THE GOVERNANCE CRISIS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: THE ELITE AND ETHNIC PERSPECTIVES

BY

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LEGON AUGUST 2015
DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Emmanuel Kennedy Ahorsu. It contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma, in any university or other tertiary institutions apart from certain sources where due reference has been made in the text.

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DATE:........................................ DATE:........................................
DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of research work to God Almighty for his guidance and protection.

This also, goes to my wife, Mrs. Janet Donkor Arthur, son, Israel Don-Donkor Arthur and loved ones for their immense support, encouragement and who in diverse ways have added to my life.
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I wish to acknowledge God Almighty for giving me wisdom, strength and the capability to make this research study a success. I would not have been able to achieve this without His mercy, grace and loving kindness.

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My sincere gratitude goes to the authors of the books, articles and journals used in this study.

To cap it all, I say a big thank you to my family and friends for their immense support, encouragement and love.
### ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFDL</td>
<td>Alliance des forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIA</td>
<td>Association International Africaine</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNS</td>
<td>Sovereign National Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRC/DR</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>ETDs</td>
<td>Decentralized Territorial Entities</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>Forces Armées Zaïroises (Zairian Armed Forces)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDD</td>
<td>Forces for Defence of Democracy</td>
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<td>FP</td>
<td>Force Publique</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRELIMO</td>
<td>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICD</td>
<td>Inter-Congolese Dialogue</td>
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<td>ICG</td>
<td>International Crisis Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>MiG 29</td>
<td>Mikoyan Gurevich MiG-29 &quot;Fulcrum&quot; (a military jet fighter aircraft)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLC</td>
<td>Movement for the Liberation of Congo</td>
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<td>MPR</td>
<td>Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCD</td>
<td>Reassemblment Congolais pour le Democratie</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCD-ML</td>
<td>Reassemblment congolais pour la démocratie–Mouvement de libération</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RENAMO</td>
<td>Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Mozambican National Resistance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPF</td>
<td>Rwandan Patriotic Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>UDPs</td>
<td>Union for Democracy and Social Progress</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNITA</td>
<td>National Union for the Total Independence of Angola</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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ABSTRACT

One of the by-products of the Cold War in Africa is its contribution towards political instability in developing countries, especially Africa. This was largely facilitated by the kind of patron-client relations the system championed. One of such countries which suffered the repercussions of both colonial rule and the Cold War is the country known today as The Democratic Republic of Congo. This study examines the protracted governance crisis in the DR Congo as a typical African country with harsh colonial background. The work basically employs secondary sources of data and with qualitative method of data analysis. The protracted conflict has its source from the country’s pre-colonial times when the territory was owned by Belgian King Leopold as a personal possession. After Belgium officially took over as colonial masters of DR Congo, through independence, this paternalistic feature of the administration characterized the activities of political leaders. This challenge was further complicated by a subtle interplay between ethnic malevolence and elitist influence over the country’s rich natural resources. These complex intertwined forces succeeded in protracting the county’s conflict since independence. The study recommends strengthening of democratic institutions and firm security measures to secure the county’s territorial integrity against undue external influences in the DR Congo.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the Study

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), formerly known as Zaire, is the second largest country in Africa. It has an estimated population of 70 million and more than 200 different ethnic groups. The country is located in Central Africa and shares borders with the Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan to the north, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania to the East, Zambia and Angola to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west.

The DR Congo is the most diverse country in Africa in terms of ethnicity. The Mongo, Luba, Kongo and Mangbetu-Azande are the four major ethnic groups. Of these ethnic groups, the majority are Bantu-speaking (i.e. Mongo, Luba, and Kongo) and Hamitic spoken by Mangbetu-Azande which combined, make up about 45% of the population.

Aside from the vast arable land for agricultural purposes, the DR Congo is also endowed with valuable natural resources. Some of the agricultural products are coffee, cocoa, cassava, plantain, peanut, sugar, tea, cotton, rubber, banana, corn and minerals such as diamonds, copper coltan, tin and timber.
The DR Congo has unfortunately been subject of colonial domination, repressive dictatorship, and internal and regional conflict, despite the abundance of these resources and the potential for economic progress and national development.

The country has endured a long history of instability and underdevelopment that since colonial rule under Belgium. Until its independence, the country was subjected to the rules of the Belgium parliament. After independence in 1960, Patrice Lumumba became the Prime Minister with Joseph Kasavubu becoming the first freely elected President in a democratic election. The president at the time demanded not just political, but also economic independence from the former imperialistic nations, which were hoping to keep their hold over the country’s resources. This hope was however short lived as conflict between the two political leaders was exploited by foreign forces and soon became a pawn in the cold war power politics. The United States and its Western allies supported, Kasavubu while Lumumba drew Soviet Union support. The USA and Belgium sent aid to anti-Lumumba factions and in 1961, Lumumba was assassinated.

In 2006, Joseph Kabila was elected as president of DR Congo and soon after, formed a new government in February; 2007. The historic presidential election was intended to bring a new era of stability after years of war, dictatorship and chaos. Despite all these laudable efforts the violent activities still persist. The Eastern provinces specifically the Ituri, North and South Kivu and Katanga remained unstable while rebel groups continued to fight among themselves and against the government.
Some scholars have described the protracted devastating Congolese conflicts as wars that were “imported” from neighbouring countries. This viewpoint emphasises the regional dynamics that dragged what was then Zaire into a spiral of violence, worsened by the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the subsequent arrival of nearly two million Rwandan Hutu refugees in the Kivu provinces. While it is clear that regional dynamics played a role in the Congolese conflicts, these violent dynamics quickly found a terrain in Zaire that was particularly well suited to their propagation.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem
Conflict, underdevelopment and instability in the DR Congo could largely be attributed to greed, grievances, identity crisis, political exclusion and bad governance since its independence. Many explanations have been given as the causes of the Congo crises. However, the abundance of natural resource and weak political institutions have been identified generally as the key elements. The weak political institutions had serious implications for both economic growth and sustainable and social development of the country.

The war in the DR Congo is counted among the wars with highest number of fatalities in Africa. Besides death and destruction, the war resulted in very large-scale displacement of persons. Among the great humanitarian costs of the war were its negative impact on women and other vulnerable groups, and the increased post-trauma stress syndrome and the resultant psychiatric problems for surviving victims. The economic costs of the conflict cannot be limited to a particular sector of the country’s economy as well as the neighbours that had to deal with the challenge of refugees. Furthermore, besides resulting in extensive damage to the infrastructure of
the region, the violent conflict also succeeded in discouraging private investment and pushed the economy towards stagnation.

Though great efforts have been exerted by scholars to give apt and adequate explanation to the post-independence war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, most of the explanations have been hinged on the political and natural resource factor. Not much has been done in examining the impact of the affluent and elitist stakeholders in the conflict as well as the role played by countries in the Great Lakes region. This study, therefore, seeks to assess the role of the elites and ethnicity in the cause and sustenance of the post-independence crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The research seeks to address the following questions:

- How central was elite influence to the causes of conflict and instability in DR Congo.
- What role had and did ethnic multiplicity, ethnocentrism and ethnic and regional exclusion play in the DR Congo crisis.
- What were the factors that led to the involvement of the various Great Lake countries in the DR Congo crises?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This research seeks to achieve the following objectives to:

- Examine Belgian elitist colonial policies in the Great Lakes region.
- Overview of Democratic Republic of Congo's governance crises.
- Assess the role of the elites and ethnocentrism in the crises.
• Examine the Great Lakes regional dimension to the crises with particular emphasis on regional politics and identity crises.

• Suggest solutions based upon the findings.

1.4 Scope of the Research

The history of the Democratic Republic of Congo has been dominated by civil war and corruption. This study is however limited to the governance crisis of the country and the role played by elitist influence as well as ethnocentrism in sustaining the protracted war.

1.5 Rationale for the Study

It is imperative that the world understands clearly why Rwanda decided to take the war to DR Congo to the extent of toppling President Mobutu Sese Seko. Due to the unending crises in DR Congo, especially in the volatile regions of North and South Kivu and Katanga, this research seeks to bring to light the governance crisis and relate it to the ethnic multiplicity of the Great Lakes region and its influence on the stability of the DR Congo. Like the European World wars, the African “World war” needs to be studied, especially, the factors that plunged each individual state into the war. The research comes out with the recommendation to the leadership, especially that of developing countries on the spillover effect. Finally, the study is expected to add to knowledge or research done in the area, and also serve as literature to scholarly reference work for further research in the area.
1.6 **Hypothesis for the Study**

The protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo is a result of malevolent multi-ethnicity, elite conflict and regional politics.

1.7 **Theoretical Framework**

This study is hinged on the Social Conflict Theory. This theory seeks to explain how the unequal distribution of resource leads to conflict between those who own and manage valuable resources, on the one side and those who seek to increase their share of those resources. Farley contends that conflict theory arose primarily from the work of Karl Max and promoted in the work of C Wright Mills and Ralf Dahrandorf. In his view Conflict theory consists of the following four points:

- **Conflict Built into Society** - society naturally tends toward conflict. This occurs because wealth and power are distributed unequally; therefore different social groups have different and conflicting interest.

- **One group becomes dominant** because competing groups have unequal power. The dominant group then uses its power to control most or all other aspect of the social structure.

- **Consensus is Artificial** - when a consensus appears in a society; it is usually artificial and is likely to persist over the long run. The conflict theorist contends that a consensus in a society is either based on coercion and or repression by the dominant group.

- **Conflict is desirable** because it makes possible social change which may lead to more equitable distribution of wealth and power.
Social conflict theory as posited in this work is coterminous with Elite theory which explains the power relationships in modern society as one controlled by a tiny group of elites. In this sense, a small minority, consisting of members of social elites clings to power and influence no matter the outcome of elections in a country. The elites in every society have certain innate characteristics that make them that powerful. For Pareto, it is the psychological traits or characteristics of elites which separates them from the masses. He classified elites into two types - those with the power or traits of 'lions’. This group of elites used force to gain and retain. Examples are military dictators. The second group is those who had the traits of a ‘fox’ using cunning and crafty means to have their way. This group is, however, not popular in Africa as against the former.

