countries has increased due to peace in areas that were greatly affected by conflicts. The prevalence of peace in the region can improve regional trade and bring positive effects.

5.2.5 Involvement of Civil Societies

Peace process negotiations in DRC primarily happen in top-down form. They fail to incorporate the bottom-up process that will ensure the input from the general public. The exclusion of civil societies from peace talks negatively impact the sustainability of a peace agreement during peace building. Durable peace agreements do survive only when they feature direct civil society involvement in peace negotiations, mostly in conflicts characterized by undemocratic elites like in DRC. Peace process has to exist in bottom up form to ensure it integrates the society to which it hopes to bring peace. A sound approach to civil society inclusion is a major step towards sustainable peace. By supporting civil society institutions, political decision makers can be hopeful for peace conditions. In order to increase the peace prospects in the DRC, the peace processes should fully engage civil societies.

5.3   CHALLENGES OF ACHIEVING PEACE IN THE DRC

5.3.1 Introduction

Challenges to peace prospects in DRC are brought up by a number of reasons. The most prominent reasons are social, political and economic.

5.3.2 The Challenge of Ethnic, Regional identities and Land issue

The ethnic hostility and deep rooted enmity between tribes has contributed to an uncontrollable, unmanageable and multifaceted conflict situation leading to a country to be divided by violent conflict and dissent (Swart, 2012). Before the facilitators could convene the talks, there were conflicts over the composition of the delegates that was along ethnic lines. Failure to resolve this issue resulted in quick collapse of the dialogue.

Despite the agreements the belligerents continued unrestricted with their inhuman acts. The Congolese belligerents continued to be aligned to their regional supporters and their commercial networks that connect them (Hoffman,1996). Tutsi rebel leader Laurent Nkunda insists that he is protecting his fellow ethnic Tutsis from Rwandan-Hutu militias and he has received extensive support from neighbouring Rwanda. The ethnic Tutsi commonly known as the Banyamulenge are the Tutsi Congolese found in South Kivu, Eastern region of the DRC. They occupy territories along the Rwanda-DRC - Burundi border. With this support from Rwanda, Nkunda has extended his political ambitions in DRC and has threatened to fight all the way to Kinshasa.

Ordinary citizens divided among ethnicity and regions have become dependent on the economy generated by war even though it has caused poverty to the majority, millions of people displaced and land ownership is held by those who have instruments of violence. Land ownership by communities is highly constrained as most of it is owned by ethnic armed groups. Land ownership is dictated by control over instruments of violence rather than by legal or customary title.

The insecurity patterns created by the conflict between rival ethnic groups have created severe complications to the implementation peace processes (Swart, 2012). Entitlements to land were forfeited when armed groups sized control over land and most of the time doing so by means of coercion. This forced different ethnic groups to be associated with a particular armed group for protection. According to Nest (2006), land ownership in eastern DRC is now in the hands of Tutsi and Hema.

This benefit came as a result of support from Rwandan and Ugandan forces that have managed control of the land that did not initially belong to them.

The economy in eastern DRC, which is based on the production of lucrative minerals is organised along the ethnic lines. Only those tribes who control the mines do benefit. This poses a great challenge to any possible peace prospects. Those who have nothing to gain from the peace threaten to pull out of the negotiations making the peace talks susceptible to collapse.

In his speech on the instability of the Great Lakes Region, His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda stated that "Some of the aspects through which the seeds of conflicts are believed to have been sown under colonialism include the following: firstly, colonialism created and consolidated divisive ideologies of ethnicity, racialism and regionalism" (Mpangala, 2004: 5). According Mpangala (2004), this division of people according to ethnicity by colonialism continues even after independence to cause grave and repetitive conflicts despite many repeated interventions. Gabatlhaolwe (2014) emphasizes that according to Kagame the presence of external factors which bore hallmarks of neo-colonialism have created conditions for post-independence conflicts and instability.

The rampant violence is mainly due to communities fighting for the control of valuable resources like land, grazing areas, mineral deposits and water sources. This local conflicts led to group of actors like warlords and entrepreneurs of violence in the country's conflict landscape.

5.2.3 The complex situation of international bodies

The extreme weakness in the central government had created opportunities for predation and multinational companies have taken advantage of this to make profit. International companies including those from neighbouring African states have fully seized the opportunity to loot the DRC (Diehl, 2010).

The economic profits made by international actors have escalated the opportunity to exploit DRC resources through investment. There is a lot of foreign interest in DRC. Multinational companies secure their markets within DRC through infrastructural integration and economic integration. These companies source for goods and services and produce them and distribute them locally and internationally. This

predation fuels violence amongst Congolese and this gives the multinational companies the benefit of exploiting the DRC natural resources unrestricted.

United States and France are the two major powers that are involved in the region. They both have strategic interests in DRC exceptional metals and are interested in having their transnational companies having the right to use these resources. They also have fear that these resources might end up in the wrong hands, especially the international terrorist organisations. The international interests of the United States as a world power and France's policy and practice in extending its influence into DRC exploiting its resources require that they remain involved in the region. Washington is also concerned about Kabila's incompetence, unpredictable behaviour and his friendship with nations which Washington considers hostile, such as Cuba (Ntalaja, 2004).

