

The

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# HORN

## Bulletin

# THE RISE OF CHINA:

## Implications for Peace and Security on Eastern Africa

Photo Credit: WNIP, February 26, 2019



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The HORN Bulletin is a bi-monthly publication by the HORN Institute. It contains thematic articles mainly on issues affecting the Horn of Africa region.

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*"To fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemies resistance without fighting."*

*Sun Tzu, The Art of War*

### Abstract

This article explores the implications of the rise of China and the shifting global power dynamics on peace and security in Eastern Africa. Using the *power cycle spectrum*, the article moves beyond the classical power theory of war determinism, toward a more pragmatic view of global power shifts and re-alignments. It examines Chinese mega infrastructural development,



*China's military base in Djibouti. The base has become an important outpost for China in the Horn of Africa.*

the United States (US) adjustment of its foreign policy in response to this reality, militarization of the region with establishment of strategic military bases in Djibouti by global powers, and the vulnerability of the region to external pressures given the region's domestic socio-political and economic fragility.

## Introduction

The rise and fall of empires in human history has informed historical ebbs and flows between war and peace. The meteoric rise of the Peoples Republic of China, the most populous nation on earth, to become a global economic, military and political power has had ramifications in its immediate Asian neighborhood, as well as in Europe, the Americas and Africa. The thawing of great powers rivalry in 1989 which marked the end of 'Cold War' provided space for China to rise without attracting much global powers' attention (Layne, 2018). According to my assessment, the shifting global power axis from the Western metropolises to the Eurasian metropolises will be the greatest determinant of international peace and security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

China is expected to be the largest economy in the world by 2050 in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) (Layne, 2018). China has established banks in collaboration with other Asian countries that significantly rival the Bretton Woods institutions in global financial governance.

Having been a previously colonized country, and until recently sharing the tag of 'third world country' with many developing countries including Africa, the nation

has not attracted much disdain in that part of the world compared to former imperial powers. However, there have been schisms with the United States (US), the current global hegemony, and to a lesser extent, Japan. China and Japan have much-loaded history between them and China surpassed Japan as the second biggest economy in the world over the last decade and has marshaled significant military capabilities. This has prompted a review of post-Second World War pacifist status of Japan with tacit support from the United States to act as a bulwark against China.

These geopolitical power shifts have not yet produced a major war; courtesy to declining American economic power, China's 'peaceful rise' and Russia's focus on domestic power consolidation in pursuit of an empire. Like Africa of the centuries past where slavery, colonialism, and neo-colonialism were harped unto the continent; there has not been any remarkable efforts by the African Union (AU), countries or regional blocks to draft strategic response to this rapidly evolving power dynamics. As Ali Mazrui put it, 'Africa paid homage to foreign ideologies of Christianity, Islam, Democracy, Capitalism, and Communism alike – Any other-ism is welcome'. However, Africa cannot afford to continue playing the role of a bystander in world affairs. The continent must marshal its unique global heritage to shape the world toward a more peaceful path.

Many African countries have not yet drafted foreign and security strategy blueprints for responding to the Chinese rise despite the significant effects it is having on their

political, economic and security situation. To paraphrase an African adage, Africa cannot afford to be the grass or an 'innocent bystander', 'when two Elephants fight or make love'.

Literature on Sino-African relations oscillates between optimism and pessimism, given historical background, level of Western penetration and the modern economic and political dynamics (Adem, 2010). These divergences also run parallel with ideological affinity/disaffection with liberalism, communism and realism divide.

## Theoretical Framework

### Power Cycle Theory

This theory provides a middle ground, pragmatic and pro-peace re-interpretation of classical realism and liberal internationalism paradigms. It provides agency to the leadership of a structure/system or hegemonic state in adjusting to natural and inevitable shifting power dynamics. Power cycle theory was first formulated by Charles Doran in 1964. The theory maintains that changing power balance both horizontally and vertically between states and the role of rising states in maintaining a stable international system does not have to lead to conflict or instability. The states can adjust appropriately to take a commensurate role in shaping the stability of the international power system (Doran, 2012).

This theory recognizes the supremacy of power as a determinant of interstate relations, but offers a pragmatic view where this change is not static or cast in historical moment, but changes on a long term basis. This theory also adapts aspects of systems approach in that power and dynamic transformation over time informs stability or instability, but not necessarily whether bipolar or multipolar system are precursors of stability or instability (Doran, 2012). The conceptualization, operationalization and impact on policy making of such theories may determine states trajectory toward conflict or stability. Power theory offers a close fusion between theory and practice of statecraft in balancing power and international security among states amidst decline and rising of states such as the case of the United States and China today (Doran, 2012).

### China's Foray into Africa

The entry of China in Africa's economic sphere became most pronounced in the last decade threatens to untie the current 'neo-colonial' relations between Africa and the West (United Kingdom, France and the US), and the Bretton Wood institutions. It threatens to offer a model of liberation, re-interpretation of cosmology, capital, labor, color, developed and developing countries relations. It will have deep continental effects ideologically, culturally, economically, and politically. The Chinese model of 'self propelled great leap forward' challenges the much-hyped Western paradigm of 'foreign aid and investment' mantra for poverty alleviation and development in Africa. Given the poor performance of earlier International Monetary Fund (IMF) Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and latter-day development blueprints, the Chinese model will attract attention among African economic strategists and planners (Campbell, 2008).

This outcome provides progressive African countries with an opportunity to 'shed off the old skin' in favor of spreading risks through engaging China economically, not as a benign creditor, but an alternative source of development capital. It also provides an opportunity to relook at Africa's development model so as to recognize indigenous ideologies and capacities that were condemned by the Western hegemonic paradigm as rudimentary at best and heretics at worst.

The new China-Africa relations momentum began in 2000 with the formation of Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) (Hanauer & Morris, 2014). This all-encompassing special purpose vehicle for economic and political cooperation has raised the level of interactions, economic visibility of Chinese companies in Africa, and more significantly, drawn 'Western' eyes to its loosening ties with its protege continent and ending slave-like historical relations between it and Africa. The China-Africa policy sets out a number of parameters of cooperation indicating a desire to forge win-win and non-colonial/patronizing relationships where China does not interfere with local political affairs (Hanauer & Morris, 2014).

China has had a significant influence on Ethiopia's political and economic order given Ethiopia's dalliance

Many African countries have not yet drafted foreign and security strategy blueprints toward the phenomenon of China rising despite the significant effects it is having on their political, economic and security situations

Beijing's development of state-of-the-art technology platforms is causing jitters in Washington; perceived as a threat by establishing a rival global technology capital metropole

with communism in the past. Major infrastructural projects sponsored by China in Eastern Africa are creating strong regional economic interdependence network that may precede political union. As an extension of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Mombasa, Nairobi, Lamu, Kampala, Kigali, Dar es Salaam, Juba, and Addis Ababa will soon be linked by major infrastructural networks. Given that security strategy follows economic interests, the security map will follow the economic grid with the central metropole based in Beijing.

How African countries are realigning with this global scene from a strategic viewpoint is debatable. The long-established culture of being a recipient of foreign ideologies creates room for peaceful evolution. However, in the event that US or the West decides to use Africa as a proxy war launching pad against China, most African countries demonstrate significant vulnerability to such foreign manipulations.

### **Russia, Greater Eurasia and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**

Russian scholars, economic, foreign policy and security analysts are promoting a relatively new concept of Eurasia as a power satellite constellation of like-minded countries in Asia revolving around Russia as the center of power with seamless convergence with BRI. With accumulated social capital from the communist alliance of the pre-Cold War era, Russia and China are today inevitable allies because of their shared objective of restructuring global value-chains and the development of a multipolar world (JMJ, 2019).

Beijing's development of state-of-the-art technology platforms is causing jitters in Washington; perceived as a threat by establishing a rival global technology capital metropole. This Eurasian train has already departed from the station and its motion may not be reversed, stopped or slowed by sanctions, demonization, containment and

even war threats from the West (North Atlantic Treaty Organization – NATO), (JMJ, 2019). Most global conflict hot spots such as the Middle East – Syria, Iran and Iraq; the Caucus – Ukraine and Georgia; South America – Venezuela; Africa – Libya and Central Africa Republic, are all reflecting this emerging global power axis divide.

### **Global Power Shift: Implications for Africa**

Despite the decline of Pax Britannica and Pax Americana; most African states and leaders still regard and relate with that part of the world as if the 'Wheel of History' is stagnant. African states foreign policies have to adjust to reflect current power dynamics. In Kenya, it is the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government led by President Mwai Kibaki in 2003 that changed Kenya's foreign economic policy direction towards the East. Coupled with major infrastructural projects, many Kenyans have seen its economic benefits and the reduction of Western economics dictates spearheaded by the World Bank and the IMF. The increasing alternative sources of international finance offered by China will gradually lower the status of the Bretton Woods institutions and, consequently, the 'Washington Consensus' global economic order (Layne, 2018).

China has held several China-Africa defense and security forums to forge closer security partnership. This, together with FOCAC high-level political meetings, have enhanced Chinese relationship with Africa (Layne, 2018). The US in 2018 promised a 60 US\$ Billion investment in Africa to rival Chinese investments.

### **North America/Western Response**

The US has responded to China's massive economic debut with disdain for gradual loss of influence and economic advantage. It has instigated multiple propaganda fronts to portray China's development aid as a debt trap that disregards democracy and human rights (Mayoyo, 2019). China does not put political conditions on its aid since it is not out to spread the gospel of communism or 'human rights'. Like the Organization of African Unity, (OAU), before reforms, respect for national political choices and non-interference are key principles. Though this stand is beneficial to dictators who loathe accountability; Western intervention in countries like Libya and Cote D'Ivoire has ushered neither peace, democracy nor human rights.

The US is also coming up with parallel infrastructure development projects in Africa whose aim appears to



*Kenya Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) line constructed by the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) and financed by the Chinese government (Photo Credit: Reuters)*

rival China than to assist African countries. Given the 'America first' mantra of current US leadership, chances of implementing a grand rival economic strategy are moot. What promises to be common is propaganda (cheap to execute) and influencing African mainstream media firms and opinion leaders as is already happening in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa.