The above distinctions notwithstanding, Mills sees the power of elites emanating from their location in three linked key structures in society: political, dominated by the executive power of the Federal Government, the economic, dominated by a few hundred corporations, and military. For Mills, both the class struggle picture of the Marxists and the pluralist picture, shared by Dahrendorf are not valid.\(^{19}\)

Conflict and Elite theories are relevant to the study because it confirms the Conflict dynamics of the DRC elite minority's power relationships to that of multi ethnic majority who want social justice and equitable distribution of wealth.

The protracted conflict fought between 1996 and 2002, the range within which this study is hinged, largely depict elements of the social conflict theory as posited above. The crisis largely
became a scramble to control resources by both elitist states and individuals. On the other hand, the less privileged was also determined to demand their fair share of the national cake. These were factors that helped to escalate and sustain the crisis.

1.8 Literature Review

Literature on the Congo conflict, especially the recent one between 1996 to date is extensive. Most of the literature on the conflict in DRC has been dominated by the International Crisis Group (ICG). One of the publications of the ICG is “How Kabila Lost His Way: the Performance of Laurent Kabila’s Government.” The study examines the tenure of the president Laurent Kabila and how his rule worsened the already deteriorating state institutions he inherited.

These weak institutions have serious implications for both economic growth and sustainable and social development. The reliance on natural resources has often been coupled with elite accumulation and the DRC is no exception. Often the massive wealth generated from the export of natural resources is amassed by the group in power and distributed among party loyalists in a bid to maintain control of political and economic power. “This political weakness at the centre has allowed military conflict to fester on the periphery.” This, according to the research work, created tension from marginalised groups who have not benefitted as they ought to have the natural resource wealth of the country.

In “The crisis in the Great Lakes” by Rene Lemarchant in “Africa in World politics: The African State System in Flux”, the author brings out clearly the underlying cause of the conflict in DR Congo. Lemarchant analyses the players in the conflict and their reasons for entering the war on
either side, and examines the rise and demise of Kabila and why Kabila turned against his sponsor Rwanda.\textsuperscript{22} He argues, Kabila unearthed a coup d’état planned by Rwanda.\textsuperscript{23} The contrary analysis on why Laurent Kabila turned against Rwanda will be brought out in this research. The role of external actors – the UN, France, US and the NGOs is well brought out.

Bates tries to go beyond explaining the crisis to explain how crisis leads to conflict. For Bates, to study the political economy of development is indeed to study prosperity and violence. Bates finds an intrinsic link between the prevalence of violence (including the economic violence of predation) and regression in the economic arena. What Bates does not seem to explain is why violence and economic relapse seem to be occurring in Africa more commonly and on a larger scale since the end of the Cold War. In the DR Congo, state collapses eventually led to Africa’s first international war. This research will delve into the influence of the world’s super powers and some elites on the DR Congo’s governance woes.

The collapse of the Congolese state, according to Bates, meant that the military was no longer being paid. As a result, personnel stopped functioning as an army and began to extort money from the ordinary people.\textsuperscript{24}

The war was triggered by the combination of this crumbling of the Congo’s end of the story of the state in former Zaire. But, in most analyses, little grounding is provided as to what actually lay behind this evident breakdown of public authority in the DRC. And such grounding appears more necessary than ever when looking at the continually
problematic nature of the state in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, a continent beset
with endemic warfare.\textsuperscript{25}

In his work, “Resources and Rent Seeking in the Democratic Republic of the Congo”, Matti
examines the effects of resource rents, foreign aid and the potential effects of Chinese
investment. He contends that a form of political tradition of Patrimonialism based on easily
corruptible resource trades was established during the era of Mobutu. The source of revenue
shifted in the post-conflict period (after 2002) from resource rents to foreign aid, while the
political structure remained unchanged. Matti further argues that, the then Sicomines deal
between China and the Congolese government is unlikely to perpetuate the “resource curse”
condition.\textsuperscript{26} This research further interrogates the role of China and other elite countries in the
protracted crisis in the DR Congo.

In the article “The Challenge of Warlordism to Post-Conflict State-Building: The Case of
Laurent Nkunda in Eastern Congo,” Beswick argues that the presence of warlords and the
influence of their international supporters is not adequately addressed by current international
approaches to post-conflict state building.\textsuperscript{27} Existing approaches have tended to emphasise the
transition to electoral democracy and the need to create a state monopoly on force. Based on
evidence from the Kivus, the article makes the case that an approach recognising multiple
sovereignties or emphasising significant decentralisation may be more appropriate. Without such
a shift in emphasis the notion that DR Congo is, or will soon become, an empirically functional
state is perhaps wishful thinking.\textsuperscript{28}
This article “Public Service Provision in a Failed State: Looking Beyond Predation in the Democratic Republic of Congo” Trefon examines the paradox of why the Congolese government is, on the one hand, often seen as weak and on the verge of collapse, yet on the other hand also retains such a powerful and omnipresent influence over the daily lives of the population of the country. It examines how the state manifests itself, and questions whether its raison d’etre goes beyond the violence of exploitation and predation, focusing on the relationship between people and public services.

Trefon further argues that ordinary people find it difficult to avoid negotiations and interactions with the state over tax. The numerous crises of legitimacy experienced by the state in DR Congo have led to a change in its objectives. A number of competing explanations exist for why the state has persisted. The most common is that administration continues for the purposes of predation. State elites and the affluence use the administration to extort state resources. The state’s persistence can also be explained by the volume of demands made on it by the population: parents, for example, will pay bonuses to teachers to encourage them to keep public schools open. In contrast to the common view that the DRC represents a case of state failure or collapse, Vlassenroot argues that the DR Congo is an embodiment of state resilience. In “New Political Order in the DR Congo: The Transformation of Regulation”, Vlassenroot, emphasises that the country has demonstrated a remarkable tenacity. Its administrative and regulatory frameworks have remained largely intact throughout the latest period of war. This study, however, argues that there are factors that make the DR Congo’s government a failed one.
Zartman, on his part, draws an equation between the collapse of the state and the collapse of society and thinks that in a ‘weak’ society there exists a general inability to refill the institutional gaps left by withering government structures. Therefore, he concludes that the organization and allocation of political assets easily fall into the hands of ‘warlords and gang leaders’ who often make use of ‘ethnic elements’ as sources of identity and control in the absence of an overriding social contract binding the citizen to the state.

The article provides details of a number of instances where, rebels and economic agents operating in the “informal” trans-border trade connecting eastern DRC with its eastern neighbours, entered into a process of negotiation and cooperation to safeguard their own interests.” It argues that, the constant undermining and reinterpretation of state power within the context of crisis and violent conflict has apparently given life to a more commodified, indirect form of statehood that drives the middle ground between formal and informal, state and non-state spheres of authority and regulation.

1.9 Sources of Data

Data for this research was drawn chiefly from secondary sources such as: relevant text books, journals/ magazine articles, current affairs commentaries, news magazines and from the internet. In-depth readings were done after thorough search for relevant materials in this subject matter was accomplished. The study further employed the qualitative data analysis method. The subject matter was noted; analysed and evaluated in such a way that lessons drawn were used to beef up this study.
1.10 Arrangement of Chapters

Chapter one constitutes the research design.

Chapter two examines the overview of DR Congo’s governance crises.

Chapter three assesses the role of Elite Conflict, Ethnocentrism and regional Politics.

Chapter four contains the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.
Endnotes

2 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
9 Ibid., p. 7.
12 Ibid., p. 53.
13 Ibid.
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16 Ibid.
19 Tittenbrun, J., & Dahrendorf, R., (1945). Conflict theory of social differentiation and elite theory Innovative Issues and Approaches in Social Sciences, 6, 3
21 Nibishaka, E., (2011), Natural Resources and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): The failure of post conflict reconstruction strategies
23 Ibid.
28 Ibid
30 Ibid
31 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
CHAPTER TWO

THE GOVERNANCE CRISIS OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

2.1   Background

The Democratic Republic of Congo has a bicameral legislature comprising a Senate of 108 seats (members elected by provincial assemblies to serve five year terms) and a national Assembly with 500 seats.¹ The country’s judicial system consists of constitutional court, Appeals Court, Council of State; High Military Court; plus civil and military courts and tribunal.²

“Governance” as a concept has been around in both political and academic discourse for a long time, generally referring to the duty of running a government or any other appropriate entity such as a nation. More recently, the concept governance has gained particular significance in the literature on the development of African countries.³ Africa’s underdevelopment has been largely been attributed to the challenge of poor governance by many intergovernmental organizations. More specifically, the World Bank describes Africa’s governance challenges at those of extensive personalization of power, the denial of fundamental human rights, widespread of corruption, and the prevalence of unelected and unaccountable government.⁴

Governance, on another hand, is described as one in which the concerned authority if any, exercises power, exerts influence and manages the country’s social as well as economic resources leading to better development.⁵ Thus, governance has social, political, and economic dimension:

Governance is the use of institutions, structures of authority and even collaboration to allocate resources and coordinate or control activity in society or the economy.⁶
Governance is defined by the World Bank as: the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development.\(^7\)

To Barkan, governance involves less in the way of administrative management and more in the way of political management; with its emphasis on developing networks of reciprocity and exchange, governance increases the possibilities of accomplishing more while spending less.\(^8\)

In the view of Srilatha:

Governance is legitimate in a positive sense when the government is installed by the people through institution arrangements that are put in place by the people and when the performance of the ruler is adjudge good and accepted by the people and when the people have power to remove the ruler in case of very grievous offence, such a government is legitimate and democratic. Although governance is practiced by political elites, it is manifest in the condition of citizenry. This implies that a strong state is unlikely to emerge in the absence of a vibrant civil society. It concerns the institutionalization of the normative values that can motivate and provide cohesion to the members of the society at large.\(^9\)

Africa’s governance crisis is traced by many scholars to independence. According to those wielding this viewpoint, African states and leaders were not really prepared for self-governance. According to William Tordoff, particularly onerous was the lack of a productive political culture. “The transition to independence was a rather short and an abrupt one, in countries deeply divided and with very little experience of governance of the part on the nationalist.”\(^10\)

In agreement with Tordoff, Basil Davidson has been very critical of the speedy partial and lack of adequate preparation of African people for independence and concluded that emergent Africa nation-state was bound to fail from the start. Thus, the arrangement for transition to independence was deficient from a bureaucratic perspective.
The failure to presage the rather rapid precipitation towards independence and the attendant inability to prepare Africans to master the multifarious and intriguing task of governance created a calculations and deterministic paradox.\textsuperscript{11}

John Stedman conceptualises state weakness in Africa in terms of remote and immediate causes.\textsuperscript{12} He regards the colonial inheritance as remote and post independent factors as immediate causes of conflict.