Efforts by the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and the international community to broker peace and develop alternative options for sustainable regional development have lacked impartiality and have been influenced by foreign governments unmentioned political and economic interests. According to Baaz (2010), the three western governments that are involved in the DRC being Belgium, France and the United States have economic agendas which are implemented through their multinational companies. On the other hand, the regional actors receiving spoils from the DRC war see any peace process development like MONUSCO as a political endeavour by the NATO to repossess control over DRC's economy so that they could make profits. The Western powers have not been transparent about their involvement in DRC. They opted for political expediency for any acknowledgement of their multinational companies that are deeply involved in lawful and unlawful exploitation of DRC's natural resources. Baaz (2010), states that the role played by the international community in implementing prospects for peace has been drenched in double standards.

While the western donors were criticizing the actions of Ugandan, Rwandan and Zimbabwean governments, the government of United Kingdom, US and France were attempting to disguise the deep participation of their countries in the exploitation of natural resources. According to Baaz (2010) this was exposed in by their efforts to regulate the focus of the UN Panel of expert's reports. The DRC conflict is viewed by

African states to be the results of the dictatorial west still having the attitude of telling Africans what to do.

While Rwandan forces had previously focused primarily on pursuing the Hutus who committed the genocide, both Rwandan and Ugandan forces increasingly became interested in controlling and exploiting the mineral-rich eastern provinces of DRC. Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia used their deployment as a pretext to loot vast natural resources and terrorize civilians. These regional countries also blame the west for being responsible for the conflict moreover in the origins of the conflict (Nest, 2006).Their bases of this is due to the west sustained support to Mobuto or the role of North American and European based transnational companies who are exploiting resources and aggravating the conflict.

The challenge now is that if the Congolese and other regional actors believe that they are left out in the international post conflict DRC reconstruction, they will become losers and will spoil any peace building effort. The two factors that are the leaders or, and also the neighbouring countries that oppose the peace agreement and help the spoilers of peace agreement pose challenges to peace prospects in DRC (Nest, 2006). These spoiler factions oppose any peace process and employ violence to undermine it. Another challenge to peace process is to make sure that a satisfactory number of important actors, which include national and foreign actors, the signatories and non-signatories of power sharing agreement, are positioned to benefit something from the return to peace.

These challenges have made attempts to build up the peace course a difficult and politically tense process. The peace processes are regarded by many as having hidden agendas and therefore unlikely to make any transformation on the ground when implemented. The provisions for peace agreement have been observed as torn between rival solutions for regional economic and political issues.

The uncompromising position of Rwanda and Uganda and their continuous military occupation in DRC is a threat to Kinshasa and this brings challenges to the peace prospects.

5.2.4 Bad Governance

Bad governance is the failure of the government to manage public resources and public affairs. In Africa it has led to poverty, destruction of social cohesion and ultimately violent conflicts. Most African countries have a poor design of democracy as they militate their politics (Nzongola, 2004). Cases of official pillaging, mismanagement, irresponsibility confrontation, and unequal distribution of national resources, dictatorships and indecisiveness are common. These aspects of socio-economic, ethnic and cultural tolerance which are catalysts of development are absent in various in African countries systems. The identities of ethnicity and regions have dominated ideologies of DRCs political landscape. These irregularities have brought about conflicts. It resulted in political directive that could not respond to societal challenges and eventually conflicts intensified (Nzongola, 2004).

The failure of DRC to consolidate democracy brought misfortune to many post-colonial African societies. This failure by political and military leaders betrayed people's expectations as they placed personal interests above general welfare and patriotism. DRC enormous wealth was monopolised by its leaders and their foreign partners, represented today by numerous networks of international financial corruption that include states and rogue business groups which prosper on make money from crisis circumstances (Nieuwkerk, 2013).

Failure to concede defeat after election results announcement by serving heads of state has incited their followers to participate in violent activities. The post-election violence in DRC has led to violence in form of riots, harassment and intimidation. "Congolese officials to date have shown little interest in fundamental change. They have created environment where institutions are weak and dysfunctional" (Spear, 2013: 44).

The international community has considered DRC to be a weak state and its citizens see it as predatory, serving only the political and economic interests of the elite who gobble resources that are meant for the country's development. This has been a fundamental feature of the DRC system and the country's political culture.

Congolese authorities have been very reluctant to apply institutional reforms supported by international partners. Lack of legitimacy has weakened state institution. The government is weak and hardly functions in many respects and often

finds itself faced with persistent political and security challenges. More has to be done than just institutional strengthening to overcome this. State officials and political leaders do not account to the public. The DRC government challenge for prospects of peace is to lay the foundations for a state that will be deeply and firmly established on national and local systems of good governance. It should also provide for the security and prosperity of its neighbours (Nest 2006). The government drags its feet in resolving the fundamental conflicts of ethnicity, citizenship and security which are fundamental long term peace instruments.

The government had passed resolutions that promised good governance and economic transparency but that is still to be implemented. Many still feel that the transitional government is just pretending to support radical reforms in the governance of DRC state while they are working hard to ensure that there are no international guarantees made to confirm compliance to commitments made. Congolese still view the DRC signing of peace agreements as the government strategic manoeuvre calculated to buy the government time to increase and develop its military position (Baregu, 1999).

Kabila's government is benefiting handsomely from western donors. The DRC government is also involved in looting, acting in collaboration with the Zimbabwean players. The Congolese government led by Laurent Kabila had actually wanted to adhere to the commitment they signed, by their regional sponsors and supporters would not allow it. For example President J. Kabila had to fly to Harare to explain how the review of economic and financial conventions would work and to guarantee that the Zimbabwean interests will stay safe (Koko, 2011). Any decision made by DRC government will have to be confirmed by telephone call from Kinshasa to Harare. The credibility of democracy and good governance of the government remains doubtful in DRC public. The government had committed itself to political accountability and transparency that it had no intention of respecting. There was never any concrete action by members of transitional government to correct patterns of wrong behaviour. They did not reallocate or return national assets as agreed.