Africa is already bearing the political and economic burden of the current trade wars occasioned by the rise of the Trump presidency in the US (Watima, 2018). The IMF has reduced economic growth forecasts for Africa from 3.3 to 3.1 for 2019 due to trade tensions, Brexit and slowing Chinese growth (Devermont & Chiang, 2019). The report expects more impact on primary raw materials economies such as Nigeria, Angola, South Sudan, and Zambia. Many African countries have expressed displeasure with US trade protectionism in favor of Chinese economic liberalism (Devermont & Chiang, 2019).

However, there may also be benefits from lost market opportunities by China which may prompt more focus on Africa or African countries could fill the market left by China in the US. However, this position assumes congruency of market needs, quality production from Africa and lack of other competitive producers and markets; a tall order in the global competitive market.

## Implications for Peace and Security on Eastern Africa

In international relations, there is discrepancy between what is stated in theory and, what actually happens on the ground. China's engagement with Africa seems to be ideologically antithetical to Western relations with the continent. This departure creates areas of contestation with the U.S/European Union (EU) policy toward Africa. The US, under Trump's leadership, is set to roll back Chinese influence in Africa with Kenya as a pilot project (Layne, 2018). In this vein, the US is extending a loan of about Kshs. 200 Billion to build a road running parallel to the Chinese built Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) from Mombasa to Nairobi. This plan coupled with propaganda about non-viability of SGR channelled through mainstream local media as 'objective facts'.

Given that economic relations cannot exist without security backing in the modern world, China has upped its arms sales to Africa and increased military training for Africa in Chinese academies (Hanauer & Morris, 2014). China has also established a military base in Djibouti, sitting alongside US, France and Japanese bases. This presence of global powers military basis implies that conflicts in the region will no longer take place without global powers involvement. Between 2009 and 2012, the Peoples Republic of China's Army (PLA) was part of



*Ethiopian factory workers make shoes at the Ganzhou Huajian International Shoe City Company in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on August 1, 2017 (Photo Credit: Xinhua)*

the international contingent to ensure safe passage of international vessels across the Gulf and the Somalia coast. Chinese peacekeepers are part of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) troops. Given Chinese oil interests in South Sudan, the peace-keepers are welcome by the local authorities.

The Horn of Africa has retained a strategic military value since the Cold War where the Somalia port of Berbera exchanged hand several times between the USA and the former Soviet Union. Located near the oil-rich gulf and Middle East region, along the Suez Canal and the Red Sea, Western Indian Ocean Line of Communication (WIO LOC) where a significant part of the international trade pass through annually, demand significant attention from the global powers.

Given the border disputes between Eritrea and Djibouti, thawing of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the fragility of Somalia including the al Shabab incursion in neighboring countries, internal political schism among the Sudan's Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) factions, the volatility of the Great Lakes region – most notably eastern DRC, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda; makes the presence of international strategic military contingents such as the American Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF - HOA) and the French contingent at Camp Lemonnier; a significant pillar of regional peace and security. However, given the emerging global power

realignment, these military formations could also be a political and security liability in the Horn of Africa.

## **Eastern Africa's Options/Choices in Foreign Policy and Security Strategy**

The Non-Aligned Movement established by the Bandung conference in 1955 set a pragmatic precedent for dealing with global powers competition whose triumph in global supremacy cannot be ascertained. Meeting in Bandung, Indonesia in April, 1955 newly independent Asian and African countries met to chart a united way forward in relation to the emerging two camps divide in global power alignment. This strategic choice (often a diplomatic than a realist tool) shielded the countries from the high cost of outright alignment with either party. Given the vulnerability of power transitions especially when they involve replacement and rise of globally opposed ideologies, values and identities, strategic interests demand national and regional investment in robust analysis of the political, economic and security impact.

Africa needs to borrow the Bandung experience to inform choices with regard to relations with the declining US and rising China. Africa cannot afford another 'Cold' or 'Hot' political, economic or military war with either party. Prudence demands to take the best of both worlds through strategic posturing.

Many African countries were affected by the Cold War that brought heavy cost in the Ethiopian-Somalia Ogaden conflict 1977-79, Angolan-Mozambican conflicts where there were massive loss of lives and property (Campbell, 2008; ). Somalia played both the US and Soviet Union to receive massive military support. Dictators such as Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire (modern-day Congo), survived for long through US patronage. Alignment with the Soviet Union enabled many countries of Southern Africa to help liberation movements including African National Congress (ANC), that culminated in eventual freedom and independence in the whole of Southern Africa by 1994.

Blind backing of one power ideology has historically been detrimental to economic, political, and security development in some countries as witnessed in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe, Nyerere's Tanzania, Nkrumah's Ghana, Mengistu's Ethiopia, Siad Barre's Somalia, Patrice Lumumba's Congo and Muammar Gaddafi's Libya. Not only were coups sponsored by the powers during the cold war to remove uncooperative regimes, but also some leaders were outrightly eliminated. The Congo has

never recovered from the impact of the 'Cold/Hot War' as poverty, violent conflict, human rights violations, impunity, conflict-related sexual violence, plunder of resources and negative intervention from regional and international powers remain significant threats. Given that both US and China are interested in extraction of vital raw materials, minerals, oil and gas; competition and conflict might be more pronounced in resource-rich countries such as the Congo, Angola, and South Sudan.

A 'Bushian' mantra of 'you are either with us or against us', expressed furiously by President George Bush after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US, would put African countries at a loss. However, given the Chinese commitment to disturb the global power balance peacefully, the evolution might be gradual rather than drastic. The degree of vulnerability of global power rivalry to specific countries will depend on a number of factors: the degree of dependence on either power economically and security wise, the level of conflict between and among the powers, presence of strategic resources, and the power and influence of regional alliances.

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# End of an Era in Sudan: A Democratic Promise or a Lost Revolution?

By Edmond J. Pamba and Jihan Korane

*"The objectives of the revolution cannot be achieved totally and completely in the face of the backstage manipulations by the remnants of the regime...The key demand is the formation of a civilian council to guarantee that the revolution is safeguarded and all the goals are achieved."*

*Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA) member, Taha Osman, 2019*

## Abstract

The second wave of the Arab spring has seen dramatic political change beginning with the deposition of Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, and most notably, the recent overthrow of Omar al-Bashir. As popular pressure reached its peak, the military carried out a coup and imposed a 'transitional' Military Council in power. The African Union initially reacted by giving a three month deadline for the military in Sudan to handover power to civilian leadership, which led to opening of talks between the transitional Military Council and the protestors' movement - the Alliance for Freedom and Change. However, the talks are happening with uncertainty, in fits and starts. This article looks at the influence of the toxic mix of United States-Sudan relations and United States sanctions; the Darfur conflict; the secession of South Sudan; socio-economic crisis; Bashir's bid to lift presidential term limits, and Sudan's uprising. It further examines the implications of political uncertainty in Sudan, occasioned by the recent military coup, and suggests peaceful alternatives that may assist in building a democratic Sudan.

## Introduction

The nearly three-decade rule of Sudan President Omar al-Bashir came to an anticipated, yet still surprising, end on April 11, 2019, following months of nationwide protests in the country. These protests were prompted by a hike in basic commodity prices, beginning in the north-eastern town of Atbara on December 19, 2018, before spreading to different cities and towns including the capital Khartoum. The protests quickly turned political, evolving from economic protest into expression of deeply rooted anger and discontent with the current regime - accusations of corruption, government sclerosis and brutality - brought tens of thousands to the street, spurring them onto what was the longest and most sustainable demonstrations in the country's history and, current situation in Sudan.

Omar al-Bashir, who came to power in the 1989 military coup, is no stranger to protests, these of which date back to the very beginning of his regime. According to Human Rights Watch report "The year 1990 dawned in the midst of a crackdown of unprecedented proportions...several

hundred trade-union activists were arrested...and taken to unofficial detention centers. For a few, the aim of the mistreatment was to obtain information; for the majority, it appears to have been simply to intimidate" (Human Rights Watch, 1990, para. 3). The most recent protests of this magnitude came in 2013 when a hike in fuel prices evolved into "broad calls for solutions to youth unemployment, lower costs of living, and even Bashir's resignation" (Campbell, 2019, para. 2). The success of the protests and the many that came before, can be attributed to various different factors. For one, the Sudan Professional Association (SPA) leading the protests was extremely influential in pushing their momentum.

## The Dramatic Twist

In January 2019, after a month or so of widespread anti-government protests, Sudan's military Chief, Kamal Abdelmarouf, jointly with the Defence Minister, Awad Ibn Ouf, warned that the military was not going to allow instability or state collapse, and blamed the protests



Former Sudan President Omar al-Bashir addresses journalists immediately after dissolving the government in Sudan on September 10, 2018. Al-Bashir was forced out of power by protesters on April 11, 2019 (Photo Credit: Getty Images)

on foreign elements (AFP, 2019). On February 22, 2019, President al-Bashir dissolved the federal government and all state governments, declared a one year state of emergency, and replaced all state governors with military officers, which technically opened the avenue for the military to intervene in the moment of a boiling revolution (Al Jazeera, 2019). Further, Bashir replaced his Vice President and long-time ally, Bakri Hassan Saleh, with the Defence Minister, Awad Ibn Ouf – his equally long-time ally, who was involved in the 1989 coup that brought Bashir to power. It begged the question, was Bashir grooming Awad as his successor or was he tapping into Awad's strongman tendencies to save the government from being toppled by the people?