### 2.2 State Collapse

Political scientists distinguish between state collapse and state failure. In main political science terms, state ‘collapse’ is the crumbling of institutions while state ‘failure’ is defined by the non-performance of critical and crucial state functions.\textsuperscript{13} State collapse is a situation where the structure, authority, law and political order have fallen apart. State failure, on the other hand, begs the question of what the core functions of the state actually are, and these may vary from minimal concern with basic security to respect for the rights of citizens, and even the provision of welfare.\textsuperscript{14}

For instance, in 1994, Rwanda was considered a failed state because the state failed to protect much of its population, but it had not collapsed. According to Neil Cooper, two main factors explain contemporary incidents of state collapse.\textsuperscript{15} It can be understood as a post-Cold War reordering of the political map consequent to the failure of communist states (e.g. Yugoslavia) and the retraction of superpower patronage (e.g. Zaire/DRC).\textsuperscript{16} The current phenomena of state collapse can also be seen as a sharp demonstration of a more general and current crisis of the
state precipitated by the effects of globalization under neoliberalism, privatization, and the increasing control of transnational organizations.\textsuperscript{17}

The end of superpower military aid and its patronage in general is significant in explaining the ‘collapse’ of the state of Zaire. The post-independence period in the DR Congo was shaped by the international situation of Cold War competition. “In order to secure access to Congo minerals, the US and European powers financed the Mobutu regime during the Cold War.”\textsuperscript{18} Through Cold War patronage, Mobutu was able to carry out a patrimonial form of state inherited from the colonial period, in which he consolidated his power and control through a monopoly of state resources, given out as booty for political support through a network of patron-client relations.\textsuperscript{19} Beginning in the late 1980s, the practice of Patrimonialism came under growing pressure; deteriorating internal resources and new terms for external patronage began the end of broad-based patronage networks in many parts of the African continent.\textsuperscript{20}

The way in which resources were distributed and power was consolidated under the form of nation-state system operating in Africa resulted in competition over increasing scarce resources. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Soviet Empire in 1989, which announced the end of the Cold War, the US and Europeans had no reason to continue helping a Mobutu regime which had devolved into an increasingly dysfunctional kleptocracy. The lack of internal legitimacy for Mobutu’s regime was compensated for by the support received from the West and by the fact that he was granted access to international aid channels. With the suspension of Cold War support, the Zairian state simply collapsed.\textsuperscript{21}
According to Marysse, “while there is now a broad academic consensus on the significance of political factors in Africa’s crisis, there is less agreement on the role of foreign aid and its influence on political elites and economic regress.”

Van de Wall, on his part, contends that it is not so much the magnitude of aid as the way in which it is managed that is disturbing and has undermined the state’s capacity to run its own affairs. In Van de Wall’s view, the management of aid is as problematic as the volume of aid itself. However, he fails to explain why instability and violence have increased in the post-Cold War era when, according to his explanation, should rather subside.

Zartman (1995) draws an equation between the collapse of the state and the collapse of society and thinks that in a ‘weak’ society there exists a general inability to refill the institutional gaps left by withering government structures. For him, the organization and allocation of political assets easily fall into the hands of ‘warlords and gang leaders’ who often make use of ‘ethnic elements’ as sources of identity and control in the absence of an overriding social contract binding the citizen to the state. Raeymaekers puts it clear, “society and the state are placed on a developmentalist ‘continuum’, where one stage of failure almost automatically leads to another.”

2.3 DRC as a Failed State

A state fails when internal violence leads to its convulsion making it unable to “deliver positive political goods to their inhabitants.” Their governments lose legitimacy, and the very nature of the particular nation-state itself becomes illegitimate in the eyes and in the hearts of a growing multiplicity of its citizens. The rise and fall of nation-states is not new, but in a modern period
when national states constitute the building blocks of legitimate world order the violent
disintegration and palpable weakness of selected African, Asian, Oceanic, and Latin American
states threaten the very foundation of that system. International organizations and big powers
consequently find themselves sucked disconcertingly into a maelstrom of anomic internal
conflict and messy humanitarian relief.29

Failed states are usually driven by ethnic or other inter-communal hostility or by the governing
elite’s insecurities and in this state of seeming anarchy tend to victimize their own citizens or
some subset of the whole that is regarded as hostile. In Mobutu Sese Seko’s Zaire, ruling cadres
increasingly oppressed, extorted, and harassed the majority of their own compatriots while
giving undue privileges to a small party, clan, or sect.30 In DR Congo, Patrimonial rule depended
on a patronage-based system of extraction from ordinary citizens.31 The typical weak state
plunges toward failure when this kind of ruler-led oppression provokes a countervailing reaction
on the part of resentful groups or newly emerged rebels.

The main structural factor of instability in DR Congo is the existing method of governance
employed by state institutions and politicians. This paternalistic method of political governance
is deeply rooted in the history of the country as well as a product of a long and intricate
progression that was also brutal and violent. Throughout its colonial and post-colonial history,
DR Congo has never been run in a way that protected the country’s public assets, the rule of law
or the well-being of its citizens.32 Consequently, newly independent Congo developed a form of
rule that was extremely personalised after having been subjected to a vast enterprise of
outrageous economic exploitation that was both racist and brutal in colonial times.33
As a result of the above, political and economic power under Mobutu was based on networks of patronage built up around the dictator’s own persona and around the aim of distributing the country’s wealth within those artificially created networks.\textsuperscript{34}

This patrimonial and predatory style of pork-barrel governance continued to be the norm in DRC, despite democratisation attempts with support from international partners and the holding of two presidential and legislative elections (2006 and 2011). This is a form of rule that literally cannibalises public funds, which are often siphoned off to the various clients of those in power. It empties state institutions of their substance, by favouring the creation of shadowy, private systems of governance, where main decisions are not taken in the relevant ministries but more often than not behind the scenes, by the “real” power holders and the influential representatives of their respective clients. Because each key figure in power must satisfy their own clientele (which might extend from Kinshasa, the central locus of power, to the most far-flung provincial villages) in order to hold onto their position of influence, there is constant competition between those in power. This dynamic ultimately leads to the establishment of a shadowy form of rule (in which it is difficult to identify the decision makers) that is fragmented, conflict-prone and constantly being renegotiated. It involves a multitude of non-state entities that participate to a greater or lesser extent in the actual management of the country’s affairs and effectively perform the role of public service providers (education, health, security, etc.) traditionally granted to the state. The latter, in this case, has neither the political will nor the financial, human or technical resources to take on this role.\textsuperscript{35}
2.4 Role of Colonial Elites

The DRC seem to have fallen prey to the so called ‘resource curse,’ a proposition which argues that a higher amount of natural resources in developing nations creates a higher risk for civil war and slower development. Generally, it appears resource endowed countries are less wealthy and less properly governed. This is due to an “increase in domestic political corruption, a reduction of economic diversification, and reduced investment in human capital.” In the DR Congo, leaders’ access to resources are very easy, causing mismanagement and chaos. Considering a historical overview looking into the genesis of the post-independence governance crisis in DR Congo is very significant in understanding the extent and deep roots of the corruption and political instability the country had had to face.

In DR Congo, this history could be traced as far back as hundred and fifty years, when the British explorer, Sir Henry Stanley, first travelled down the Congo River and discovered the riches of the land in 1871. When the news of its vast resources reached Europe, King Leopold II of Belgium established the Association International Africaine, to aid the colonization of the Congo, masked as a humanitarian venture. Leopold II asked Stanley to return to Africa and acquire as much land as possible. By bribing Congolese natives into treaties with the help of gifts or military force, the monarch managed to acquire thousands of square miles of land. The land was not considered a colony of Belgium, but owned directly by Leopold II. It was the world’s only major protectorate owned by a single individual.

Leopold’s claim to the Congo was solidified by the 1884 Berlin Conference making him “the sole proprietor of a territory bigger than all of Western Europe and about 80 times the size of
Belgium.” The Scramble for Africa had begun; with Leopold taking a huge piece of the ‘magnificent cake’ that is Africa. The quest for glory, admiration and splendour in the eyes of the world, drove Leopold to colonize the Congo, not for the sake of the Congolese peoples, but for the sake of his own personal ambition.\(^{40}\)

The revolution of the automobile industry with its incessant demand for rubber for tyres in the late 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century made DR Congo an obsession for Leopold as the commodity was in abundance in the country.\(^{41}\)

The creation of the Force Publique (FP), an army of 12,500 African soldiers and 350 European commanders, did their part to ensure a steady flow of ‘Red Rubber’ from the Congo onto the international market. When prices were at their highest, the profit from the rubber trade exceeded more than 700 percent.\(^{42}\)

From thence, control and extraction of rubber became the prerogative of the FP.\(^{43}\) This extreme form of power made the FP employ violent means to terrorize the local population “forcing them to gather wild rubber and cutting off hands when quotas were not met. At one point hands were cut off by such voluminous amounts that the severed limb took on a value of its own.”\(^{44}\)

Reports of atrocities committed by the FP by means of collecting rubber throughout the Congo reached the international community in the late 1890’s. Leopold, never having set a foot on Congolese soil, finally ‘sold’ his Congo Free State to the Belgian government in 1908 after two years of harsh negotiations. The Belgian government paid Leopold about 205 million Francs for
the annexation of his ‘place in the sun’. Reportedly, Leopold’s ‘adventures’ in the Congo had filled his coffers with an amount of $1 billion in today’s terms.\textsuperscript{45}

For Edmund D. Morel, a strong vocalist of the anti-Léopoldian reign, “rubber in the Congo was sown in blood, and harvested in secret.”\textsuperscript{46} The degree of mayhem in the Congo during Leopold’s authoritative rule has been difficult to establish.