Majority of the government officials including their associates are involved in rampant corruption. They have accumulated a great fortune, something they could have failed to do in the absence of war. They managed to acquire this through their control of

instruments of violence. After transition from colonial powers, Africans followed undemocratic regimes to democracy. States weaknesses to transit efficiently to democracy led to internal conflicts in these countries.

5.2.5 Neighbouring Countries Participating in the Conflict

The regionalization of armed conflict has become one of the major threats to peace. External forces of neighbouring countries like Rwanda and Uganda are sponsoring rebel movements operating in the DRC. Colonial powers created boundaries that integrated diverse ethnical societies within the same territory which is contrary to African arrangement. Tribes were dispersed across different national borders. e.g the Rwandan descents were spread in different colonial borders. Paul Kagame stated that "Colonialism divided people through the policy of divide and rule and creation of artificial borders between colonies. Artificial borders divided people who before colonialism were under the same political organisations" (Mpangala, 2004: 5). This new borders influenced and often led to violent conflicts in the Great Lakes Region. Ethnic diversity within the same borders created threats of ethnicity as experienced in DRC.

5.2.6 Corrupt Power

The ineffective command and control, inadequate leadership, corruption and poor military planning capability have inhibited the government's ability to fulfil its essential obligation to protect its territory and its citizens. In most occasions, the military itself is accountable for horrifying human rights abuses against the vulnerable citizens that it is supposed to protect (Buzan, 2009).

The DRC corrupt political elite do not approve the much needed funds to be used to rebuild the war torn country for the construction of valuable infrastructure like healthcare facilities and roads. Schatzberg (2012) recognises African politics as self-interested group of elites whom their primary concern is to come up with strategies that best meet their interests and security needs. They are carefully made to safeguard securities that they felt are essential to look after their interests and protect their power.

The Congolese political saying, "Le pouvoir se mange entier" which means Power is eaten whole shows how Congolese politicians understand and appreciate power. There is tangible refusal to decentralise and share power.

The desire is to hang on to whatever portion of power that one has and then to exploit it for its value. This is done because they do not know how long one will be in power due to insecurity, instability of political situation and weak political institutions. DRC does not have strong oversight institutions that facilitate the sharing and the checking of power in the government (Schatzberg, 2012). As mentioned by Schatzberg (2012), the abundance of resource base over weak central state, regional political alienation, and intense flow of arms generates insecurity and create a powerful enticement for the rise of regional warlords.

5.2.7 Armed groups

The different armed groups that have mushroomed throughout country have contributed to derailing the DRC from attaining its goal of becoming a peaceful and stable country. Post colonial DRC has experienced severe crisis as a result of violent armed-conflict (Solomon, 2014)

The violent militia group FDLR, have plagued eastern DRC since their formation in 2000. It's made of the remnants of Hutu Interahamwe militia groups who were the key perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide. FDLR troops have caused unrest in the region becoming very problematic as they carry out regular raids across the border into Rwanda. In response, Rwanda provides support for Congolese Tutsi rebel groups such as M23 to help counter the FDLR rebels. Newly formed rebel groups, including dissident members of former rebel groups and untamed militias, continue to engage the government and local enemies in combat, most the time seeking to establish or maintain control of mineral wealth (Koko, 2011).

The use of extreme force on civilians causes massive suffering and dislocation of the population. Many of these groups suffer from repetitive and never-ending process of disintegration that shows a genuine threat to peace prospects. According to Nest (2006) there is evidence that suggest that the anarchy in DRC is actually a carefully orchestrated and managed instability and the actors especially the rebel groups have only one agenda of economic gain and occupying the local and national influential positions of power for exploitation reasons.

Armed groups are the major actors in contribution to the continuation of the conflict. The groups saw the appointed bodies as enemies who applied pressure on them not

as an act of creating conditions for creating prospects for peace and reconstruction process.

Most armed groups contribute to the disturbance of peace process by allowing themselves to be controlled by foreign governments and also by domestic indigenous to secure private and organisational advantage. Violence continues at a huge cost, access to land in DRC remains disputed, and control over revenues from natural resources is still in the hands of the few. Both foreign and domestic armed groups are actively operating with impunity in DRC and are the cause of major issues of insecurity in the region (Koko, 2011). Most armed groups have opted to shift to ethnicity to safeguard their survival and continuous accumulation of wealth.

Koko (2011) agrees with the argument that the DRC finds itself in a state of "no war, no peace," with repeated cases of ferocity perpetrated against civil population by formal security forces and local rebel groups including foreign armed groups. The continuous weakness of the state makes it unable to control instruments of violence and focuses its might across the rest of the national territory. The collapsed economic sector and the continuous presence of external armed groups operating on the DRC territory have further made the peace process difficult.

Armed groups have become major spoilers of the peace process as they have persistently disrupted and prevented the beginning of peace in the DRC. General Laurent Nkunda has been the most notorious character in establishing hostility and was involved in start up the FDLR back into activity. The peace process could not and would not move forward in the presence of rebel General Nkunda and was viewed as a major obstacle to peace plans. Armed groups have created instability in DRC and could destabilise the entire region as well (Swart, 2012).

5.2.8 Fragile working relations between DRC government and MONUSCO

The mission repeatedly failed to protect civilians, including humanitarian personnel who in imminent threat of physical violence, particularly violence coming from any of the parties involved in the conflict (Elia, 2011).