Despite the imposition of the state of emergency and adoption of authoritarian posture *stricto sensu*, anti-government protests intensified and even escalated into a clamor for al-Bashir's resignation. Actions of public defiance including intensified protests and sit-ins at government offices, were met with counter-availing brutality from security forces allied to al-Bashir, especially, the National Intelligence Security Services (NISS). Dramatically, junior cadres of the military swiftly created a buffer between protesters and NISS, shielding the

protesters from security services and gaining a level of public trust and engendering a sense of civilian-military solidarity. With the military strategically positioned in various capacities in government, releasing detained protesters and gaining some public trust, Bashir on the brink of capitalization with divisions emerging in his inner circle, Awad Ibn Ouf, spearheaded a military coup and captured power.

Upon deposing Omar al-Bashir, Awad and cohorts suspended Sudan's 2005 constitution, established a military transitional council and declared a two-year rule, pending transition to democratic dispensation. This move by the military came as a short-change to the revolutionary cause and irked public resentment, further escalating protests, which saw Ibn Ouf step down, a day after the coup. Even so, hopes for transition to civilian rule and democratic change on the part of protesting Sudanese citizens, were quickly dashed by Ibn Ouf's succession by another top military officer, Lt-Gen Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman Burhan, as the head of the military transitional council. The unchanging reality of unyielding Military Council and unfinished transition of power to civilian rule, has inspired unrelenting sit-ins at the military headquarters by protesters, demanding concessions

and a hand over of power by the Military Council in the ongoing talks (BBC, 2019).

## Factors Behind Regime Collapse

Omar al-Bashir's 30-year rule remained embattled *ab initio*, on diplomatic, political, economic, and social fronts. As the strongman fought for regime stability, US sanctions, the Darfur conflict and International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment, South Sudan's secession, internal economic crisis, the winds of the Arab Spring, and his own last failing – the bid to seek another term, became his Waterloo that finally ended his rule as captured in the next section.

## United States-Sudan Relations

Omar al-Bashir appointed himself Sudan's president in 1993 after coming to power in an earlier coup in 1989. In August of the same year, the United States (US) listed the country on the list of state sponsors of terrorism, on grounds of producing chemical weapons and harboring Islamist groups, including Osama bin Laden and other key al Qaeda operatives (Small Arms Survey, 2018). This nature of listing by the United States dented Sudan's standing regionally and internationally, impacting its foreign relations in a manner that created diplomatic isolation.

In 1997, five years into his presidency, the US imposed economic sanctions against the government of Sudan on grounds of alleged sponsorship of international terrorism, its efforts to destabilize neighboring countries, and its poor record on human rights (Giacomo, 1997). These sanctions were lifted by the US in October 2017, two decades later, but whose effects had already assisted in derailing Sudan's economy and occasioning inflation rates of up to 55 per cent by July 2018 (BBC News, 2018). This cumulative effect of US sanctions on Sudan created an economic crisis in the country, with inflation pushing prices of basic commodities up and making the cost of living exceedingly high, in part, triggering the anti-government demonstrations and protests of December 2018, which have led to his eventual downfall.

## Darfur Conflict and ICC Indictment

On April 25, 2003, two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), began a major offensive against the Government of Sudan by attacking and capturing a number of government installations, including El Fasher airport. The two groups had the backing of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a major rebel group in the South of the country. The conflict was triggered by long-running resentment against marginalization of non-Arab tribes in the Darfur



Sudan protesters celebrating the end of Omar al-Bashir's rule outside the defence ministry in Khartoum on April 11, 2019 (Photo Credit: Reuters)

region by the Bashir's government (International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect [ICRP], n.d.).

In response to the rebel attacks in Darfur, the Sudanese government began aerial bombardments in Darfur and invited the support of a nomadic militia, the Janjaweed, in what culminated in targeted attacks (genocide) against Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit tribes which involved massacres, summary executions of civilians, burning of towns and villages, forcible depopulations, rape and sexual violence (ICRP, n.d.). Numerous ceasefires were signed and broken between September 2003 and May 2006. However, the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), signed on May 5, 2006 by the Government of Sudan and one faction of the Sudanese Liberation Army, (SLA-MM), significantly brought hostilities down.

Earlier on March 31, 2005, the United Nations Security Council had referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and on July 14, 2008, Luis Moreno Ocampo, Chief Prosecutor of the ICC, requested an arrest warrant for President Omar al-Bashir, following his alleged role in the Darfur genocide. On March 4, 2009 and July 12, 2010, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Bashir to answer to charges of having committed crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of genocide during the Darfur conflict of 2003. This further dented al-Bashir's moral image nationally and internationally, and added injury to Sudan's pariah status, further escalating his unpopularity.

### Secession of South Sudan

With a history of civil war that began in 1955, the Southern part of Sudan, gained its independence to form South Sudan in July 2011. The secession of South Sudan brought economic drain to Sudan in the succeeding years, worsening Sudan's sanctions-driven economic crisis. For instance, the exchange rate of Sudanese pound to convertible foreign currencies began to plummet, while trade deficits widened by 73 per cent between 2010 and 2012. Inflation rose by 28 per cent within the same period (Elbeely, 2013). Further, Sudan lost 75 per cent of oil deposits to newly independent South Sudan, worsening its fiscal stability, with a shrink of 24.3 per cent in government revenue, due to a 68.9 per cent shrink in

oil revenue (Elbeely, 2013). The Sudanese economy has hence been struggling to recover from the shocks of South Sudan's secession and the impact of US sanctions, further stretching the patience of Sudanese citizens.

### The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring, a wave of popular uprisings and revolutions against autocratic governments in the Middle East and North Africa regions, brought down authoritarian establishments of Tunisia's Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh, Libya's Muammar Gaddafi and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, between 2010 and 2012. In North Africa, the Arab Spring initially spared the authoritarian governments of Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria (20 years in power until his removal on April 2, 2019) and Omar Bashir (30 years in power until his removal on April 11, 2019).

However, toward the end of 2018 and into the dawn of 2019, winds of the Arab Spring were reincarnated in the anti-government demonstrations in Sudan (from December 2018) and Algeria (from February 2019). President al-Bashir, while on his visit to Egypt in January 2019, alluded that the protesters against his government were only attempting to replicate the Arab Spring in Sudan (Al Jazeera, 2019). Bashir seemed to have inadvertently given the anti-government demonstrations, a revolutionary identity, which gained momentum and pushed him to the edge before the April 11, 2019 military coup against his government.

### Bashir's 'Third Term' Bid and Sudan's Economic Crisis

On December 4, 2019, legislators in Sudan, mostly from the ruling National Congress Party (NCP), started pushing a bill to lift constitutional term limits, which would have automated Omar Bashir's retirement or ineligibility to run for president in 2020. He had served two terms since 2005, having won elections in 2005 and 2015. This 'outrageous' move by al-Bashir to extend his 30 years rule, stirred a political storm in Khartoum, with opposition groups and parties marshalling public resentment against the president's tenure.

The secession of South Sudan brought economic drain to Sudan in the succeeding years, worsening Sudan's sanctions-driven economic crisis

With Bashir out of power and not able to prevent government efforts to arrest him for arraignment at ICC, it remains to be seen whether he will be extradited since he is already in custody on orders of the Military Council

However, it is the economic crisis in the country, which provided the impetus for sustained anti-government protests and demonstrations. Inflation rates hit almost 70 per cent by end 2018, prompting price hikes for basic commodities such as food and fuel. The cost of living had consequently risen worsened by acute shortages of cash, especially the dollar (used to counter national currency depreciation), bread, and staple foods in the country, provoking public agitation and subsequent anti-government protests and clamor for Bashir's resignation.

### Implications of Political Uncertainty in Sudan

The political uncertainty looming in Sudan, occasioned by military seizure of power amidst popular revolution bears constitutional, political, security, economic and social ramifications upon the country's politics.

#### Constitutional Implications

The Military Council suspended the country's 2005 constitution upon deposing President Omar Bashir on April 11, which essentially implies abrogation of the pre-coup political and legal systems and processes, and by extension relevant institutional frameworks. In its place, a martial regime not in keeping with constitutional calendars and systems, is in effect under the transitional Military Council. This simply means an imposition of the will of the ruling military elites upon the citizens of Sudan. However, the biggest question might be, how to restore the previous constitutional order in its original form – especially its Islamist foundation – or to restore constitutional order after a review process that captures the prevailing aspirations of the Sudanese people and improve political and governance systems of the country to prevent a relapse into autocracy and authoritarianism.

#### Political implications

The Military Council has declared a two-year transitional rule, without sufficient guarantees for democratic transfer of power before or after the transitional period elapses. The coup in Sudan, is an affront to Article 3(10) of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which inveighs against unconstitutional change of government, and thus attracts disciplinary actions from the African Union (AU) by the same token. Accordingly, the African Union Peace and Security Council has extended its earlier 15 days deadline to now three months, for the Military Council to hand over power to a civilian authority, short of which, the regional body warns it will suspend Sudan's membership. Chad and Egypt, Sudan's western and northern neighbors respectively, were suspended in 2013, when the two countries experienced coups.

A separate conference of African heads of state and government, organized in Cairo by the current AU chairman and president of Egypt, Abdel al Sisi, and attended *inter alia* by presidents of South Africa, Djibouti, Somalia, and Chad, issued a three-month deadline for the transition of power to civilian rule, further exerting regional political pressure on the transitional Military Council. The communique of this conference, is most likely to have informed AU's extension of deadline for the transitional Military Council in Sudan to hand over power. However, if the Military Council stays adamant, it will be a question of time, before Sudan becomes a pariah state in its already dire socio-economic situation, barely two years after the lifting of sanctions by the United States.

On the other hand, in the event the military facilitates the transfer of power to civilian rule, it is not clear whether top military officers now occupying strategic positions in government and transitional council, will stay away from elective politics. In case they declare interest in elective positions, it is equally not clear whether the transitional Military Council will guarantee free and fair elections. In such event that top military officers now in 'government' join elective politics, the standards of inclusivity and democratic practice, are at stake, considering the country's 30 years of illiberal political history and the current multiplicity of contending opposition groups and parties in the country.