\section*{2.5 Belgium Rule}

The Belgian state took over formal control of King Leopold II’s Congo in 1908 after almost 25 years of rule by the king and his men. The new colonial state ‘adopted’ much of the administration already in place, but with few minor alterations. The colonial administration enjoyed full sovereignty while the Catholic Church and the companies in charge of mineral extraction were endowed with state-like powers to assert influence.\textsuperscript{47}

The relationship between colonizer and colonized was of a paternalistic nature, much in line with dominant colonial discourse where the white man acted as father and the African subjects were children.\textsuperscript{48} The ‘divide and rule’ principle under which state, church and corporate enterprise ruled the Congo help the colonial power in consolidating its authority over the territory.\textsuperscript{49} Compulsory work continued to be enforced on a massive scale throughout DR Congo, especially in the large cities and mining areas.\textsuperscript{50}

The first 20 years of Belgian colonial rule in Congo was similar to its Léopoldian predecessor. The entire economy was based on the extraction of raw minerals from Congolese mines that
were then sent to Belgium for processing and manufacturing. Until the 1920’s, the most commonly exported natural resources from the Congo were ivory, wild rubber, cotton and palm oil.\textsuperscript{51}

\textbf{2.6 Post-Colonial and Mobutu’s Regime}

Civil war soon broke out in DR Congo after independence in 1960. The newly appointed heads of state, President Joseph Kasavubu and Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba were engaged in civil war which lasted until the coup d’état of General Joseph-Desiré Mobutu in 1965. The First Republic immediately came to an end with Mobutu’s carefully planned and executed coup d’état in November 1965.\textsuperscript{52} Mobutu’s ascendance to power was believed to be a mark of hope and new beginning for the country. Congolese thought it was time for political stability and economic turnaround.\textsuperscript{53}

Mobutu took charge of state and government at a time when rebel forces had no real power to challenge the authority of the state. His first action was to change the name of the country from Congo to the Democratic Republic of Congo in order to cut the country’s umbilical cord from its colonial past. The DRC under Mobutu’s administration experienced major challenges, especially regarding political, social and economic ventures. The military ruler received much support from foreign governments, especially the United States, in terms of military equipment and funding.\textsuperscript{54}

Due to his non-existent ethnic-based constituency, Mobutu organised an ethnic-inclusive government, at first built upon existing institutions of the First Republic. Each of the twenty-two
provinces of the DRC was to be represented in government by a local official, signalling national ethnic unity.\textsuperscript{55}

Mobutu went ahead to carry out a tight control of the political apparatus by way of either co-optation or ruthless repression through violence. Evidently, co-optation proved to be very successful, at least in the early years of his administration. “Co-optation, a device used with remarkable effect through the Mobutu era, was early developed into a fine art, as the far-flung apparatus of the state offered a large reservoir of positions for those willing to pledge faithful service.”\textsuperscript{56} Those that would not succumb were imprisoned, exiled or executed. The loyalty of the military was his most valuable asset as the authoritarian ruler enforced his rule of law through mechanisms of violence, resembling those of King Leopold II’s.\textsuperscript{57}

In 1967, Mobutu created his own personal political party, the \textit{Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution} (MPR). All other political parties were subsequently banned.\textsuperscript{58} In an attempt to create national political unity, the MPR held no particular ethnic loyalty and was thus a national party. By 1970, Mobutu’s power had become virtually absolute. He had successfully repressed vocal sentiments of secession and regionalism, along with the brutal annihilation of armed guerrilla forces in side-line DRC, the legacy of Leopold.

In 1971, President Mobutu mobilized a series of political programmes aimed at ‘decolonizing’ the DRC. This process consisted of a societal transformation in which all colonial ties were cut by means of ‘Africanizing’ the DRC.\textsuperscript{59} The transformation was to start with a change in the name of the country, a core symbol of identity. The name of the country was changed from the
Democratic Republic of Congo to Zaire. The capital city was also changed from Leopoldville to Kinshasa. Individual citizens were also encouraged to change their names as well. Serving as role model, Joseph-Désiré Mobutu became Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa za Banga.\textsuperscript{60}

From this stage of change of name followed what reflected Mobutu’s determination to rid the country of foreign influence. All foreign companies large or small, including several that had existed since Leopold’s reign, were nationalized. Mobutu further extended his influence to the extraction of raw minerals and resources from the rich Katanga region, at the cost of foreign investors. Small foreign business owners were as well compelled to give up their ventures to Mobutu’s men who were least qualified to run a profitable business.

The nationalization of the country’s foreign business ventures began a rapid deterioration of the national economy. From the early 1970’s and onwards, the national economy took a plunge so deep, that it has not yet recovered fully.\textsuperscript{61}

\textit{Zaireanization}, as it was called, ushered in the dominance of what was already a problem in state administration: corruption and nepotism. Corruption in Zaire reached a level where it meant, that any sort of economic or legal service, including obtaining common-place legal documents such as driver’s licenses, birth certificates, or passports, requires a bribe. Rarely anything can be obtained from legal authorities through legitimate procedures”. Ultimately civil society began voicing concerns and dissatisfaction with Mobutu’s regime.\textsuperscript{62}
The country Zaire entered the 1990’s with very little hope for change. The country still suffered from overwhelming economic decline and political instability. External actors with interest and influence in Zaire included the U.S., France, Belgium, Angola, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Central African Republic, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. Zaire’s management or mismanagement of its rich mineral resources served as the catalyst for the crisis and political instability. The transition to democracy, as forcefully orchestrated by Mobutu offered little change. In April 1990, Mobutu set up the Sovereign National Conference (CNS) with the aim to establishing a new government and a new constitution for Zaire.

The CNS convened in August and 2,850 delegates from entire Zaire, including the representatives from more than 200 political parties, attended the conference. Mobutu had filled the conference with staunch supporters of his regime to argue his case against a loose organisation of political opposition. As the political opponents debated on the future of Zaire, the Zairian army went rampage in the capital of Kinshasa. The army, Forces Armées Zaïroises (FAZ), had not been paid wages in several months, thus looting of stores and private homes were the order of the day.

The event that changed the landscape of Zaire and subsequently led to the downfall of Mobutu was the Rwandan Civil War that erupted in 1994. The Hutu genocide of the Tutsi population of Rwanda seriously impacted on Zaire’s socio-political system. Hutus and Tutsis alike filled the border into Eastern Zaire, creating refugee camps the size of major Zairian cities. Some of the people fleeing Zaire had fought on either side of the Rwandan Civil War and created armed groups on Zairian soil. Backed by several foreign states, Hutus and Tutsis both fought each other
and the FAZ in an effort to gain a stronghold in some of Zaire’s wealthiest provinces in the south eastern part of the country.

With the end of the Cold War and the end of the Soviet Empire in 1989, the US and Europeans had no reason to continue helping a Mobutu regime which had devolved into a progressively more dysfunctional kleptocracy.\textsuperscript{67} Mobutu, who at the time found himself in Europe receiving medical treatment, had lost the support of his own army. Faced with rebel groups, in particular the organised military, led by Laurent-Désirés Kabila, the FAZ was outfought.\textsuperscript{68} Entering Kinshasa on May 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1997, Laurent Kabila enjoyed the support of the people long-tired of Mobutu’s dictatorial regime. The inauguration of Kabila to presidency signalled the end of what is now known as First Congo War.\textsuperscript{69}

\section*{2.7 Laurent Kabila’s Regime}

The rule of Laurent Kabila was relatively short-lived. After overthrowing Mobutu’s government, Kabila attained full control of Zaire and for many Zairians, this new regime supposedly offered a change of fate. After more than 30 years of Mobutism in Zaire, Zairians were hoping for economic recovery and increased inclusive political participation of civil society.\textsuperscript{70} Their hopes were, however, utterly shattered prematurely as Kabila had no intentions of creating an ethnic all-inclusive government in Zaire. Despite his brand new kind of leadership, Kabila was in fear of a coup d’état by his former allies and foreign forces, the Rwandan and Ugandan troops. Consequently, Kabila asked the troops to leave, generating widespread anger resulting in creation of rebel groups. Two groups in particular, the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) made up of Ugandan rebels and led by Jean-Pierre Bemba; and the Reassemblement
Congolais pour le Democratie, made up of Tutsi Rebels and led by Lunda Bululu, played a major and active role in the overall conflict.  

Between 1996 and 2001, there was widespread conflict between ethnic groups and rival governments for control over land and resources. In permutation with that, the on-going wars and genocide in the neighbouring nations of Rwanda, Uganda and Sudan caused a pervasive humanitarian crisis and migration of Central Africans into the DRC. After a few superficial changes, the country changed its name back to the Democratic Republic of Congo. “Kabila practically picked up where Mobutu had left off. Mobutism without Mobutu was widely used to conceptualize Kabila’s reign.”

Laurent Kabila did not only estrange the co-founders of AFDL and his sponsors to power but did alienate all other ethnic groups from political, administrative and military activities. He filled the high political and military positions with his fellow Katangans, and mainly Katanga- Luba, Kabila’s ethnic group. When the RPA left the DRC on 27 July 1998, he appointed his brother in law, General Kifwa, and later replaced with his son, Major General Joseph Kabila.

On the political front, his ministers of Internal Affairs and Justice were his first cousins, Kakudji and Mwenze Kongolo respectively. His Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yerodia Ndombasi, was his nephew. Many other high political and administrative posts were filled by his close relatives. Kabila also failed to bring on board other political parties, at least those who were opposed to Mobutu. He did not create the desired political pluralism. The expectation by many Congolese that Kabila’s AFDL would join with Étienne Tshisekedi’s UDPS was not fulfilled. Many other
military appointments and administration appointments were ethnically biased towards Kabila’s Katanga-Luba tribe. Kabila, therefore, became a dictator regarded by many as no different from Mobutu and his nepotism and exclusion policy fuelled the commencement of the second Congo conflict.\textsuperscript{76}

The financial crisis of Congo deteriorated even further, nepotism reached unseen heights and political as well as civilian oppression continued unabated.\textsuperscript{77} Kabila, who had at first been received by most of the Congolese population as a saviour, soon found his popularity waning down. In 1998, what became known as the Second Congo War began. Armed groups of Congolese nationality along with army factions of neighbouring countries attacked Kabila’s government.\textsuperscript{78} Forces of Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Angola, Namibia, Chad, Sudan, Uganda, and Burundi all took part on either side of the war. This war eventually led to the downfall of Kabila as government control waned in the Northern and Western part of the country.\textsuperscript{79} Ethnic violence was clear throughout most of the country and Kabila’s employment of non-Congolese citizens in government did not sit well with the Congolese people.