Koko (2011) observed that despite the actions of Congolese soldiers that could qualify as war crimes in regions under surveillance by MONUSCO, UN forces did not stop FARDC rogue troops from committing crimes.   At one point the DRC

government requested the withdrawal of MONUSCO as it failed to protect civilians and also failed to stabilize the country and consolidate peace.

According to Koko (2011), in order to achieve stabilisation and peace consolidation MONUSCO should work with the DRC government to strengthen its security sector in order to re-affirming state authority. The DRC government is the primary actor in leading the process for the restoration of peace, security and stability in the country. It bears the primary responsibility for security, peace building and development in the country. The government has also failed to protect its population and also failed to establish a professional sustainable security forces. It's not fully cooperating with MONUSCO and riddled with major structural weaknesses that provide fertile conditions for the continuance of war (Zanker, 2014).

5.2.9 Unilateral Ceasefire

The formal announcement of a unilateral ceasefire presents the danger of a ceasefire substituting a more thoroughly advanced and effective peace processes. This was witnessed in the Goma agreement of 2008 that did not lead to peace but instead signified a critical stage of entrenching a no war, no peace situation. Swart (2011) warns that the unilateral ceasefire results in being fixed in a situation where there is no war and there is no peace where essential causes of the conflict and repairs factors go on without being dealt with. The unilateral ceasefire signed by various armed groups and the government brought a false sense of assurance that hostilities were to stop. The Goma agreement was immediately violated by the continued threat posed by the FDLR. This only secures a temporary break in the fighting between FARDC and armed groups (Swart, 2012).

5.2.10 The 2011 Elections

The country's highly anticipated 2011 elections were characterized by a great deal of fear and disgruntlement. The DRC elections are always regarded as dangerous and marred by allegations of fraud and violence. Post-election clashes broke out between protestors and government security forces before the country's full election results. The polls also suffered a number of delays and there are always allegations of elections being mismanaged and fraudulent (Security Council Report, 2011). The endorsement of the election by SADC election observer mission appeared contradictory to the events that transpired on the ground. There were accusations

that Kabila is of Rwandan decent and not truly a DRC Congolese and also that his government was involved in extensive corrupt practices of exporting the Congo's massive mineral wealth (Solomon, 2011).

Kabila's victory was seen as being flawed and lacked credibility. Shortly after the announcement of election results violent protests and looting erupted in some major cities of the country. There was also bloodshed that left civilians dead. Opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi declared himself as the winner and urged the armed forces to defect and recognise him as the lawfully elected president. This brought fear of the rise of a potentially devastating institutional crisis together with an outbreak of civil unrest. The Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) was blamed for lack of transparency and vote-rigging. Tshisekedi's Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), did not accept the result of the 2011 elections. The countries electoral contest has pointed out a very deep crack that remains within the DRC amongst its leadership and populace.

President Joseph Kabila's seeking of third term in office is frustrating prospects for peace. Free and unhindered popular election participation in an open political system can contribute to long-term stability in the region. People in DRC took to the streets to protest against government attempts to change the constitution to allow Kabila for third term. The overthrow of former president Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso has set a precedence that strong opposition can oust those who stay in power for extended periods. DRC may want to do the same, throwing the country into deeper chaos. The situation in Burundi is also an example of how chaos can erupt if president seeks for third term. Protests against President Nkuruziza's third term in office have led to "rapidly worsening human rights and security situation" (Ntuane, 2015: 4).

5.2.11 The Plundering of Natural Resources by Transnational Networks

The plethora of valuable minerals and resources is one of the main drivers of conflict in the DRC. In spite of the economic ruin of the country and its political turmoil, DRC is still attractive to mining transnationals because of its abundant wealth in minerals and the relatively high mineral content. Investors seeking mining contracts do not seem to shy away from war-ravaged countries with a fabulous resource gift, like the DRC, where strategic minerals such as coltan are found.

The inability of the DRC's government to control the entire territory gave the rebel armed forces the opportunity to exploit these resources and by doing so fuelling the continuation of the conflict. Rebels benefit from the profits of this illicit trade. The DRC government has also been involved in the relentless exploitation of conflict minerals elsewhere. Parts of DRC which have rich mineral deposits have experienced violence (Turner, 2007).

There are many individuals and organisations involved in the illegal exploitation of natural resources. The challenge for the DRC government is that this commercial actors will possibly be the players in the legal production of primary commodities since they play a major role as producer, processors and investors in the global market. The DRC government would not want to sanction these commercial investors involved in illegal exploitation of resources because they can boost development and reduce poverty, create stable jobs and improve livelihoods (Nest, 2006). Political leaders and state officials must have a vision that puts the nation first instead of their own private interests. The Congolese belligerents also fear that foreign allies might stop providing them with political and military support which will jeopardize their economic benefits. This resulted in the belligerents unanimously rejecting any external interference in seeking peace.

Mining companies e.g. Bechtel Inc. from San Francisco, have no respect for diplomatic principles such as national sovereignty and territorial integrity in pursuit for short-term profits. They sign deals with whoever is in control of the mineral-rich region. These may be the warlords and invaders, just like they have done with Rwanda, Uganda, the AFDL in north-eastern Congo and both the RCD the MLC the rebels (Turner, 2007).

This system of mineral exploitation was established by colonialism and consisted of extracting raw materials for export without any investment in the country from which the minerals were extracted and little or no effort to rehabilitate environment. The DRC's massive treasures attract many outsiders who in the end find local collaborators to assist them loot the country's mineral resources. Just like in Leopold's period, the national wealth is monopolised by DRC's leaders and their external business partners to the disadvantage of the mass of the people, who are still some of the poorest in the world (Nzongola, 2004).