#### Economic implications

After suffering 20 years of US sanctions, the Sudanese economy had declined with rising inflation and sharp



*Sudanese gathered in the thousands to demonstrate in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum, calling for President Omar Bashir to step down (Photo Credit: Jennifer Fernandez/News & Records).*

depreciation of the Sudanese pound, occasioning a high cost of living and cash crunch in 2018, in the lead up to December protests. Even after the lifting of US sanctions, Sudan is still unable to access the International Monetary Fund or World Bank support, remains outside the World Trade Organization (WTO) and most western banks refuse to serve it (Werr, 2019). The economic situation of Sudan might worsen, if AU suspends it, making it difficult for the international community to recognize the military-led government and for financial institutions to lend help, due to its potential pariah status (Werr, 2019).

### Omar Bashir's International Criminal Court (ICC) Case

The ICC issued the first warrant of arrest for Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir on March 04, 2009, the second on 12 July 2010, to answer to charges of having committed crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of genocide during the Darfur conflict of 2003. This is due to Bashir's refusal to appear in court, stalling criminal proceedings at the court. The case is still at the pre-trial stage, since Bashir has been avoiding arrest by blunting the application of Article 58 and Article 59 of the Rome Statute, by virtue of his status as the head of state of Sudan and by visiting friendly nations showing indifferent to arrest requests.

With Bashir out of power and not able to prevent government efforts to arrest him for arraignment at ICC, it remains to be seen whether he will be extradited since he is already in custody on orders of the Military Council. In the meantime, the Military Council is preparing charges through the chief public prosecutor for various 'crimes' committed under his reign, while maintaining it will not extradite him to ICC, leaving the matter, a prerogative of the next civilian government (Munaita, 2019). If Bashir's trial and possible conviction in Sudan for different crimes will happen before or after the formation of the next civilian government, the viability of extradition process might run into jeopardy, since he will be serving time in a Sudanese prison.

On the other hand, a dilemma looms around the question of justice in a post-Bashir Sudan, where national judicial and prosecutorial institutions have to decide the criminal procedure germane to the peace and stability of Sudan while demonstrating international accountability, since Bashir is accused of national and international crimes which fall under different jurisdictions. Nonetheless, there is a possibility however slim, of deferral of Bashir's case from the ICC to a national jurisdiction. However, if the Military Council refuses to transfer power to a civilian government or mutates through illiberal political processes and maintains its ICC position, the Bashir-ICC-process will be dead.

## The Arab Spring, a wave of popular uprisings and revolutions against autocratic governments in the Middle East and North Africa regions, brought down authoritarian establishments of Tunisia's Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh, Libya's Muammar Gaddafi and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, between 2010 and 2012

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### The Darfur Peace Process

A pre-negotiation agreement for the peace talks between the Government of Sudan and two armed groups, Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and Sudan Liberation Movement-Minni Minnwi (SLM-MM), was concluded in Berlin in December 2018. Negotiation talks were scheduled for January 2019 in Qatar, whose basis remains the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), but the uprising and the coup against Bashir have created a new reality to the peace process. This means introduction of new negotiating parties on the part of the Government of Sudan and possibly new approaches to talks. This is likely to affect the overall dynamics of the Darfur peace process.

### Conclusion

The Arab Spring has come late in Sudan, toppling the long-ruling president, Omar Bashir. A mix of internal and external factors, from both political, diplomatic, economic and social fronts, exacerbated public resentment and protest against his authoritarian rule. However, the people-driven revolutionary cause in Sudan has been

paused for now by 'transitional' Military Council. The journey towards democratization, which begun with the protests, is at stake, due to unfinished transition to civilian and democratic dispensation.

To ensure quick and satisfactory transition to civilian rule, regional countries, the African Union and the United Nations, should exert economic, political and diplomatic pressure on the ruling military elites to cede power in a realistic timeline, and create institutions that would allow for free, fair, and transparent elections. However, the international community should endeavor to invest in reviving Sudanese economy, sustainably stabilize the Darfur region through a comprehensive peace deal, and reintegrate Sudan diplomatically and economically. However, the question of justice, and institutional reforms in the post-Bashir years, is of critical importance to the stability of peace and security of Sudan, and thus, should be progressively and realistically addressed through transitional, legal and political architecture that would balance between the moral importance of justice and the critical necessity of political stability and national unity.

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# Of Terrorists, Borders, Migrants, Citizenship, and Security Regimens in Kenya

By Mokuia Ombati, Ph.D.

## Abstract

Kenya has responded to several al Shabab terrorist attacks through a series of security, administrative, and military policies and measures. This article contextualizes Kenya's responses, especially as they pertain to border control practices with the Republic of Somalia, and indicates how they complement, compete and adversely affect Kenyan ethnic Somalis, and Somali migrants. The article considers the response trajectories: how the terrorist attacks have affected the identity of the Somali descent group, and how the terrorist attacks have affected the understanding of migration between Kenya and Somalia. In what forms Kenyan Somalis, migrants, and refugees from Somalia have been categorized, differentiated, constructed as a threat, and sustained as terrorists. And what the categories Kenyan-Somali, Somalia migrants and refugees have (or not) in common and in what (or not) the association is rooted.

**Keywords:** Kenya, al Shabab, terrorism, Somalis, refugees, border-wall, Somalia

## Key Features of Terrorism and Counterterrorism

Terrorism poses an increasingly dangerous and difficult threat to countries not only in the Horn of Africa, but also in the African continent as a whole, and indeed the world at large. Over the last few years, terrorists believed to be associated with the al Qaida-linked al Shabab (Arabic for 'youth' or 'youngsters') militant group have unleashed terror in Kenya and other countries in the region, destroying vital installations, property, and people causing monumental damage, injury, death and destruction.

Oppositional terrorism is the strategic use of violence or threats of violence by non-state actors against non-combatants for symbolic purposes, usually with the intention of influencing policies. This classification is in sync with typologies which identify terrorism as directed, first and foremost, not at killing or terrorizing for the sake of it, but influencing audiences and policies. As illustrated by various terror attacks in Kenya, terrorism often targets specific civilian population, and aims at diminishing the people's support for certain civic policies. Often the terrorists' motivations are to achieve their goals through the use or threat of violence (Livingstone, 1982). The immediate objective of a terrorist group is to create terror, not destruction rather than the harm caused to the targeted victim(s) (Moran, 2002). Usually, the aim is to coerce and intimidate governments into making political

concessions in line with political goals. In order to achieve these objectives, terrorist activities must be public.

On the other hand, counterterrorism are government policies commonly enacted or implemented in response to oppositional terrorist events/threats, and/or policies declared by governments as directed (at least partially) at preventing or limiting future oppositional terrorist acts.

Accordingly, this article, rooted mainly on state bordering practices, historicizes and analyses security and military policies, administrative measures and discourses developed before and after repeated al Shabab terrorist attacks on Kenya, and how they have been (in) effective in countering the terrorist activities. In analyzing security bordering practices and mapping of terrorist activities in Kenya, the article illustrates the complex and contradictory realities of ethnic identity and citizenship, and state profiling and labeling.

## Securitization Theory of Bordering Practices

State Bordering Practices (Vaughan-Williams, 2009) range from explicit and active to subtle and/or passive activities by states to constitute, sustain or modify borders between states. From the eyes of state authorities, borders symbolize security and control. States take



*Former Inspector General of Police, Joseph Boinnet, inspects a section of the Kenya-Somalia border wall. The wall was constructed to bar unwanted persons from freely crossing over into the country (Photo Credit: Strategic Intelligence (SI)).*

extra measures to control borders and extra security measures in territories and areas where no official control takes place. In summary, bordering practices range from barring, curtailing, preventing, regularizing, facilitating to assisting movements of persons, living creatures, goods, information and communications across borders.

## **Security Regimens for Countering al Shabab Terrorist Attacks**

### **Citizenry Safety Regimens**

The responses of Kenyan citizenry to the gory spectacles of the terrorist attacks transcend religious and ethnic divides. Of note are the methods used in the attacks which indicate that the extremists aim at inciting sectarian hatred and undermining the culture of religious tolerance - the hallmark of daily life in Kenya (Mushtaq, 2013). Instinctively, Kenyans from many religious persuasions and ethnic communities make spontaneous and universal pronouncements of condemnation and expression of grief every other time an attack occurs. From the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims to the Evangelical Churches of Kenya and the National Council of Churches of Kenya, immediate statements show solidarity with the victims and denunciation of the perpetrators. Despite the apparent tactic by the attackers to give religious color to the attacks, none of the Christian or Muslim organizations

use sectarian language or innuendo to convey their messages. 'We reiterate that wanton and indiscriminate killing of innocent men, women and children is against Islamic teachings and tenets...We call upon all Kenyans to remain calm and refrain from being divided on sectarian grounds,' pleaded the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims after the Westgate Mall attack (Mushtaq, 2013, p. 1). In weekly sermons, Muslim Imams 'called on Muslim scholars to scale up their efforts to counter the un-Islamic teachings that are used by radical groups' (Standard, 2013, para. 3). Similar sentiments are echoed in almost every public proclamation by religious and non-religious Muslim organizations and personalities.

Indeed, in December 2015, a group of Muslims traveling on a bus were ambushed by al Shabab gunmen in Mandera County. Some of these Muslims protected Christian passengers by refusing to be split into Muslims and non-Muslims, thereby saving lives and preventing a massacre. "The attackers were trying to identify who were Christians and who were not, [but] ...Muslims who were part of the 62 passengers' protested, 'forcing the militants to panic and flee..." (Barasa, Otsialo & Muchui, 2015, para. 1). The locals in Mandera County are mainly adherents of the Islamic faith. Passenger witnesses said Muslims in the bus removed their Muslim attires and handed them to the Christians present at the time "as a way of ensuring none died in the bus" (Ombati, 2015,

para. 14). The area of the ambush is close to Somalia border where there are many al Shabab militants.