2.8 Joseph Kabila’s Regime

Following Laurent Kabila’s assassination in 2001, his adopted son, Joseph Kabila was appointed as President of the DRC. Entrusted by several Western governments, Joseph Kabila along with other heads of state finally implemented vital measures of the Lusaka Accord, which resulted in the retreat, and withdrawal of all armed forces to 15 kilometres behind the cease-fire line and thus sealing the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD).\textsuperscript{80} These talks of warring factions paved the way for the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement on the Transition in the DRC in 2003. This
eventually led to the withdrawal of most foreign soldiers from Congolese territory. Some of the main goals in the agreement were the reunification of the DRC and the holding of general elections. The government of Kabila actually succeeded in most of its endeavours and held general elections in 2006 where Kabila was once again elected president with new ministries, parliament and other administrative capacities.

Today, President Joseph Kabila maintains presidential powers over a highly disjointed country long torn by wars, imperialism and colonialism, ethnic hostility, political malevolence, a multitude of exploitative mining organisations and economic bankruptcy. Several neighbouring African countries still have soldiers stationed along the borders of the DRC, engaged in both security and financial activities in some of the DRC’s richest mineral regions. Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundian forces support the rebel forces around the eastern provinces of the DRC while the Kabila government enjoys the support of Angola and Zimbabwe. President Kabila has tried several ways to restore peace in the DRC by attempting to bring all warring factions to the negotiation table, but he has not yet been successful in that quest. He has gained widespread support both nationally and internationally for his actions that have perhaps brought more stability to the DRC than witnessed since independence in 1960.

The governance crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo is not a recent phenomenon. It has its sources from the country’s pre-colonial era. Belgian King Leopold’s possession of the entire territory later to be known as the DRC through the Association International Africaine (AIA) was just the beginning of what was to seen as a norm by the country’s own leaders. The treatment of the then territory as a personal property by King Leopold served as a precedence to
be followed by the later Belgian colonial masters and later long term Dictator Mobutu Sese Seko and later Laurent Kabila. The country thus came to be treated as virtual personal property of the leader leading to establishment of a paternalistic form of government.

Establishment of a paternalistic government was much easier as leaders readily and easily had direct access to exploitable natural resources through their agents. This was precipitated by the failure of the state as a whole. The state of DR Congo after independence had not been able to establish institutions strong enough to provide basic necessities to its citizens. This was a situation largely emanating from the post-independence conflict between President Joseph Kasavubu and Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba. The country was birthed into crises. Right from independence, it became clear that a new country with such a large territory and thick population such as DR Congo plunged into civil war was definitely not going to get out easily. This difficult situation was what was exploited by Mobutu with the able assistance of his western supporters.

The Cold War also had a heavy toll on the governance crisis of the DRC. The immediate post-independence conflict between Kasavubu and Lumumba was a direct product of the Cold War as President Kasavubu was supported by the West and supplied with weapons as Lumumba on the other hand was also heavily assisted and encouraged by the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Mobutu Sese Seko was a crony of the West and with Western support he was empowered to embark on his heartless dictatorial policies. The DRC’s governance, to a very large extent, could, therefore, be blamed on the Cold War and its spill-over effects. It is not surprising that the country saw relative peace only when the Cold War ended.
2.9 Conclusion

The governance crisis that hit the DRC right after independence which almost led to the collapse of the nation-state was real. As a typical developing state caught in the unmerciful ebb of Cold War, the DRC faced similar challenges that almost all countries in Africa faced. The challenge, however, was the management and mismanagement of interests in the country. The root of this problem is traced from pre-colonial times, aggravated by Belgian colonial rule and finally consummated by selfish and power-drunk Congolese leaders.
End notes

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CHAPTER THREE
ETHNIC AND ELITE PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Background
It is rightly said that ethnic violence is no respecter of international boundaries. It produces refugee problems, spreads diseases, and triggers proliferation of fighters and weapons as well as facilitating the growth of trafficking and terrorist networks. Most often than not, conflict in one African country has the propensity of spreading to other countries. This problem largely succeeds in pushing refugees across borders, upsetting the ethnic balance in a neighbouring state and worsening tensions between the two states.

Ethnocentrism is usually described as an attitude that defines the tendency to view other cultures through the eyes of one’s own culture, and thereby misrepresent them. Ethic refers to cultural heritage, and ‘centrism’ refers to the fundamental starting point. Therefore ethnocentrism basically refers to judging other groups from one’s own cultural point of view.

The common definition of ethnocentrism has two basic elements, “a positive attitude toward one's own group” which includes positive prejudice about the in-group and “a negative attitude toward other ethnic groups” which contains negative prejudice about out-groups. Additionally, Berry and Kalin argue that the concept of ethnocentrism tends to be viewed as “the synonym for general antipathy towards all out-groups” where “a lack of acceptance of cultural diversity, a general intolerance for out-groups and a relative preference for one’s in-group over most out-groups” is shown. The failure to accept cultural diversity has a sturdy tendency to arouse
negative stereotypes toward other ethnic groups and negative behaviours against members of these groups. Group antagonism towards foreigners can be mainly examined by measurements of ethnocentrism which indicate how well otherness is respected and accepted.⁶

Ethnocentrism in a very large sense expresses the belief that one’s own ethnic group or one’s own culture is better than other ethnic groups or cultures, and that one’s cultural values can be applied generally for to cover non-members.⁷ The term was first used by the American sociologist William Graham Sumner to describe a cultural narrowness in which the “ethnically-centred” individual rigidly accepted those who were culturally alike while at the same time strictly rejecting those who were culturally different. William Graham Sumner said that:

“ethnocentrism leads a people to exaggerate and intensify everything in their own folkways which is peculiar and which differentiates them from others. It therefore strengthens the folkways”.⁸

In another sense, ethnocentrism could refer to a group association, not necessarily numerous groups toward which the individual has antagonistic sentiments and outlooks.⁹ This propensity has been employed in instances where regimes control concentrated valuable resources that entice outside investment. In other words, foreign corporations limited to small portion of territory and yet containing portable, valuable resources.¹⁰

Ethnocentrism as described above in many instances in Africa where independence was given to a nation-state with traditional rival groups. The group that eventually wields political power tends to take advantage to antagonize members of the ethnic groups. More often than not, leaders influenced by ethnocentrism encourage private use of state assets and resources. These private uses of state assets and prerogatives create a framework of rule outside formal state institutions,
leading to a state of bureaucratic agencies based on personal ties. Max Weber observed similarly constituted patrimonial regimes:

The patrimonial office lacks above all the bureaucratic separation of the private and official sphere. For the political administration is treated as a purely personal affair of the ruler and political power is considered part of his personal property which can be exploited by means of contributions and fees.\textsuperscript{11}

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba was seen by some to have had genuine wish to establish a country that rose above ethnic and colonial ties.\textsuperscript{12} “Part of the legacy Lumumba tried to escape was the ethnic tensions latent during colonial rule.”\textsuperscript{13} Political parties were banned by the colonial authorities resulting in the creation of cultural organizations along ethnic lines. When independence was won, these ethnically based organizations attempted to transform the entities into political parties.\textsuperscript{14} As a result, ethnic exclusion became the rule rather than the exception. As these parties began to struggle for political power, the debate centred more on ethnicity than actual policies for the new state. Only Lumumba’s party was ethnic inclusive but his political thoughts were too radical for both internal as well as external competitors. Although the legacy of colonial rule easily manifested in Mobutu’s regime, Lumumba had unsuccessfully tried to escape this colonial legacy before it began.\textsuperscript{15}

The immediate instability that followed DR Congo’s independence has been argued to be a result of the absence of educated professional elite.\textsuperscript{16} The Belgian government had not established universities on Congolese soil until the 1950’s. Unlike other African colonies such as British Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa and French Congo-Brazzaville, the Belgian colonial administration had done little to nothing to foster higher education among the Congolese population. The policy of non-inclusion of Congolese into state administration had severe
consequences for the infant nation. This phenomenon will be discussed in details later in this chapter.\textsuperscript{17}

3.2 The Ethnic Dimension

The DRC, since independence, has experienced numerous problems increasing ethnic tensions, especially in eastern part of the country. The period between 1996 and 2001 in particular saw the most notable incident when a massive influx of Hutu refugees fled from Rwanda into both North and South of DRC. It is estimated that up to 1.2 million refugees settled in camps around Goma, Bukavu and Uvira.\textsuperscript{18} These refugees were largely under the control of the very authorities that had orchestrated the genocide in Rwanda, and were subsequently using the camps as staging areas for incursions into Rwanda with the intent of eventually returning to power. Due to this situation, the Rwandese army crossed the border to seek those responsible for the genocide and disband the camps.\textsuperscript{19}

The prevalent ethnic tensions, however, did not start with the influx of refugees in 1994. During earlier years, the Banyamulenge group had their right to citizenship challenged.\textsuperscript{20} The Banyamulenge had been living in the region long before independence but were termed by many as the ‘Tutsis of Zaïre’ due to their mostly Rwandese origin. Violent clashes also took place between groups of cattle breeders and groups of farmers in the Masisi region of North Kivu over the exploitation of limited land. In Ituri, the conflict between the Hema and the Lendu had its genesis in disputes over access to land between groups with conflicting traditional livelihoods. In all cases, ethnic tensions were both partially a cause of the conflict as well as a result of the conflict when the regional protagonists used ethnic-based armed groups as proxies.\textsuperscript{21}
Traditional chiefs, instead of acting as secondary figures, rather decided to play a principal role in Congo’s politics and administration. Perceived as influential during elections, they are part of political patronage networks and have support in national and provincial institutions. Despite a decade of efforts to rebuild the Congolese state, the government remains ineffective in rural areas, leaving customary chiefs, whose role is recognised by the constitution but not fully defined, practically in charge. They use their key position between the state and communities to benefit from any state and international investments and to protect their own interests. This fuels conflict, with inter-communal rivalries playing out in state institutions and among local and national politicians.