In order to continue plundering the country, President Museveni of Uganda came with the strategy of the "Somalisation" the DRC; that is taking DRC as a failed state where he created MLC and supported up to three different factions of the RCD. Ugandans and Rwandans established a regime of pillage that is resonant of King Leopold era. They divided the timber, gold, coffee, diamonds, and tea of the north-east DRC among themselves. The major activity of the Ugandan army in north-eastern DRC had been organised looting of natural resources. The armed clashes between Rwandan and Ugandan troops in DRC were fundamentally a circumstance of fighting over territory and natural resources (Williams, 2005).

Zimbabwean businessman Billy Rautenbach, who is reportedly close associates to Mugabe, acted as the managing director of Gécamines, DRC's state mining company that specialises in copper and cobalt. Zimbabwe was reported to be airlifting diamonds and other minerals home on a regular basis. Zimbabwe's governing elite were determined to reap some tangible gains from its military intervention in DRC (Avezov, 2013).

5.2.12 DDR and DDRRR

The difficult task towards attaining peace in DRC is the demilitarisation of Congolese and foreign former combatants (Baaz, 2010). The task is being assigned to MONUSCO who have been given the mandate of identifying, screening, demobilising and repatriation of any foreign combatants still in the DRC. MONUSCO has no role in disarmament as it is bound by the terms of its deployment which is to support the Kinshasa government and protect civilians. The mission has found itself supporting one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The Congolese army generals are also among the most industrious of DRC's thieves and whose rank-and-file boast one of the worst records on human rights particularly in eastern DRC (Gilpin, 2014). MONUSCO had a bad reputation as some of its soldiers for paying refugee children for sex. Pakistani peacekeepers also sold weapons to militias in exchange for gold. Peacekeepers are known to habitually barricade themselves into their bases at the first sign of trouble, leaving crowds of several thousand refugees who tend to gather outside to fend for themselves. The population no longer feels safe in the presence of peace keepers. In the area where MONUSCO has a base, Raia Mutomboki which was originally a self-defence group is now pursuing a violent

campaign of ethnic cleansing against Rwandese. Failure to intervene has resulted in MONUSCO being viewed as weak (Gilpin, 2014).

The international community is also delaying MONUSCO's capability to offer logistical support for DDR. This complicates and delays the DDR process for not only for the M23, but for the masses of other armed groups in DRC that surrendered after the fall of the M23. Rwanda and Uganda combined are accommodating and feeding more than 2,000 ex-M23 combatants and in the absence of a properly established DDR programs they unlikely to handover these combatants back to the DRC (Jimson,2014).

5.2.13 Extensions of presidency term limits

Since the end of Cold War, the African polity has to struggle with strong men who seek to temper with national structures to enable their own self succession in office (Victor, 2010). Former Zambian President Chiluba bid for third term was opposed by resistance from coalition of civil societies and other democracy movements and was also rejected by parliament. The same happened in Malawi as Bakali Muluzi wanted third term extension that left Malawi in turmoil and instability (Coleman, 2009). In Nigeria President Obasanjo attempt for third was also foiled in 2006 by a pro-democracy coalition. President Robert Mugabe who has been in power since 1980 has changed the constitution and he is on his first presidential term after the July 2013 elections. President Nkurunziza of Burundi has managed to run for third term and in the process many ordinary citizens have been killed by the people that are supposed to protect them; namely the police (Ntuane, 2015). DRC is also attempting to temper with the constitution to allow the president a third term. This will be for the benefit of the president and the elite few as compared to the interest of the nation. The president can easily preside over week institutions. "African leaders do not recognise the importance of adhering to term limits for the benefit of selfish personal interests." (Ntuane, 2015: 4).

5.2.14 Peace Process Negotiations

The DRC conflict has proven hard to control or deal with because peace processes have failed to reflect on the local dimensions of the conflict. Alternatively DRC and international partners have focused their effort on rebuilding state institutions at the national level. The DRC conflict should not be addressed in singular since it's a

collection of diverse conflicts with different underlying forces. Peace negotiations have to a large extent ignored local dimensions of the conflict. Therefore the peacebuilding initiative applied in the DRC does not sufficiently address the root causes of the country's conflict. The local factors have played role in setting up the national crisis and if ignored peace building in DRC will remain fragile (Kaldor, 2012).

5.2.15 DRC's Neighbours

DRC has to deal with its national matters in a very challenging and changeable regional environment and must uphold positive relations with her nine neighbouring countries so as to safeguard internal stability and state integrity. The chronic challenges to peace prospects in DRC are further made worse by the fact that almost all its neighbours are susceptible to severe violence and instability. With the exclusion of Tanzania and Zambia, the rest of DRC's neighbours have a history of violent and serious conflicts. In most of the cases this has led to the conflict spilling over into DRC. The conflict in Eastern DRC can be directly linked to the influx of refugees from Rwanda after the 1994 Rwanda genocide. Peace prospects in DRC are threatened by how DRC manages its multilateral relations with all her neighbours (Think Security Africa, 2014).

5.3   OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEACE IN DRC

5.3.1 Introduction

Peace opportunities are the circumstances that existed such that DRC and the international community could or could have made use of to restore peace and stability in DRC. Some of the major events that gave hope for peace in DRC include augmentation of the UN mandate, the fall of the M23 and agreement of Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda to implement commitments.