On another front, during the Westgate Mall attack, the Jain religious community opened the Visa Oshwal Centre doors to survivors, families of those who were still trapped inside the mall, security forces, and journalists. The Centre provided not just shelter, but also first-aid, medical treatment, counseling and food (Mushtaq, 2013). Kenyans of various religious and ethnic persuasions voluntarily serve meals, water, and drinks to survivors, journalists, relief workers, soldiers and police officers working at terrorist operation sites. The humane response of the Kenyan citizenry during and after the DusitD2 terror attack on January 15, 2019 is typical to the other terrorist attacks.

### State Security Regimens

The cliché that “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” (Crenshaw, 2001), has compounded Kenya’s response and policy measures on terrorism. In

many analyses of terrorism, along with the prescriptions for dealing with it, the government has often less emphasized historical political, social, ideological and economic aspects, than security factors. Indeed, Lind, Mutahi and Oosterom (2017) allude to this complexity when they state:

Kenya’s political and security establishment consider al Shabab to be a type of new external stress that can be contained and defeated’ militarily, however for others the ‘violence marks the continuation of a long-standing conflict dynamic, intimately connected to Kenya’s own political history – including its complex relationships with Somalia – and one in which the state itself has been a central actor (p. 2).

Al Shabab exploits Kenya’s long-standing internal tensions, real or perceived marginalization, and use of state violence against Somalis and Muslims to expand and multiply violent attacks, as the government conveniently avoids these issues in its securitization responses.



*A general view of the tented settlement near the Ifo II refugee camp in Dadaab, near the Kenya-Somalia border. (Photo Credit: VOA)*

## KDF's Operation Protect the Nation

In the last quarter of 2011, Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) assembled along the border with war-torn Somalia, in preparation for assaults on al Shabab militia forces behind several attacks on Kenyan territory. Somalia has had no effective government ever since it plunged into repeated rounds of civil wars beginning in 1991, allowing a flourishing of militia armies, extremist rebels, and piracy. The original intention of the Kenyan military incursion into Somalia was to insulate the country from the conflict in Somalia, more specifically, by curtailing the activities of the al Shabab insurgent group (Mokua, 2015a).

One month after the KDF incursion, the Kenya government agreed to re-hat its forces under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The Kenyan troops were later formally integrated into AMISOM with the approval of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2036. Christened 'Operation *Linda Nchi*' (literary translated to mean Operation Protect the Country/Nation) the KDF assignment, initially involved pushing the al Shabab rebels far inside Somalia away from the common border. The intention was to create a buffer zone from the hostile rebels, and therefore, insulate Kenya from the conflict in Somalia. After several field successes and capture of the port city of Kismayu, the central base and economic engine of al Shabab' activities (Mokua, 2015b), the new mission was to mop-up (root-out) completely what was left of the Islamist insurgency. With the integration of KDF into AMISOM, a more defined mandate also involved, supporting Somalia's internationally recognized government assert its authority (Mokua, 2015a). Kenyan officials argue that Kenya's continued presence in Somalia remains significant: without it, Somalia would revert to chaos and Kenya would be insecure as a result. Thus, Kenyan military campaign in Somalia may have long-term security objectives.

## Anti-Terror Border Wall

In April 2015, Kenya resolved to build a barrier along its entire border with Somalia, in an effort to prevent incursions by the Somalia-based al Shabab militias (Mokua, 2018). Kenyan authorities adamantly maintained that whatever the cost and whatever it will take, they were determined to build the 700 Kilometer border barrier. Once complete, the security wall is meant to limit illegal crossing and monitor movements from Somalia, as it can only be crossed through appropriate border points. At the designated crossing points, movements with legal documents will be allowed to cross as immigration and

security agents capture their data. In the process, the wall is hoped to provide a long-term security solution toward securing the porous border.

The building of the border fence is based on government security agencies' belief that al Shabab combatants do not live in the country, but rely on Kenyan recruits to do logistics for them. However, it is significant to note that border walls have been ascertained (Cannon, 2016, p. 23) to 'have unintended, long-term and possibly detrimental outcomes, including the exacerbation of border disputes, irredentist movements and the cessation of legitimate cross-border trade and movements.' Secondly, 'lessons from countries such as Israel, Mexico, the United States (U.S.), and other historical evidence...demonstrate that a border wall will have little, if any, impact on Kenya's security' (p. 16).

## Closing of Dadaab Refugee Complex

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) established Dadaab, the world's largest refugee complex in 1991, as a reaction to violence and instability in Somalia. Originally designed to host 90,000 refugees, its population had grown to an estimated 400, 000, by 2010, and the number continues growing as thousands of refugees fleeing violence in Somalia continue to pour into Kenya daily. The refugee population in Dadaab is largely Somali (95%), (with small numbers of Sudanese, Ugandans, Eritreans, and Ethiopians), making it the second largest center of Somalis after Mogadishu (Burns, 2010).

In 2013, Kenya resolved to wind-up the Dadaab refugee complex operations and relocate the refugees to Somalia, accusing the complex for being a breeding ground or 'nursery for terrorists', as well as for being a center for smuggling, contraband trade besides being enabler of illicit weapons proliferation (Damien, 2012). Accordingly,

Kenya's political and security establishment consider al Shabab to be a type of new external stress that can be contained and defeated militarily

## Kenyan officials argue that Kenya's continued presence in Somalia remains significant: without it, Somalia would revert to chaos and Kenya would be insecure as a result. Thus, Kenyan military campaign in Somalia may have long-term security objectives

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Kenya petitioned UNHCR to arrange for safe return of all Somali refugees to their country, failure to which it shall relocate them itself, the legal and constitutional appropriateness notwithstanding. This, Kenya maintains, is an effort to secure the country at whatever cost (Whiting, 2014).

Kenya submits that the international community must consider setting up Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps inside Somalia near the Kenyan border, and offer services to Somalis in Somalia in order to reduce the number of refugees entering Kenya. This response is part of a coordinated long-term strategy to push al Shabab from Central and South Somalia and set up an autonomous buffer zone inside Somalia.

The closure of the Dadaab refugee complex and the relocation of the Somali refugee population to an area that the Kenyan government asserts as safe and conflict-free, would thus, resolve one of Kenya's most significant (in)security concerns (Mwagwabi, 2016). Equally, Kenya authorities promise to take stern action on officials affiliated to the department of immigration and registration of persons who abet suspected terrorists sneaking into the country, posing as refugees (Mkawale, 2013).

Kenya's (in)security concerns with Dadaab refugee complex are discernible. First, the camp has assumed permanency. Second, based on its large population, it has become one of Kenya's largest cities, and the concomitant governance challenges of large cities are well known. More importantly, however, the Kenyan government views the camp as a hotbed for al Shabab militants' activity (including extremism, radicalization and recruitment), and a staging ground for terrorist attacks on Kenya (PSC, 2015). Kenya argues that there is no better way for al Shabab to penetrate Kenya's borders than becoming refugees within Kenyan borders. These refugees are desperate for security, but Kenya is aware that where refugees manage to cross the border, al Shabab fighters may follow. Therefore, closing down the refugee complex would guarantee Kenya its security and safety.

### *Nyumba Kumi Security Initiative*

One of the key government security policy pronouncements in 2013 was the introduction of a community-policing program code-named *Nyumba Kumi* Security Initiative. Modelled on the modules of neighborhood associations, the government intended to use the initiative to collaborate with locals in creating national security awareness amongst citizens. Guided by the dictum, citizen's personal and national securities are the responsibility of all citizens as well as the government. The primary objective of the *Nyumba Kumi* initiative is to enable community members get to know each other, share information amongst themselves and about potential threats to their neighborhood. Among the information to be shared is news about new people relocating into the neighborhood and suspicious criminal elements in the area. This is expected to make it difficult for criminals, particularly terrorists, to find havens in any neighborhood (Atta-Asamoah, 2015).

Though *Nyumba Kumi* is a Swahili phrase for *ten households* it is not 'rigidly' an initiative based on a specific number of households but a concept, in which a cluster of households (not imposed, fixed or limited by external forces), coalesce into a cohesive unit in pursuit of shared aspirations, goals and objectives. The cluster of households driven by common need(s) and common solutions identify and prioritize their safety and security needs and bring together communities, police, local authorities and other security and justice providers to address them. This is because people live integrated lives in which security concerns of crime, violence and disorder are often intimately linked to broader human security issues related to the people's health, education and livelihoods.

Equally, *Nyumba Kumi* takes action on small arms and light weapons proliferation to unintended people and places. *Nyumba Kumi* would enhance efforts to control and reduce illegal guns in the wrong hands by monitoring and reporting suspects, and burning surrendered ammunitions. In practice, *Nyumba Kumi* is simply a

community policing initiative (Kioko, 2017) and is a strong module for citizen participation in the provision of security. In its ideal form, it helps citizens take ownership of security around them both through conscious tracking of threats in their neighborhoods and through their willingness to tip off security agencies to take appropriate action. From a security angle, it is an innovative idea that fosters citizen-government collaboration in the fight against terrorism. It also creates the necessary security consciousness for the benefit of the larger population. However, there is a great deal of pessimism, that clandestine elements interested in spying on citizens for their parochial interests can easily abuse the program. Secondly, the program may inadvertently be used for political reasons, resulting in challenges to human rights and civil liberties.

### Separate Prisons for Extremist Offenders

In a bid to stem radicalization in Kenya' prisons, the government announced plans in the first quarter of 2016 to construct a new correctional facility for confining extremist offenders only. These are suspects accused of carrying out terrorist attacks, radicalization and violent

take-overs of mosques. The move was born out of the concern that al Shabab had infiltrated prisons and was actively recruiting prisoners. Though inmates associated with terror offenses are housed in separate blocks at Kenya's two maximum-security prisons, indications are that the prisons could be serving as a conduit for recruitment and radicalization of other prison facilities across the country (Ndungu, 2016). In announcing the new prison plans, the President argued that a separate prison for extremist offenders would deter them from spreading their venom to vulnerable Kenyans. He said the plan was in conformity with government commitment to reform the character of remandees, contain offenders in conditions that enable rehabilitation to fit into society and make a positive contribution to the country.