3.2.1 Background to the Conflict

In the DRC, provinces are divided into territories, which are in turn divided into decentralized territorial entities (ETDs) called secteurs, chefferies and groupements. The chefferies are administered by traditional (or customary) chiefs and their council. Currently, the chiefs are appointed by the Ministry of the Interior and Traditional Affairs. The Ruzizi Plain is located in the territory of Uvira, in South Kivu province. The chefferie covering the plain is divided into five groupements, each one administered by a chief. The Ruzizi Plain, which has historically been the starting point for several rebellions, is a border area that has been disputed by two communities since colonial times. People originally living on the territory are Bafuliro and the Barundi. Each community has rewritten recent history in order to legitimize its presence and right to govern.22
Historical evidence shows that the Barundi were present in the Ruzizi Plain during the first half of the nineteenth century, under the control of the Burundian king Ntare Rugamba, who eventually established a chefferie there at that time. But the Barundi community claims it has been present there since 1750. This version of history, however, is more akin to mythology than history. The Bafuliro claim a presence on the plain since 1902, when a Belgian colonist married a woman from the Barundi community originally from Burundi. The Bafuliro only settled in the plain at the end of the nineteenth century but believe that the area belongs to them on the grounds that they settled in the Moyens Plateau taking charge of Uvira in the eighteenth century. These contradictory histories of settlement are informed by the principles of autochthony and land rights. In 1928, the Belgian colonisers divided Uvira territory into three chefferies, along ethnic lines: one each for the Bavira, Bafuliro and Barundi. The Barundi were therefore granted land rights that were traditionally the prerogative of autochthones. The Bafuliro opposed this decision and rebelled in 1929.

After independence, the Bafuliro tried several times to force the Barundi to leave for Burundi: in 1961 and between 1963 and 1965, during the Mulele rebellion. Under the leadership of the Mwami Marandura, the Bafuliro launched a campaign of intimidation against the Barundi, known as the “war of the goats.” In addition to their territorial claims against the Barundi, the Bafuliro became more radical and joined the Mulele rebellion to protest at their eviction by the central government. The enlistment of the Banyiamulenge and Barundi as auxiliaries of the National Congolese Army in the struggle against the Mulele rebellion only increased tension between the two communities in the plain.
In 1972, the Congolese nationality of what were called non-autochthonous peoples was brought into question and this invigorated pressure between these two ethnic groups. Previously, the Constitution of 1st August 1964 deprived the populations that had migrated from Rwanda and Burundi between 1930 and 1954 of their Congolese nationality. As from 1971, the Tutsi elites in the Kivus became robustly incorporated into the institutions of the Mobutu’s government. The director of Mobutu’s Cabinet, Bisengimana Rwema, was a Tutsi from North Kivu. Consequently, a law together recognizing the Congolese nationality of migrants from Rwanda and Burundi consolidated the Barundi’s right to their own chefferie. This was opposed by the Bafuliro. The controversial law was repealed on 5 January 1972. In 1981, a new nationality law reiterated the prohibiting of communities not present on Congolese territory in 1885.

Although there is evidence that the Barundi were present before 1885, they lost their Congolese nationality. Although the 2006 constitution confirmed the Barundi’s Congolese nationality, it did not end the quarrel about who got there first and therefore did not resolve the issue of the Barundi’s right to administer the Ruzizi Plain chefferie.

3.2.2 The Barundi lose power

In 1996, the Mwami Ndabagoye, leader of the Barundi community was relieved of his post by Laurent-Désiré Kabila’s Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre (AFDL) and was forced into exile in Uganda. He returned to Congo in 1998 as an officer in the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD). Bafuliro leaders have since used his participation in the RCD rebellion to contest his legitimacy.
They say he and his descendants lost the right to govern the chefferie when they joined the RCD and, according to them, betrayed the country to Rwanda.\textsuperscript{37} He was also accused of atrocities against the Bafuliro.\textsuperscript{38} As from 1999, the RCD tried to obtain popular support by rallying traditional chiefs, who were also mobilized and courted by the central government. Uvira’s traditional chiefs opted for two completely opposed strategies. Although he was a founding member of the RCD, the Mwami Ndare played a double game by cultivating close links with the Mai-Mai groups in his chefferie and finally joined the Kinshasa-backed Mai-Mai in 2001.\textsuperscript{39}

The Mai-Mai’s capture of Uvira in October 2002 allowed the Mwami Ndare Simba to project the image of a resistance fighter against the RCD.\textsuperscript{40} Meanwhile, the Mwami Ndabagoye tightened his position within the RCD and became a senator during the transition. As from 2004, after a decision by the government in Kinshasa, which wanted to remove former RCD members, the territory administration deprived Mwami Ndabagoye of his traditional powers and appointed a Bafuliro as chief of the Ruzizi Plain chefferie. The Bafuliro, therefore, achieved their historic objective of controlling the Ruzizi Plain and the Barundi were sidelined.

Economic and land rivalries between the Bafuliro and the Barundi in the Ruzizi Plain go back to the colonial period. When the Barundi settled on the plain, the Bafuliro were only using it as a hunting reserve and most of the area was abandoned because of endemic malaria. The Bafuliro still believe that the first Barundi were cattle thieves who crossed the River Ruzizi to escape from King Ntare Rugamba of Burundi.\textsuperscript{41} Disputes about the pasture and land occupation rights spread to include other local resources as the area developed. In this region, as elsewhere in Africa, the land is a key indicator of collective identity and an essential source of income.\textsuperscript{42}
With the promotion of cash crops production during the colonial period, land in the plain became more valuable and its economic importance increased. The Belgian colonisers introduced cotton at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1950, they also planted rice. In 1956, they introduced sugar cane, which developed with the construction of Kiliba sugar refinery, a private investment that covered 6,000 hectares, employed 3,500 workers and was known as the “Uvira Gécamines”. The first to benefit from the development of agricultural activities were the Barundi, who lived on the plain, rather than the Bafuliro who lived on the plateau. This seeming unfair distribution of resources further aggravated the already existing tensions between the two communities.

The local economy was completely disrupted in the second half of the 1990s due to conflicts. The rice-growing development programs were halted and, in 1995, the Kiliba sugar refinery closed down. The fact that the sugar refinery was the most important source of employment in Uvira led to the revival of agro-industry among the many promises made by successive governments. The transitional government announced the reopening of the Kiliba sugar refinery in 2004, and again in 2010.

However, the re-launch came in a background of land conflicts and blackmail over jobs. After a decade of neglect and no management presence, some local people had occupied the refinery lands and in some cases acquired land titles. Moreover, the population was not pleased that only a small fraction of the former workforce was re-engaged, as the company reportedly did not feel able to employ more people at that stage. The local population did not look on this new employment policy kindly.
On 16 April 2013, with the tacit support of the local authorities, young Bafuliro violently opposed the dismissal of an agronomist before forcefully demanding a policy of affirmative action in favour of members of their community. Land distribution was another cause of tension between the Barundi and the Bafuliro. Since 2005, the communities had clashed over the sale of traditional lands by the groupement chiefs, which they believed to be illegal.

3.3 The Elite Perspective

External players have contributed greatly in determining the outcome of the DRC’s economic outlook. As the country possesses many vital and valuable minerals, many countries had vested interest in the DRC. Both regional and international states have played a part in exploiting the DRC’s minerals where gold, copper, diamonds, rubber and cotton have dominated the scene. The protracted war in the DRC featured high involvement from other states where it is believed, were looking to gain economically from the wars. Since independence, the DRC has relied on external forces in terms of state power and state finance:

Throughout the post-independence era, the political forces in the DRC have received massive assistance in terms of technological know-how, military advice and industrial investment. None of the subsequent regimes following the exodus of the Belgians would have been possible were it not for the reliance on other actors. Both Mobutu and Laurent Kabila relied heavily upon state and the private sector states assisted militarily while the private sector handled mining rights e.g. the case of coltan.

3.3.1 The Super Powers

The two major Western powers involved in the region are the United States and France. Both countries had real vested interest in the mineral resources of the DRC. They, therefore, liked to see their transnational corporations have access to these resources. For this reason, and for fear that such resources might fall into the wrong hands, particularly those of international terrorist groups, they could not afford to remain indifferent as to who holds state power in the various
countries of the Great Lakes region. This fear by the West was particularly prompted after it was alleged that the al-Qaeda terrorist group was involved in diamonds purchased in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to fund its activities. More importantly, the global interests of the United States as a superpower and France’s neo-colonial alliances with stakes in Central Africa required that they remain engaged in the Great Lakes region.

3.3.2 United States of America

The United States has since the end of the Cold War seen its major interest in Africa as fighting transnational threats particularly Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism and humanitarian disasters. A close ally of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Rwanda as guardians on the combat zone against Islamist intimidation from Sudan, the US supported their sponsorship of Laurent Kabila to remove its former ally Mobutu from power. But Kabila’s incompetence, unpredictability and alliance with countries to which the United States is hostile to, such as Cuba, Libya, and Sudan, did not endear him to American policymakers.

Until July 1998, US military personnel were training Rwandan troops in counter-insurgency, and a US military and diplomatic team was sighted at the Rwanda–Congo border when war broke out on 2 August 1998. Officially, the team was there to assess the Rwandan government’s ability to prevent genocide. There could be no better expression of support for Rwanda’s aggression in DR Congo, which Kigali justified in terms of preventing genocide. Thus, despite official US statements that Rwanda and Uganda had to withdraw their troops from the Congo, both countries continued to receive assistance from the United States and the World Bank. This encouraged the invaders to continue their aggression in the Congo.
3.3.3 France

As the number one power in most parts of Africa, France has had a major stake in central Africa’s political dynamics. In Rwanda, France supported the Hutu regime of Juvénal Habyarimana against the Tutsis during the Rwandan genocide. Its UN-approved post-genocide intervention in June 1994 resulted in bringing to DR Congo the leftovers of Habyarimana’s regime and military with a lot of tools and supplies. Together with the Interahamwe, this military machine posed a serious threat to the newly established RPF regime in Kigali, and its raids into Rwanda were the immediate cause of the war of 1996 - 7.  

The major reason for France’s involvement in Central Africa appeared to be an attempt to stabilize the Mobutu regime and help rehabilitate the discredited dictator internationally. This move began in October 1993 at the Francophone countries’ summit in Port Louis, Mauritius. It continued with efforts by the major Western players - the United States, France and Belgium- to withdraw support from Etienne Tshisekedi, the Prime Minister elected in 1992 by the Sovereign National Conference, in favour of Léon Kengo wa Dondo, a “Mobutu protégé who was strongly backed by the Bretton Woods institutions as a supposedly competent technocrat.”