5.3.2 Security Framework Agreement

DRC and eleven African countries signed a Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo on 24 February 2013. This action was taken after identifying the existence of the recurring cycles of conflict and violence that spread throughout the eastern DRC. The eleven countries that signed the Framework are: DRC, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda Angola, Central Africa Republic, Burundi, South Africa, South Sudan, Zambia, and Tanzania. This agreement signifies an opportunity of hope for the region to build peace and stability by dealing with the root causes of the conflict and building trust amongst neighbours. The agreement is the most inclusive effort to date to address with root causes of conflict and terminate the series of violence that are reoccurring in DRC and are connected to several countries within the region. This will also enable neighbouring and regional countries to respect the sovereignty of DRC, not to tolerate or provide support to armed groups operating in DRC and also not to harbour people accused of crimes against humanity or war crimes (Feingold, 2014). This agreement is important that not only to DRC but for other countries and their citizens as well. The population will encourage their governments to ensure full implementation and governments can be held accountable for any failure to act responsibly.

Feingold (2014) stated that following this agreement the World Bank pledged $1 billion for education, health and other services in the DRC. There was also the act of encouraging amnesty law by DRC government so that those accused of war crimes can be granted amnesty especially ordinary fighters willing to surrender their arms. DRC is expected to extend security sector reform and consolidate State Authority, mainly in eastern DRC.

The UN Security Council's welcomed the Framework as it was concerned over the worsening security and humanitarian situation in DRC that has increased in the past recent years. On 28 March 2013, the Security Council recognised the Framework and the potential it signifies to lead to a process that will create stability in DRC and the region. The Security Council stressed the importance of urgent implementation the Framework to protect the people of the region and demanded that the signatory States of the Framework must fully implement their obligations.

5.3.3 Willingness of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi to implement commitments

Most of the challenges in the DRC are mainly domestic however there exist some regional root causes to the country's protracted volatility (Feingold, 2014).   The country severely suffered from the use of proxy forces by the region especially Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi and is losing considerable revenue through the illicit exploitation of its natural resources. As a result the ethnic tensions and refugee flows fail to recognise borders. The complex regional factors can only be addressed with the engagement of key neighbours and the willingness of neighbouring countries will allow for the conflict to be addressed beyond the Congolese border (Gilpin, 2014).

EU echoes its commitment to ensuring a coherent approach in its partnerships with the countries of the Great Lakes, bearing in mind that political developments and elections, which should respect constitutional provisions, in Burundi, DRC and Rwanda have a direct impact on longer term stability in the region. It welcomes progress made by Rwanda on a number of structural reforms, especially within the economic sphere and recognises the achievements in reconciliation during the 20 years since the genocide of 1994. However, the EU is concerned about constraints faced by political parties, including the reduction of the political tolerance and by reports of disappearances and actions against human rights advocates.

Looking ahead to the 2017 elections, the EU encourages Rwanda to consistently follow its commitment for democratisation. It urges Rwanda to further open up the political space, to give more room for independent civil society and in particular Human Rights advocates. EU insists that Rwanda should allow greater freedom of expression for civil society and all citizens in order to enable full democratic participation (Gilpin, 2014).

The Rwandan government, which had occasionally assisted armed groups in DRC for the past 17 years, all of a sudden cut off its aid. The sudden turn of events by Rwanda to pull the plug was the biggest step towards peace. The Rwandan government has always considered it essential to have an armed partner across the boundary to safeguard its interests in the DRC.

The Rwandan and DRC governments met in Nairobi with the aim of resolving the devastating threat of armed movements operating DRC. Rwanda also agreed to stop supporting any of the armed groups in eastern DRC and to stop them from crossing the border in either direction. Rwanda and the DRC also agreed on a common approach to disarm FDLR and to normalise relations between the two countries. These developments show DRC is ready for advancement in resolving the deadly conflicts (Feingold, 2014).

5.3.4 The Rise and Fall of M23

The M23 is made up of mostly ethnic Tutsis loyal to the Rwandan government. It was the most unified and active rebel group since their rebellion started in April 2012. The sustained diplomatic and financial pressure on Rwanda to stop backing of the M23 significantly decreased its outside support. The US and the UK have pressed M23 sponsors in Rwanda to cease supporting the group. Lack of support supplies, weapons and troops from Rwanda marked the fall of the M 23.

The FARDC, which was known for being incompetence, had greatly improved their performance. With the mandate of neutralising and disarming rebels, they were able to put M23 on its heels ever since. The Ugandan Government's continued engaging M23 and forced it to abandon its unreasonable demands while on the other hand FARDC and MONUSCO increased relentless military pressure (Feingold, 2014). The end of the M23 is a critical step paving the way towards peace prospects in DRC. It opened the door for progress after too many years of on-going conflict.

The defeat of the rebellion gave the opportunity to focus attention to other major foreign groups. The groups include the Ugandan ADF and Rwandan FDLR. The domestic militias cannot be neglected, even though their force and military capabilities cannot be compared to those of the foreign armed groups (Meece, 2015). Beneficial effects of the fall of the M23 are the significant increase of foreign and DRC combatants opting for voluntary disarmament and reintegration into their

home societies and increased prospects of political agreements between DRC and its neighbours (Feingold, 2014).

The defeat of the M23 rebels has created a window of attaining peace and should not be lost. State authority must be reinstated as fast as possible to regions where armed rebel groups are no longer active. The DRC, in cooperation with Uganda and Rwanda, should accelerate DDR of remnants of M23 members paying particular attention to women and children.