In July 2015, three prisoners petitioned Kenya's national assembly to separate inmates associated with terrorism offenses given concerns that prisons were turning into fertile grounds for al Shabab recruitment and radicalization. A program started in 2015 in efforts to curb al Shabab recruitment and radicalization in prisons is already underway which includes stationing imams within all prison and rehabilitation facilities. The program aims



Kenya News Agency (KNA) Staff with Nyumba Kumi Initiative Chairman Joseph Kaguthi during a training on Citizen Participation on Security on September 25, 2016 (Photo Credit: KNA)

The challenge posed by terrorism is mainly that Kenya externalizes terrorists as foreigners from 'lawless' Somalia that Kenyan state authorities have a problem in identifying and controlling

to offer counter-narratives to radical messaging within the prisons (PSCU, 2016).

However, isolating prisoners in the name of counter-radicalization is likely to be counter-productive. Instead of curbing recruitment and radicalization, a facility like that could make it easier for terror groups to establish command and control structures, in addition to elevating such facilities to symbols of martyrdom and oppression to extremist sympathizers. In this way, it could further embolden, fuel and rally support and sympathy for terror groups – in addition to increasing the chances of Kenya being further targeted for its actions.

### Operation *Usalama* (Peace) Watch

At the beginning of 2014, Kenya security agencies launched a massive (in)security crackdown codenamed Operation *Usalama* Watch (literally translated to mean Operation Security Watch). The initial intention of the campaign of swoops and raids was to flush out illegal immigrants, undocumented refugees, arrest and prosecute people suspected of engaging in terrorist activities, identify places harboring criminals and prevent acts of crime and lawlessness in general (Aling'o, 2014). The operation essentially aimed at containing terrorism, radicalization and religious extremism.

Operation *Usalama* Watch focused on residential neighborhoods and urban centers inhabited majorly by people of Somali ethnic descent and adherents of the Islamic faith such as Nairobi's Eastleigh estate and coastal areas, particularly sections of Mombasa city. Large numbers of security personnel were deployed into neighborhoods and urban areas, believed to host operational bases for terrorists. With bullish, impulse driven and reactionary operation, security personnel conducted massive raids arresting and detaining thousands of people, particularly those perceived to

be non-Kenyan Somalis or suspected to be criminals. Human rights groups criticized the process, and faulted the government for the conditions at the detention and screening centres. Some of the arrested and detained were deported to Somalia, and others repatriated to refugee camps without regard to the UNHCR and other human rights organizations (Waitherero, 2014).

A key observation on the Operation *Usalama* Watch by human rights organizations and analysts focused on the counter-productive aspects including generating and deepening a sense of resentment, isolation, and alienation, and which sometimes constitute recipes for radicalization, extremism and ultimately further terrorist activities. Singling out of the Somali community and Muslim faithful residing in urban neighborhoods as the main concentration areas for searches, screening, swoops and raids added credit to the perception that the operation was discriminatory and targeted particular communities and religious faith. This increased perceptions that little more than ethnic and religious profiling were the motives driving the operation.

### Observations and Conclusions

Despite the government and state security apparatus rolling-out many responses thus far, they are yet to be brought into full operation and subsequent consistent efforts made to position and synchronize them into a coherent framework of responses for securing the country. Those that have been operationalized including the targeted police swoop operations, were over-ethnicized, over-secritized and over-militarized, with inadequate efforts made to bolster non-military responses.

The security regimens developed after the terrorist attacks have entangled migration with terrorism concerns and national security issues in different ways. The challenge posed by terrorism is mainly that Kenya externalizes terrorists as foreigners from 'lawless' Somalia that Kenyan state authorities have a problem in identifying and controlling. This is especially so because the state sometimes find it difficult to differentiate Somalis of Kenyan ethnic descent from Somalis originating from the Republic of Somalia. These concerns are especially, compounded by undocumented migrants and migrant Somalia citizens who stay with their Kenyan kin. However, there is a strong need for the Kenyan state to respect basic human rights, which transcend national borders and citizenship laws, when implementing its bordering practices.

In conclusion, though the state security regimens appear to be largely motivated by political expediency rather than well-thought-out policies and strategic measures that can sustain durable solutions, their collective benefits will substantially improve government and citizen

security if they were all to become fully operational. Most importantly, there is a need to prevent the ethnoreligious profiling and abuses that have traditionally characterized Kenya's state security regimens.

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# Managing Root Causes of Continued Insecurity in DR Congo

By Jules Swinkels

## Abstract

Multi-layered social embedding of political-military entrepreneurs, high levels of remobilization due to the failure of security sector reforms and demobilization programs, a highly unprofessional army, lack of opportunities for youth, longstanding grievances and ethnic tensions, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and the ongoing meddling by foreign states and non-state actors are all root causes of insecurity in the DRC which can derail President Felix Tshisekedi's five-year plan to reduce insecurity in the DRC. The Government of the DRC, assisted by the international community, needs to implement comprehensive and mutually reinforcing approaches to address root causes of continued insecurity in the DRC. Developing a legal-security framework that allows for the prevention, countering, and punishment of political-military ties, actively involving ex-combatants and militia commanders to assist in the creation of adequate Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programs from an experience-based perspective, and developing sustained knowledge and experience sharing programs of the national army with more professional and developed militaries, are some of the approaches Tshisekedi should employ in his five-year plan.

## Introduction

Felix Tshisekedi emerged victorious in the December 2018 presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), taking over from Joseph Kabila who held the presidency seat for 18 years following his father's assassination in 2001. In his election manifesto, Tshisekedi prioritizes security, defence, justice, and the rule of law. He has emphasized the need for a national army capable of defending DRC's borders, exercising authority on its territory, and eradicating militias, saying that measures "will involve, among other things, raising recruitment standards, regular pay, better training, improving food and housing conditions, and qualifications for promotions" (UDPS, 2018). Missing from Tshisekedi's manifesto is the realization of the DRC's current security conundrum in which several root causes mutually reinforce each other's effects.

Back in 2003, the DRC tried to adopt a Security Sector Reform (SSR) program. Mandrup (2018) argues that this SSR has failed because it failed to address the root problems in the security sector. President Tshisekedi has recently stated that he plans to introduce a five-year plan called 'One Nation, One Army' to consolidate a legitimate military authority in the DRC.

## Theoretical Framework

There is no single cause of conflict and insecurity. There have been numerous attempts to define and describe all potential root causes of violent conflict. However, there is no consensus on what exactly are root causes, how and to what extent they affect violent conflict, and how we can adequately address them. Conflict and insecurity are context-specific and multi-causal, and can result from political-institutional factors, cultural factors, and socio-economic factors, among others. There are some tools drafted by international organizations and experts that try and dissect the root causes of violent conflict. These tools are often theoretical and generic, and not tailored to the situation at hand. For example, the UK's Department for International Development's (DFID) 'Conducting Conflicts Assessments Guidance Notes', differentiates between political, economic, security, social and regional/international factors, populating each of these categories somewhat equally. For comparison, the World Bank's 'Conflict Analysis Framework' emphasizes economic and security factors, while the German *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik's* 'Conflict Prevention Network (CPN) Risk Assessment Tool' emphasis political and social dynamics. In this plethora of tools, assessments, notes and analysis frameworks, it is often cherry-picking root causes relevant to the conflict under analysis. That does not mean that the root causes provided by these tools are wrong, but

it does show the multi-causal and context specific nature of conflicts. For this analysis of continuing insecurity and conflict in the DRC, the article will adopt root causes from DFID's Notes, CPN's Risk Assessment Tool, World Bank's Conflict Analysis Framework, Swiss Peace's FAST Framework, UNDP's Conflict Related Development Analysis, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance's (IDEA) Democracy Assessment Tool. The article will look at how root causes, as described by the various theoretical frameworks and tools, are contextualized to eastern DRC, what the specific effects are of these root causes, and how policymakers can try to manage them.

## Root Causes of Insecurity in the DRC

Continued insecurity in eastern DRC has led scholars such as Judith Verweijen (2016) to float the 'stable instability' theory, describing the last two decades of sustained periods of violence interspersed with periods of relative calm. At the root of this 'stable instability' are political, economic, social, security, and regional/international causes that allowed the conflict to start and now allow it to continue. What follows is an analysis of some of the core root causes that foster instability and insecurity in eastern DRC, and recommendations for the new government of Felix Tshisekedi and its international partners on how to address them.

### 1) *Multi-layered social embedding of political-military entrepreneurs profiting from the status quo (lack of political will)*

The Global and Inclusive Agreement of 2002 provided the power-sharing formula and transitional arrangements until elections were held in 2006. The Agreement incorporated and included several armed groups in the peace process, but also alienated some powerful ones and fragmented others (Stearns, Verweijen & Erikson Baaz, 2013). Former Congolese Dictator Mobutu Sese Seko created a strong patronage network throughout the country, even in the far eastern parts of Kivu. During the two Congo wars (1996 – 1997, 1998 – 2003), the political center in Kinshasa lost its control over local elites in eastern Congo. When Joseph Kabila tried after the Congo wars to construct a similar patronage network as Mobutu did, he failed. Furthermore, Kinshasa's strategy of assimilating leaders of armed groups into the army after the Congo wars, combined with rewarding loyalty to Kinshasa led to military commanders sidelining their local and regional counterparts, further fragmenting the various armed groups already in existence. In this highly

fragmented militaristic environment, local politicians try to become local strongmen who rule through personality and doling out of cash, and are often backed by an armed militia. An interviewee of the *Usalama Project* stated that "almost every single armed group here has backing by politicians in Kinshasa or Bukavu" (Stearns, Verweijen & Erikson Baaz, 2013). With the support of an armed group, a local strongman can provide protection for the dominant ethnic group in a certain area, acquire influence in Kinshasa, facilitate development projects, and in return gain votes from the populace. Verweijen (2016) argues that such political-military entrepreneurs have been normalized due to the Congo's long history of militarization. Normalization of multi-layered social embedding of political-military entrepreneurs perpetuate insecurity and violent conflict; local politicians, customary chiefs, and business people, use armed groups for protection, but such militaristic protection mechanisms further perpetuate insecurity, leading to more violence.