The fact that Kengo had presided over the greatest pillage of the country’s wealth during his previous two terms as prime minister (1982–6 and 1988–90) escaped the attention of institutions and people who were mostly interested in debt recovery. During his third term (1994–7), he and his interior minister, Gérard Kamanda wa Kamanda, did their best to help Mobutu block the transition to democracy. France’s support for both Mobutu and Habyarimana was thus a major factor in the present crisis.
France’s military detachment from Africa and pressures from its African cronies such as President Omar Bongo of Gabon resulted in more French support for Congolese resistance to control by the Anglophone regimes of Uganda and Rwanda. France was the brain behind the June 2000 UN Security Council decision to set up a panel of experts to investigate the illegal exploitation of the natural resources and other wealth of DR Congo by its neighbours. At the same time, French permanent representative to the United Nations then was the most vocal critic of Rwandan and Ugandan aggression in the Congo. With the support of Belgium, France, also played a crucial role in mobilizing European Union support for the DR Congo government under Joseph Kabila, who took over from his father, Laurent Kabila, as president following the latter’s assassination in January 2001. This has provided much leverage for the government and other political and civil society organisations in talks for a political settlement with the Rwandan- and Ugandan-backed rebels.

3.3.4 Multinational Networks

Apart from foreign sovereign countries, transnational networks also played a major role in the governance crisis the DR Congo has experienced since independence. These networks were both legitimate and criminal. This became even more instructive when mining trans-nationals from around the world joined South African counterparts in a new rush for concessions and exploration rights all over Africa. They sought to exploit both the new opportunities of the post–Cold War period, such as the push towards privatisation, and also Africa’s possession of a large supply of resources, which by and large have been run down by the developed countries.
Despite the economic mess up of the country and its political mayhem, DR Congo has always been attractive to mining trans-nationals because of its massive endowment in minerals and the relatively high mineral content of Congolese copper, cobalt and gold ores, among the highest in the world. Thus, although their long-term interests required political stability, investors seeking mining contracts did not seem to shy away from war-ravaged countries with a fabulous resource endowment, like the Congo. To aggravate matters, these transnational networks mostly did not have any respect for diplomatic procedures such as national sovereignty and territorial integrity that may hinder short-term profitability. They made deals with whoever controls a mineral-rich territory, including warlords and invaders, as they have done in north-eastern Congo with the AFDL, Rwanda, the Ugandan warlord Brigadier James Kazini, and the rebels of both the RCD and the MLC.

The abundance and diversity of Congo’s minerals largely gave the country “its colonial-era distinction as a geological scandal.” In the wake of the real life scandals of the wild rubber atrocities of King Leopold of Belgium’s Congo Free State, colonialism established a system of mineral exploitation that consisted of extracting raw materials for export, with little or no productive investment in the country from which they were extracted, and little or no effort to protect the environment. This system has remained intact since independence as a national curse, DR Congo’s enormous wealth attracts numerous outsiders who eventually find local collaborators to help them loot the country’s natural resources. As in Leopold’s day, the national wealth is monopolised by Congo’s rulers and their foreign business partners to the detriment of the mass of the people, who remain among the poorest of the global poor. This is the real scandal of the Congo.
On the other hand, for Congolese leaders, especially, Mobutu and Laurent Kabila, what mattered most was the amount of money foreign businesses were prepared to pay up front to win lucrative contracts, and the percentage of income that will later go back to political authorities or warlords. Rebel groups, beginning with Kabila’s AFDL, later discovered that making deals in this manner was a good way of raising money for warfare. It is purported that in one such transaction in May 1997, the AFDL received an initial payment of $50 million, with a further $200 million promised over four years, from Consolidated Eurocan Ventures of the Lundin Group of Vancouver, Canada, for a copper and cobalt investment deal worth $1.5 billion. Jean-Raymond Boule, the principal owner of American Mineral Fields, a company registered in Canada but operating from Arkansas in the United States, even loaned his executive jet to then-rebel leader Kabila for his visits to cities under his control in the Congo and for diplomatic missions in Africa.65

As these abuses of the country’s sovereignty by mining corporations show, even legitimate businesses may engage in unacceptable activities, mainly in conflict situations in which the rule of law has broken down. The UN panel of experts’ report on the illegal exploitation of Congolese resources lists 85 business enterprises that the panel considers to have contravened OECD guidelines for multinational corporations. Of these, 21 companies are Belgian, 12 are South African, 10 are British, 8 are American, 5 are Canadian and 4 each are German and Zimbabwean.66 Furthermore, the panel proposes the placing of financial restrictions on 29 companies, and a travel ban and financial restrictions on 54 individuals, most of whom are connected with the 29 companies. These include individuals with close ties to presidents Joseph Kabila of DR Congo, Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Yoweri
Museveni of Uganda. Travel bans and financial restrictions are also recommended against the Russian arms merchant Victor Bout and a number of Antwerp-based diamond dealers.67

The other category of transnational actor in DR Congo as stated earlier have been criminal networks, including arms merchants, drug traffickers, money launderers and Mafia groups of all kinds. These transnational criminal networks often entered into alliances with states and warlords to profit from the crisis and to plunder Congo’s natural resources with acrimony. The trade in coltan, diamonds, gold, timber, coffee and other resources of Congo’s soil and forests has enriched individuals all over the world. While detailed information on the criminal networks is difficult to obtain, the large number of small arms, such as Kalashnikov rifles that can be purchased for as little as $10 a piece, and the role of illicit finance in helping to sustain armed conflict in resource-rich areas like north-eastern Congo, are clear manifestations of the strong participation of these networks in sustaining the crisis.

3.3.5 Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi

The United Nations Panel of Expert’s Report shows that at least the vested interest of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi in DR Congo contributed greatly to plundering the state into crisis. This has been described as the underlying reasons for President Museveni’s strategy of the “Somalisation” of the Congo, which has included creating Jean-Pierre Bemba’s MLC and supporting up to three different factions of the RCD breakaway group originally led by Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie–Mouvement de libération (RCD–ML).68
Museveni’s generals and other military commanders have been more successful in making business deals than in waging war in the Congo. Thus, beginning with his half-brother, General Salim Saleh, and Uganda’s then-army chief of staff, General Kazini, who is said to be Museveni’s cousin, the major activity of the Ugandan army in north-eastern Congo until 2003 was the systematic looting of natural resources. A regime of pillage reminiscent of the Leopoldian era was established, with Ugandans and Rwandans dividing among themselves the gold, diamonds, timber, coffee and tea of the north-east. The military clashes of 1999 and 2000 between Rwandan and Ugandan troops in Kisangani were basically a case of fighting over turf and resources. There is no doubt that a major concern of the RPF regime in Kigali was the threat posed by the génocidaires, who were still committed to finishing off the deadly task they had set for themselves in 1994.69

The mind boggling questions being asked have always been what would make Kagame and his military strategists think they could wipe out the threat by unleashing their troops in the vast interior of Congo, if the Rwandan army could not contain rebel incursions along the 217-km border between Rwanda and DR Congo? In their haughty belief that they could hunt down and kill the last Hutu fanatic, the Rwandan army men and officers were determined to take advantage of the collapse of the Congolese state and army to set up a puppet regime in Kinshasa, or at the very least a buffer zone in eastern Congo, involving the Tutsi settlement and economic exploitation of that region. Their true intentions were exposed when they started giving foreign firms mining concessions for the exploitation of rare metals in the occupied territory, and by making sure that Rwanda, and not Uganda, took the greatest share of Congo’s resources.70
As one Ugandan daily commented with respect to the 1999 clashes between the Ugandan and Rwandan armies in Kisangani, “though the Ugandans made money, they got crumbs as Rwanda took the lucrative deals.”

**Burundi:** Burundi, the third partner in the anti-Kabila alliance, also sought to give good reason for its partial military contribution as arising out of the need to stop incursions by Congo-based Hutu extremists. Burundi’s motivations for entering the Second Congo War were somewhat similar to Rwanda’s. The two countries share the same ethnic divisions and Hutus and Tutsis in Burundi have often been in variance. The Forces for Defence of Democracy (FDD), a Burundian Hutu rebel group, used the DRC as a refuge throughout the 1990s. When Rwandan-Ugandan forces attempted to unseat Kabila, he responded by arming Hutu groups throughout eastern Congo, including the FDD. This placed pro-Kabila forces, including the FDD, on one side and Burundi on the other with its allies in Kigali and Kampala. Though allied with Rwanda and Uganda, Burundi did not share its allies’ eventual goal of overthrowing Kabila or their economic interests in the DRC. Burundi’s main concern was repelling the FDD, and to that end it stationed a small number of forces just inside the DRC.

### 3.3.6 Angola and Zimbabwe

Originally, four countries came to Laurent Kabila’s rescue when the war erupted in 1998: Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Chad. Of these, the first two are those with significant interests at stake in DR Congo. They justified their involvement in the Congo war as support for a fellow member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) facing external aggression, in accordance with international law and the charters of the United Nations and the Organisation
of African Unity. While this justification was reasonable, undoubtedly, the personal idiosyncratic and parochial interests of the leaders concerned as well as the economic and geopolitical interests of their countries influenced the decision to intervene.74

**Angola:** The leading pro-Kabila state was, unquestionably, Angola. When the conflict appeared most dreary for the DRC’s leader, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos determined to mediate on the side of Kabila. This move definitely was what Kabila needed to save his regime. Dos Santos had several reasons for supporting Kabila’s DR Congo. His primary interest was in defeating the Angolan rebel group the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) led by Jonas Savimbi.75 The explanation Angola gave for backing Rwanda and Uganda in their overthrow of Mobuto two years earlier was that Mobuto had provided a haven for UNITA. In 1998, however, reports emerged that the leadership of UNITA had visited Rwanda and Kampala. The possibility that Rwanda and Uganda were working with UNITA drove Dos Santos to support Kabila.76

In addition, the Angolan president resented the audacity of the Rwandan-Ugandan airlift to the Kitona airbase, located next door to Angola’s oil-rich Cabinda province.77 Together, these factors were enough to convince dos Santos to intervene on the side of Kabila. Rwanda and Uganda were unable to precisely gauge the security interests of their former ally, and were thus surprised when, on August 23, Angolan forces carried out an overwhelming strike with attacks on helicopters and MiG 23 fighter bombers that stopped the Rwandan-led drive to Kinshasa.78

In August 1998, Luanda had two main objectives: to protect the security of its territory particularly its oil-rich country and to beat back a more powerful UNITA.79 The Luanda
government feared that Savimbi would once again use an unstable Congo as a rear base for his rebellion, as he did during the Mobutu regime. The Kitona airlift brought Rwandan and Ugandan forces to Angola’s doorstep, thus increasing its insecurity. At the same time, reports that Rwanda and Uganda were working with UNITA made Kigali and Kampala the ally of Angola’s enemy, and therefore the enemy of Angola.\textsuperscript{80}

Zimbabwe and Namibia, Angola has an evident interest in the stability of the Congo, a country with which it shares a long land border of 2,511 kilometres. Having already intervened in 1997 in both Congos, by helping to put Kabila in power in Kinshasa and restoring the ancient régime of Denis Sassou-Nguesso in Brazzaville, the Angolan government was eager to establish its credentials as a regional power in central Africa.\textsuperscript{81}

**Zimbabwe:** Both Angola and Namibia followed Zimbabwe in calling a military role for SADC in DR Congo.\textsuperscript{82} Zimbabwe took the lead in making their intervention a joint defense action against an external threat through the SADC “Organ for Politics, Defense and Security”, then chaired by President Mugabe. These legal particulars appeared to be suitable cover for Zimbabwe’s real intentions - economic and geopolitical interests of the governing elite.