5.3.5 Willingness of tribal leaders and the Congolese people

Nest (2006) argues that customary authorities, through their influence have the legitimacy necessary to make DRC to be politically more transparent and also more responsive to the general population. The DRC government should allow the implementation of a bottom-up dialogue process, bringing together local actors and the authorities. The aim of this dialogue is to allow those primarily concerned by the problems being addressed to use data and objective analysis as a basis to agree on a solution to the conflict. This implies that the authorities and other actors are given responsibility for monitoring the way in which the solution is put in place.

The local actors are willing to play a significant role in defining the content and execution of the solutions required to resolve their problems in the long term. They have joined the struggle to implement solutions that are adapted to the local circumstances, taking into account the first-hand experience of locals on how to tackle the structural elements of the conflicts (Swart, 2012). It is this process that makes it possible to reunite governable spaces at different levels, to bring together the people and those who govern them, and to promote dynamics of accountability. In doing so, they help to create a more inclusive style of governance that is transparent and democratic and likely to be viable in the long term.

5.3.6 Augmentation of UN mandate

In early 2013, the UN mission in DRC came under growing criticisms for being inefficient, ineffective and strained (Global Policy Forum 2013). The Uganda's authorities also accused the mission for accommodating and living with rebels.

Article 2(4) and 51 of the UN Charter emphasizes the non-use of force, except in self-defence and being aware that the mandate of each peacekeeping mission is

specific to the situation of that country. With the observation that DRC has continuously been suffering from repeated cycles of conflict and persistent violence by armed groups both DRC and international community emphasized the need to address the core root causes of the conflict so as to put an end to these repeated cycles of violence. It became essential that the combatants are permanently demobilised and are dealt with in accordance with international law. In December 2012, the Secretary-General recommended improvements on the mission's ability to implement its mandate. In order to support DRC, MONUSCO was authorised to carry out targeted offensive operations either jointly or separately with the FARDC to stop the expansion of all armed groups, neutralize these groups and disarm them. This was done in order to achieve the objective of decreasing the threat of armed groups on state power and improve civilian security in eastern DRC. It was also to make space for stabilization activities (Global Policy Forum 2013).

5.3.7 Introduction of UN special intervention force

The UN recommended the establishment of an Intervention Brigade within MONUSCO and supported by SADC. The Brigade was made up of three infantry battalions, artillery battalion, Special force battalion and Reconnaissance Company. This formation was under direct command of the MONUSCO Force Commander, with the responsibility of neutralizing armed groups as set out.

Force Intervention Brigade was formed in March 2013 composed of Tanzanian, South African, and Malawian forces and was authorized to take more forceful measures than most UN armed forces. South African deployed their deadly Rooivalk attack helicopters, which helped the Congolese forces recapture the steep hills controlled by the M23. The introduction of special intervention force marked a shift in the UN's approach to protecting civilians. The Intervention Brigade was no longer forced into a reactive position of waiting for the enemy to attack. For the first time in UN peace keeping missions, peacekeepers were now allowed to go on the offensive and attack groups threatening the population (Aloyo, 2012).

In 2014, the UN adopted Resolution 2098 that allowed its troops to attack armed groups in Congo. A more robust response by the UN offensive force led to the defeat of the vicious M23 rebel group. The Intervention Brigade in MONUSCO was both welcomed and controversial at its inception (African Report, 2013). The Intervention

Brigade was given a first-time mandate to neutralize rebel forces, something that neither the UN peacekeeping mission nor the DRC government had been able to successfully address up to that point. The UN Secretariat declared that it was a peace enforcement mission but not a peacekeeping mission. It was the first-ever offensive combat force that was authorised by the Security Council on an exceptional basis. While many commended the brave move, others were quick to point out that the UN was treading into unfamiliar territory without fully bearing in mind the potential consequences of its actions. UN Secretary General met Security Council members in April 2013 to further debate the standard boundaries of peacekeeping and alternatives which can be employed by the Intervention Brigade's instruction.

In 2013, the Intervention Brigade in MONUSCO was hailed largely as a success. Equipped with various sophisticated military equipment, the Brigade was able to carry out and support DRC's offensive operations forces and as such MONUSCO was able to and has produced desired military end state, which will open way for strategic end state in the long run. The Intervention Brigade activities have inclined to give emphasis to a supporting role to FARDC (Global Policy Forum 2013).

The Intervention Brigade deployed into the eastern DRC, has been constant ever since, engaging variety of challenges. After defeating the M23, the Brigade has since shifted its focus towards FDLR and ADF with the hope that the military success against M23 will continue. The mandate of the Intervention Brigade within MONUSCO was renewed by Security Council Resolution 2147 in March 2014, and not much was changed of its mandate. Many saw this mandate as an achievement and Intervention Brigade is well thought-out to be a future model.

5.3.8 The International Criminal Court (ICC)

ICC is an international legal body skilled of trying those accused for war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. The court does so when national courts are not capable or reluctant to do so (Martin, 2010). The ICC started its inquiry in the DRC in 2004. At the time seven arrest warrants were issued for war crimes and crimes against humanity. This was after DRC government formally referred the matter to ICC to investigate any potential crimes committed anywhere in the DRC since the admission into force of the Rome Statute in 2002.

The trial of Thomas Lubanga was the first formal trail where the victims were able to take part in an international criminal trial (Mansson, 2006). Lubanga was accused conscripting and enlisting under age children. The case exposed the gravity of conscription and enlistment of child soldiers in DRC. Rebel leaders Mathieu Chui and Germain Katanga were also sent for trial at the ICC. Jean-Pierre Bemba, warlord and former vice-president of DRC is facing five counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for atrocities he committed with his MLC rebel group.