How can this vicious cycle be broken? One step that the government of DRC and its international partners can take is to try and counter normalization. Verweijen (2016) argues that impunity is a crucial aspect of normalization. When political-military entrepreneurs can solicit the assistance of armed groups and use them for violent activities without getting any form of punishment for it, it is unlikely they will stop doing so. In other words, a legal-security framework should be put in place that allows for the prevention, countering, and punishment of political-military ties that increase insecurity. Such a framework should be developed by the government with assistance from international partners.

### 2) *Continued high levels of remobilization due to failure of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs and Security Sector Reforms (SSR)*

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs are considered a key part of post-conflict

The Global and Inclusive Agreement of 2002 provided the power-sharing formula and transitional arrangements until elections were held in 2006



*The People's Alliance for Free and Sovereign Congo (APCLS) is one of the many armed groups that bring together people who are unhappy about previous peace processes and who claim to defend the integrity of the national territory against all aggression from outside (Photo Credit: International Alert).*

peacebuilding and statebuilding strategies. DDR programs are meant to reintegrate former combatants into civilian life by disarming and demobilizing them, and providing opportunities for income generation to reduce the chance they rearm and remobilize. The 2002 Global and Inclusive Agreement, the 2003 Dar El Salaam Accord, and the 2003 Sun City Agreement all laid the basis for comprehensive DDR programs. The 2003 Sun City Agreement fed the 2004 *Commission Nationale de Désarmement, Démobilisation, et Réinsertion* (CONADER) and *Structure militaire d'intégration* (SMI), both initiatives to organize the disarmament, identification and categorization of combatants who could either reintegrate into civilian life or integrate into the FARDC. In 2015 the Congolese government initiated its third major national DDR program called DDR III, in order to reintegrate Congolese ex-combatants into civilian life (Vogel & Musamba (2016). These programs have, until now, not merited significant positive results due to several challenges.

In an unstable situation like the DRC, where armed groups permeate every layer of civil life, it is questionable whether DDR programs can bring about meaningful change or are in fact contributing to continued instability. First, some militias' main goal is to protect their communities (especially *Mai-Mai* groups). Local security realities can lead these militias to refuse to disarm because they do not believe that the security forces can protect their communities. If they have laid down their arms and are

then attacked by a rival community, they cannot defend themselves. They may therefore only be willing to lay down their arms if the opponents also lay down theirs. "Entering DDR thus requires armed groups to take a leap of faith – and if DDR fails, this faith is lost" (Vogel & Musamba, 2016). Secondly, Mandrup (2018) shows that reforming local security institutions becomes even more difficult when the local authorities do not support the effort, a feat all too true in eastern DRC. In fact, local security institutions often benefit from the status quo and have no incentive to change the situation. In other words, there is significant resistance from political elites who exploit fears and insecurity to bargain for political posts, as seen above.

Third, DDR programs often have incentive structures for commanders in place, luring them into the army with the promise of benefits, ranks and positions. To this extent, in 2013, the DRC stopped the process of absorbing whole units into the army and giving out high-level positions to their commanders. Providing incentive structures for commanders might seem like a solid option, but it also disgruntles other soldiers and army officials trying to work their way upwards through the ranks. Fourth, in response to the above, disgruntled officers and soldiers might form an armed group of their own and go into the bush, only to emerge out of it with the promise of new positions and ranks within the army they left in the first place. At the same time, those withdrawing from army integration generally faced few sanctions. Punishments



Members of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Forces at a past Independence Day parade. (Photo Credit: Eagle Online)

for desertions have been rare, many groups have never been confronted with significant military pressure, and deserters have always been welcomed back into the fold, creating a revolving door of army integration and defection (Stearns, Verweijen & Erikson Baaz, 2013). In other words, army loyalty was not rewarded while mutiny and subsequently taking part in DDR programs was.

DDR programs in the DRC were often not preceded by research which led the programs in some contexts to morph into some sort of 'cash-for-weapons' program (Vogel & Musamba, 2016). To apprehend ineffective or even hurtful DDR programs, its architects should more actively involve ex-combatants and commanders to assist in the creation of adequate programs from an experience-based perspective. Additionally, experts and scholars on DDR programs in the DRC should draft guidelines on effective DDR strategies and work together with the government and international donors to implement them. Finally, the effectiveness of DDR programs is highly dependent on a stable and capable national army able to cope with the integration of large numbers of combatants without losing operational effectiveness.

### 3) *Unorganized, undisciplined and unprofessional security services:*

The DRC's army is highly unprofessional and unorganized, lacking basic training, salary, equipment and morale. This

situation was cultivated during Mobutu's reign in a series of divide-and-rule techniques geared towards keeping the army weak, fractured, loyal, and preoccupied with affairs outside politics (Young & Turner, 1985). When the Laurent Kabila took over and subsequently split with his former allies Uganda and Rwanda, who helped him take power, there was not much left of an army except for a highly fragmented security skeleton. The *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (FARDC) was created in 2003, merging fighters and factions engaged in the Second Congo War. "Positions in the FARDC were allocated through a patronage framework, with commanders receiving appointments based on their connections, not their competence or performance (Stearns, Verweijen & Erikson Baaz, 2013, p. 44). This resulted in structural deficiencies still seen today, such as an all-compassing patronage structure, positions in the army that are being used for revenue generation, successive integration initiatives that weakened cohesion and morale, weak and contested commanders unable to exert control over troops or punish misdemeanors, and deplorable working and living conditions for soldiers. Currently, there are individuals and entire units suspected of war crimes, corruption, misuse of funds, selling of arms, and human rights violations. Additionally, soldiers need to undertake hitherto offensive operations without having adequate equipment, ammunition, training or morale (Mandrup, 2018).

Efforts have been made to professionalize the army, provide adequate equipment and create army discipline, but these efforts have only created small pockets of well-functioning units. Additionally, efforts such as implementing a biometric payment system, which significantly improved salary payment to soldiers, are still being misused or underused due to a lack of political will and a lack of funding. Thus, soldiers generally only get part of their payment through this system.

There are several ways the government can comprehensively professionalize the national army in the long term, all of which require the assistance of international partners. Toronto (2017) found that states with greater levels of human capital, urbanization, and economic wealth are more likely to professionalize their armies. In short, there is a strong correlation between economic modernization and military professionalism. One way to professionalize the army could be to develop sustained knowledge and experience sharing programs of the national army with more professional and developed militaries. After young mid-ranking officers have completed a training program at international military academies, a so-called harmonization period ensues in which trained officers share their knowledge with their local counterparts (Soeters & van Ouytsel, 2013). Additionally, together with international partners, the DRC should set up 'after-care' programs, where UN and Western military instructors and officers work together with the trained Congolese officers, preferably in real missions, to solidify the received training.

Secondly, there are some 'basic' ways the government can professionalize the army, which include ensuring the timely and adequate pay of soldiers, providing ammunition and adequate weaponry, providing ethics training, holding corrupt and/or looting officers and soldiers accountable through a military tribunal, and prosecute officers and soldiers for human rights violations in front of that same tribunal. Admittedly, these latter reforms are complex and expensive tasks. But reforming and strengthening a thoroughly weakened military apparatus during continued insecurity is not a luxury, it is a necessity.

#### 4) Lack of opportunities for youth and youth poverty

Though not necessarily a direct cause of insecurity, a lack of opportunities for youth and youth poverty certainly makes its mark on insecurity in eastern DRC. Armed groups recruit youth who are happy to join to evade

poverty, boring lives, or a lack of opportunities. Stearns (2013) reiterated the story of a young Banyamulenge boy during the Second Congo War who argued that joining a militia was 'cool', while going to school or working in the fields was most certainly not. Additionally, youths get recruited by militias with narratives of self-defence and revenge. They all have heard stories of the cruel 'other' and their violent deeds, and are now offered the opportunity to do something about it. It makes them feel part of a group, gives them a sense of belonging and a purpose in life.

Youth in eastern DRC experience severe poverty and a lack of opportunities. Results from International Development Research Centre-supported (IDRC, 2016) research at the *Université de Kinshasa*, show that youth often consider themselves "socially dead". This is partly because of poverty and a lack of opportunities. In the Human Development Index, DRC ranks consistently low, scoring 0,37, with 1 being the maximum. In a Question and Answer session of USAID in 2014, Christopher Darrouzet-Nardi, Mission Economist, stated the DRC has the highest extreme poverty rate in the world, with six out of seven people surviving on less than USD 1,25 a day. "Youth are especially affected due to poor employment prospects, low educational achievement and a large age cohort" (USAID, 2014). Although poverty does not necessarily translate directly into insecurity, it does provide a structural reason for a lot of youth to join armed groups, where they are often offered a gun. In situations of high insecurity, a gun means food, water, income, and status.

Compulsory education, job creation for women and youth, and learning lessons from Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) efforts are key strategies to reintegrate marginalized young people back into society.

#### 5) Longstanding and fragmented intergroup grievances and tensions

The history of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a turbulent and violent one. Intergroup and interethnic grievances and tensions are old phenomena, dating from even before colonial times. However, that alone does not explain why eastern DRC is experiencing such high levels of insecurity and instability. Other countries in the region have longstanding intergroup tensions and grievances but are not witnessing the same levels of insecurity. One of the differences though between the DRC and its neighbors, is that the DRC witnessed two successive large-scale wars less than 25 years ago, with local,

national, regional and international involvement. The Congo Wars further entrenched ethnic, tribal, religious or communal differences. Jason K. Stearns (2011) reiterates the story of the Banyamulenge, an ethnic Tutsi group often seen by Congolese as 'foreign' (i.e. from Rwanda), even though the Banyamulenge have been in eastern DRC for generations. Some of the worst violence during the Congo wars took place between the Banyamulenge and other (Hutu, often *Mai-Mai*) groups.