The DRC government under Laurent Kabila allegedly owed millions of dollars to Zimbabwe for military equipment and supplies obtained during the seven-month war of 1996–7.\textsuperscript{83} After the regime change in DR Congo, however, a number of Zimbabwean businesses and state owned enterprises extended credit to country for the acquisition of goods in various sectors, but failed to receive payment. Moreover, with its population of fifty–sixty million people, the Congo
represents an attractive market for Zimbabwe’s goods and services, especially taking into consideration that Zimbabwean textile, agro-industrial and other enterprises have been trailing even at home, to competition from South Africa and suffering from the damaging effects of globalization.

Zimbabwe’s ruling elite was resolute in making good on its investment in DR Congo. During the civil war in Mozambique, Zimbabwe had sent thousands of troops to help the FRELIMO government fight the RENAMO rebels. By the end of the civil war in 1992, there were no dividends for Zimbabwe’s sacrifices, as South Africa, the very country that had armed RENAMO and tried to destroy Mozambique’s society and economy under apartheid, reaped the largest benefits of peace.

For a year or so, Billy Rautenbach, a Zimbabwean businessman who is reportedly close to Mugabe’s entourage, acted as the managing director of Gécamines, Congo’s state mining company specialising in copper and cobalt. Zimbabwe had a strong military presence in the southern Congolese city of Mbuji-Mayi, and Zimbabweans were said to be airlifting diamonds home on a regular basis.\textsuperscript{84}

With support of some Congolese state officials, several important Zimbabweans became owners of the two richest diamond mines in Mbuji-Mayi, under a company called Sengamines; while Zimbabwe as a state may not profit much from the exploitation of DR Congo’s resources. Individual members of the country’s elite reaped the spoils of war even sometimes more than their countries could gain:
Besides Rautenbach and Emmerson Mnangagwa, Zimbabwe’s speaker of parliament, they include General Vitalis Zvinavashe; army commander during Zimbabwe’s 1998–2002 military engagement in DR Congo. His trucking company was used to carry supplies for Zimbabwean troops in DR Congo from Harare to Lubumbashi.\(^85\)

Just like its past history, by 1997, Congo had deteriorated to a weak, fragmented, more or less a collapsed state. The resulting complication in a mix of weak central government, regional ethnic militias, foreign armies, abundant natural resources, and the presence of multinational corporations, bringing the DR Congo back on economic and political recovery will indeed be the agenda for discussion for emerging leaders and stakeholders a daunting task. This is particularly difficult as political stakes in this large African state are high, turning any losers into potential rebel groups.\(^86\)

The challenge of governance crisis in the DRC is undoubtedly a complicated one. Unlike natural resource wars experienced in West Africa’s Liberia and Sierra Leone which relatively had very few national and individual interests at stake, the protracted conflict in the DRC proved to be one with multiple interests. Under the guise of protecting human rights and fighting of terror, the United States and France cunningly promoted their national interests in the scramble for the Congolese natural resources through their multi-national organizations. To a very large extent, this action by these western states had daunting and devastating impact on the war as both warlords and state officials could easily lay hands on weapons illegally. The DRC wars were perfect epitome of what is termed economies of war.

Furthermore, neighbouring southern and central African states also took advantage of complicated ethnic differences in the region to loot the Congolese natural resources. This depict
real clash of elite struggling to control resources in the midst of war. Countries such as Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Zimbabwe unequivocally were in DR Congo not for the interest of restoring peace in the country but to participate in the scramble for resources. The international system is indeed controlled by national interest and it is not surprising at when countries would end up clashing in another territory chiefly to protect national interest.

3.4 Conclusion
That the Democratic Republic of Congo’s governance crisis was a result of battle of elites through the exploitation of traditional ethnic difference is an understatement. The vast land size of the country, coupled with its very rich natural resources made it attractive to foreign powers. Local leader’s inability to manage their internal crisis resulted in the influx of both regional and foreign countries. Internal political divisions along ethnic lines served as the catalyst to attract especially southern African states into the country. This was made easy due to the cross-border nature of the two dominant traditionally opposing ethnic groups, Hutus and Tutsi in the southern African region.
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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary of Findings

The underlining sources of the governance crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo have never been of recent history. Both the country’s post-independence and post-Cold War crisis could be attributed directly to pre-colonial and colonial influences. Belgian King Leopold’s possession of the entire territory later to be known as the DRC through the Association International Africaine, was just the beginning of what was to be viewed later as a norm by the country’s own leadership. The treatment of the then territory as a personal property by King Leopold served as a precedence to be followed by the Belgian colonial masters and later long term Dictator Mobutu Sese Seko and finally Laurent Kabila. The country thus came to be treated as virtual personal property of the leader leading to establishment of a paternalistic form of government.

This development became much easier as leaders readily and easily had direct access to exploitable natural resources through their agents. This was precipitated by the failure of the state as a whole. The state of Congo DR after independence had not been able to establish institutions strong enough to provide basic necessities to its citizens. This was a situation largely emanating from the post-independence conflict between President Joseph Kasavubu and Prime Minister Patrice Lumuba. The country was birthed into crises. Right from independence, it became clear that a new country with such a large territory and thick population such as DR
Congo plunged into civil war was definitely not going to get out easily. This difficult situation was exploited by Mobutu with the able assistance of his western supporters.

As a typical developing country which gained independence in the Cold War era, the DRC soon found itself entangled in the mess of the Cold War. The immediate post-independence conflict between Kasavubu and Lumumba was a direct product of the Cold War as President Kasavubu was supported by the West and supplied with weapons as Lumumba on the other hand was also heavily assisted and encouraged by the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Mobutu Sese Seko was a crony of the West and with Western support he was empowered to embark on his heartless dictatorial policies. The DRC’s governance to a very large extent could, therefore, be blamed on the Cold War and its spill-over effects. It is, therefore, not surprising that the country saw relative peace only when the Cold War had ended.

4.2 Conclusion

The governance crisis that hit the DRC right after independence which almost led to the collapse of the nation-state was real. As a typical developing state caught in the unmerciful ebb of Cold War, the DRC faced similar challenges that almost all countries in Africa faced. The challenge, however, was the management and mismanagement of interests in the country. The root of this problem is traced from pre-colonial times, aggravated by Belgian colonial rule and finally consummated by selfish and power-drunk Congolese leaders.
Just like its past history, by 1997, Congo had deteriorated into a consolidated weak, fragmented, more or less a collapsed state. The resulting complication in a mix of weak central government, regional ethnic militias, foreign armies, abundant natural resources, and the presence of multinational corporations, bringing the DR Congo back on economic and political recovery will indeed be the agenda for discussion for emerging leaders and stakeholders.

The challenge of governance crisis in the DRC is undoubtedly a complicated one. Unlike natural resource wars experienced in West Africa’s Liberia and Sierra Leone which relatively had very few national and individual interests at stake, the protracted conflict in the DRC proved to be one with multiple interests. Under the guise of protecting human rights and fighting of terror, the United States and France cunningly promoted their national interests in the scramble for the Congolese natural resources through their multi-national organizations. To a very large extent, this action by these western states had daunting and devastating impact on the war as both warlords and state officials could easily lay hands on illegal weapons.

Neighbouring southern and central African states also took advantage of complicated ethnic differences in the region to loot the Congolese natural resources. This depict real clash of elite struggling to control resources in the midst of war. Countries such as Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Zimbabwe unequivocally were in DR Congo not for the interest of restoring peace in the country but to participate in the scramble for resources. The international system is indeed controlled by national interest and it is not surprising at when countries would end up clashing in another territory chiefly to protect national interest.
The vast natural endowed resources of DRC, made the country attractive to foreign powers. Local leaders inability to manage their internal crisis resulted in the influx of both regional and foreign countries. Internal political divisions along ethnic lines served as the catalyst to attract especially southern African states into the country. This was made easy due to the cross-border nature of the two dominant traditionally opposing ethnic groups, Hutus and Tutsi in the Southern African region.

4.3 Recommendations

- Good governance always goes with strong democratic institutions. The government of President Joseph Kabila must make it a priority to build and strengthen institutions that world check abuse of power and incumbency. This is especially crucial as the country the country has determined not to reverse to its past.

- The DR Congo needs to take strong hold of its territorial integrity. The government, through the military, immigration service and other important state agencies must work not to be easily corrupted. The history of the country as discussed above shows the extent of multiple external interests in the country and it definitely needs hard work in order to make itself immune to the negatives of those interests.

- Furthermore, the South Africa Development Community, SADC, of which DR Congo is a member must be up and doing. Member countries must be challenged to respect the territorial integrity of other others. This extent of which neighbouring countries – mostly
SADC member states – took advantage of the governance crisis in the DR Congo, really demands that the sub-regional body sits up and be up and doing.

- The protracted conflict has undoubtedly led to proliferation of weapons in the region. The DR Congo in particular and the Southern Africa in general must maximise efforts at disarming all militia groups and even individuals. This will go a long way to prevent any conflicts in the future.

- Finally, as African conflicts are trans-border in general, regional effort at containing and preventing conflicts and political instability is crucial to the future of the DR Congo and Southern Africa.
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