Mathieu Chui and Germain Katanga were accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes that happened in the village of Bogoro in the Ituri Province of Eastern DRC. In 2014 the ICC found Katanga guilty of crimes against humanity, murder and the war crimes. The court convicted him for pillage, destruction of property and deliberately attacking civilian population on a village in Eastern DRC where citizens were butchered.

The verdict gave hope that those carrying out war crimes in DRC will not escape justice. This will deter committing of crimes against humanity and will improve opportunities for peace in DRC.

5.3.9 Conclusion

Opportunities for peace are faced with the existing challenges. This results in noncompliance to peace agreement and violation of peace process. The accomplishments made so far remain fragile and can possibly be reversed. Peace in the DRC still remains a formidable challenge. Several militia groups continue to terrorise the general public and object any determinations towards peace prospects. The augmentation of the UN mandate has led to the fall of the M23. This gave hope that should the same tactics be applied to other existing rebel groups, most of them could be defeated. Without rebel groups, there will be increased opportunities for peace in DRC.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECCOMMENDATIONS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter connects all the summaries and conclusions of the preceding chapters. It also lists out the recommendations and lastly the concluding remarks.

6.2   SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted for the purpose of determining the opportunities of peace prospects in DRC. The qualitative research method was utilized to understand the underlying reasons behind DRC crisis.

From the findings it has been observed that rampant misrule has prevented the country from breaking loose from an endless recurrence of violence and move in the direction of long lasting peace hence attracted numerous peace efforts. The political elite do not recognise the importance of politics and social justice. They do not address structural forces that are fundamental to solutions. The other significant threats to peace are the nonexistence political commitment by the leaders and the weak and incompetent state structures that fail to maintain social order leading to insecurity and volatility. Government has encouraged divisions within the public and permitted corrupt systems within the security services to flourish and profiting from stealing and exploitation of natural resources.

DRC has a large territory that the government cannot control. This ungovernable environment is a major challenge to fruitful peace implementation. The government is failing to provide basic services like security and communities are protected by ethnic armed groups. All these make it possible for armed groups to thrive from illegal trade of natural resources. The complex regional alliances also worsen the situation. Even though DRC remains the battlefield of multiple armed groups there is a glimpse of peace at the end of the tunnel. The implementation of the Framework peace process, ICGLR dialogue, the more explicit Chapter VII mandate of robust targeting of armed groups and the demise of the M23 rebellion provides DRC with an opening to embrace the peace that has long evaded the Congolese people. The prevailing prospects are better than ever for DRC to accomplish tangible, sustained and durable peace. All these offer a good platform to be optimistic of progress in spite of the considerable difficulties.

There still remains a multifaceted heap of post-conflict challenges. Significant records of armed groups are still present, particularly the FDLR which presents huge challenges to peace. Neighbouring sovereignty states should not interfere in DRC and should remain committed to signed peace agreements.

They should also maintain peace with their own borders to avoid conflict overspiling into DRC which further worsens the situation. All these reduce any likelihood of peace prospects. The government still has the huge task of stabilising and securing the country by improving governance and stamping state authority across the entire territory. Despite these challenges, there are signs of peace and prosperity for the DRC.

6.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to build on the progress made and avoid backsliding to conflict. They are in order of priority.

- As a short term measure urgent action should be taken to address the most pressing requirements of the advanced demilitarization of the conflict affected areas by availing the information on the DDR process to avoid armed groups being sceptical and being reluctant to disarm.

- Former rebels who had been integrated into FARDC military remain in regions they initially controlled as rebels. They have basically continued the illegal exploitation of natural resources in those territories since they are the brains behind their establishment. FARDC has to transfer them to unfamiliar territories where they won't have control over illegal trade of these natural resources which is the major source of conflict.

- International community should put intensive pressure at the highest level for DRC government commitment to put effective binding conditions for political and programmes support. The government should support and strengthen local governance since building stronger institutions will take a longer time.

- The UN Security Council should take firm action against neighbouring countries interfering in DRC especially Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. Sanctions have to be applied so that they keep up their commitments and stop sponsoring armed groups operating in DRC as that action will further worsen the situation. They should respect its sovereignty and territorial integrity of DRC.

- The DRC government and MONUSCO should to apply equal military pressure on FDLR and ADF just like they did with M23.To achieve this the government has to restructure and professionally train its military top brass since the FDLR is embedded within the population as compared to M23 which was more conventional.

- UN mission, MONUSCO has to introduce drones in the DRC. As force multipliers, drones have the advantage of monitoring the mountains and dense forests of DRC. They can reach where troops cannot and can also be armed and used for attack which will be more effective and minimise the risk of personnel.

- The DRC elections should be credible and multiculturalism. The international community should put pressure on Kabila not to seek third term. It has proved to do more harm than good as evidenced by what's happening in DRC's neighbour Burundi.

- Changing the UN mandate to attack has proved to be working against the M23. In this way, the dynamic and multifaceted nature of DRC conflict requires highly flexible UN peacekeepers that are able to quickly adapt and respond. The UN should keep adjusting and changing nature of operation of peacekeepers to allow implementation of robust mandates together robust capabilities to ensure tough unprecedented responses.

6.4   CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study has shown that the forceful and violent efforts mainly by rebel groups to get unrestricted control of DRC's vast natural resources is the major contributor in continuous deterioration of the already war torn country. The overall objective of this paper has been met. The findings of this research can assist decision making of peace initiatives in DRC.

ANNEX A : PROVINCES OF DRC

www.operationworld.org

ANNEX B : MAP OF DRC AND HER NEIGHBOURS

www.operationworld.org

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