Over the years, these entrenched intergroup differences became increasingly fragmented and started to create their 'own truths and realities' (Verweijen & Vlassenroot, 2014). Armed militias popped up out of self-defence, aiming to protect the own community against 'foreign invaders' or other ethnic groups. These armed militias, in turn, fostered greater insecurity, leading other groups to start their own militias, again creating a vicious cycle of violence and mutual insecurity. Fuelled by revenge, self-defence, and longstanding intergroup differences and grievances, insecurity in eastern DRC spiralled out of control.

One way to deal with longstanding and fragmented intergroup differences and tensions is the creation of widespread and efficient truth and reconciliation mechanisms (TRMs). Albeit having its limitations, TRMs are still considered by scholars (Rimé et al., 2011) to be an effective conflict reconciliation tool. Rimé et al. (2011) highlight three crucial aspect of TRMs. First, a TRM can stimulate empathy and emotional connectivity. By experiencing the 'other's' suffering, sadness, anger and grievances, people can experience empathy and positive sympathy. Second, TRMs can bridge intergroup differences and foster personalization. Brewer and Miller (1996) and Yzerbyt and Demoulin (2010) argue that TRMs reduce prejudice and stereotypes about the other group, limiting grievances and hatred. Third, TRMs intend to reinforce the sense of belonging to an imagined community, transforming representations from two opposites groups. Out-groups qualities and in-group shortcomings are acknowledged, helping to avoid negative intergroup comparison (Dovidio et al., 2008).

### 6) High levels of small arms proliferation

The Regional Centre on Small Arms (RCSA) conducted research into the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and found that fragility situations in the DRC today are sustained by the proliferation of illicit SALW, according to 79 per cent of the respondents. Abdullahi (2016) supports the argument that conflict in the DRC has been fuelled by high levels of small arms proliferation. Small arms are those weapons one can use for personal use, such as pistols, revolvers, sub-machine guns, machine guns, rifles, light machine guns, carbines, and assault rifles, such as the well-known AK-47, also known as the Kalashnikov. It is these kinds of weapons that most of DRC's violent episodes are being fought with, and, next to machetes, at the end of which most civilians die. 88 per cent of respondents noted that there are more than 300,000 illicit SALW circulating in the DRC, which are fuelling insecurity in the country.

Felix Tshisekedi's new government should put so-called 'gun buyback programs' in place, offering rewards for the handover of SALW. The goal of such programs is to reduce the number of weapons among civilians. In Australia for example, the 1996 National Firearms Agreement was accompanied by a buyback scheme that took out more than 640,000 firearms. Alpers (2018) demonstrates that in the aftermath of Australia's gun buyback programs, it's mass shootings ceased, gun-related violence was cut in half, and the country witnessed a significant drop in gun homicide. Gun buyback programs are highly context specific and dependent on the participation of the public to voluntarily handover their weapons, which might be problematic in the Congo due to issues of self-defence. However, conflicts cannot be conducted as lethal without SALW and buyback programs should therefore be utilized. In exchange for guns, owners can for example get a *piki piki* (motor cycle used for taxying goods and people), or farming equipment. Gun buyback programs where basic equipment that betters the lives and prospects of former militants or owners of SALW is offered in return for arms should, therefore, be part of future DDR programs.

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*Felix Tshisekedi was elected president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, succeeding Joseph Kabila in the vast central African country's first transfer of power through an election in 59 years of independence (Photo Credit: Al Jazeera/News Agencies).*

### **7) Ongoing interference in the DRC from foreign state and non-state actors**

The multi-layered social embedding of political-military entrepreneurs in eastern Congo is intensified by strong cross-border networks and regional interference. Regional connections have intensified the power struggles between local elites in eastern Congo and the political power center in Kinshasa. In Daniel McGabe's 'This is Congo' (2018), a feature-length documentary on armed conflict in eastern Congo, a high-ranking official in the FARDC notes that he joined three different non-state armed groups, all of which were supported by Rwanda. Historically, DRC's neighbors play a significant role in both the Congo Wars, and continue to do so today. Angola, Rwanda and Uganda are alleged to have funded or provided military support to armed groups, predominantly in the borderlands of the DRC.

Echoing Plateau (2004) and Lund's (2006) line of thought, Global Witness, an anti-corruption NGO and human rights defender, revealed that Glencore-Xstrata, the world's largest commodities trader, enriched a friend of DRC's President Joseph Kabila, Dan Gertler, by tens of millions of dollars and structured deals to protect his interests as it gained control of one of Africa's biggest copper mines, the Kamoto mine. Just five of these deals have resulted in the Congolese state losing out on some USD 1.4 billion, almost twice the country's annual spending on health and education combined (Global Witness, 2014).

The United Nations, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the International Criminal Court (ICC) should play a significant role in preventing foreign non-state and state actors from intervening in the DRC. With regards to non-state actors such as resource extraction companies, there should be clear legal mechanisms in place that prevent mishandling of resources, corruption, embezzling of funds, the exploitation of the local populace or the use of armed groups to gain access to resource-rich areas. Additionally, there should be clear and attainable punishments for violation of these legal mechanisms, such as withholding aid, arms embargos, or fines. With regards to non-state actors such as cross-border militant groups, the international community should step-up its security presence in the region and prevent these groups, such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), from finding refuge on their respective territories. With regards to state interference in the DRC, the United Nations should launch an investigation into continued financial and military support of regional countries for local armed groups, condemn foreign meddling in the DRC, and bring to justice those that violate the DRC's sovereignty.

### **Conclusion**

Some of the root causes described are easier to deal with than others. Longstanding grievances and intergroup differences have become intertwined with violence leading to a circle of attacks and counterattacks. This influences the truths and opinions that people hold

about one another, in turn affecting their behavior, the creation of self-defence groups and the seeking of revenge. Other issues, such as an unprofessional army, high levels of SALW proliferation, and the failure of DDR and SSR programs are relatively 'easier' to deal with. In between these groups are the issues that are possible to tackle, but that require significant effort and political will and cooperation, such as a lack of opportunities for youth, the multi-layered embedding of political-military entrepreneurs, and ongoing interference from foreign state and non-state actors.

Felix Tshisekedi awaits the complex task of trying to bring peace and security to eastern DRC. In this quest, he cannot rely on half-hearted efforts. The Government of the DRC needs to implement comprehensive and mutually reinforcing approaches to address root causes of continued insecurity in the DRC. For substantial delivery, the DRC needs to receive adequate support from regional partners and the wider international community, who could provide funding, knowledge, capacity and security assistance.

### Recommendations:

To reduce insecurity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Government of the DRC should:

- Counter normalization of political-military entrepreneurs through the creation of a legal-security framework that allows for the prevention, countering, and punishment of political-military ties that increase insecurity.
- Conduct thorough and comprehensive research into effective Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs, including learning lessons from countries where DDR programs have yielded success.
- More actively involve ex-combatants and commanders to assist in the creation of adequate programs from an experience-based perspective.
- Draft guidelines on effective DDR strategies in collaboration with independent researchers, scholars, and experts.
- Prevent the integration of large numbers of combatants in unstable army units. The effectiveness of DDR programs is highly dependent on a stable and capable national army able to cope with the integration of large numbers of combatants without losing operational effectiveness.
- Develop, in collaboration with international partners, sustained knowledge and experience-sharing programs for the national army with more professional and developed military academies, followed by a so-called harmonization period and after-care programs, where UN and Western military instructors and officers work together with trained Congolese officers in real missions to contextualize and solidify received training.
- Provide timely and adequate payment for soldiers, sufficient ammunition and adequate weaponry, and ethics training. Additionally, punish corrupt and/or looting officers, hold them accountable through a military tribunal, and prosecute officers and soldiers for human rights violations in front of that same tribunal.
- Introduce compulsory education programs for youth and create jobs especially for youth.
- Learn lessons from successful Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) programs to prevent youth from being 'radicalized' into armed groups. Countries in the region, specifically Kenya, have significant experience in this regard.
- Introduce widespread and efficient Truth and Reconciliation Mechanisms (TRMs) that promote healing, bridge intergroup differences, reinforce the sense of belonging to an imagined community, and transform representations from opposing groups.
- Introduce gun buyback programs, offering rewards, such as motorcycles or basic equipment for income generation, for small arms and light weapons (SALW). Gun-buyback programs where basic equipment that better the lives and prospects of former militants or owners of SALW is offered strengthen future DDR programs.
- Create a strong collaboration between international bodies and donors to solidify international assistance for local initiatives.

*The international community, specifically the United Nations, International Court of Justice, International Criminal Court, international donors, and foreign countries involved in the DRC should:*

- In the case of the unlawful involvement of resource extraction companies in the DRC, create and uphold clear legal mechanisms that prevent

mismanagement of resources, corruption, embezzling of funds, the exploitation of the local populace or the use of armed groups to gain access to resource-rich areas.

- In the case of unlawful involvement of non-state actors in the DRC, such as cross-border militant groups, step-up its security presence in the region and prevent these groups from finding refuge on their respective territories.
- In the case of unlawful interference in the DRC from state actors, launch an investigation into continued financial and military support of regional countries for local armed groups, condemn foreign meddling in the DRC, and bring to justice those that violate the DRC's sovereignty.

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## Editor's Note

Dear our esteemed readers,

We are excited to release our seventh bi-monthly issue of the HORN Bulletin 2019 (Vol. II, Iss. III). We bring to you well-researched articles and analysis of topical issues and developments affecting the Horn of Africa. We welcome contributions from readers who wish to have their articles included in the HORN Bulletin. At HORN, we believe ideas are the currency of progress. Feel free to contact the Editor for more details at [info@horninstitute.org](mailto:info@horninstitute.org).

Hassan Khannenje, Ph.D.  
Editor-in-Chief, The HORN Bulletin

### Disclaimer:

The content in this bulletin represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the HORN Institute.

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## Upcoming Activity

### Symposium

The Institute will hold a Symposium on Kenya-Somalia Maritime Border Dispute in June 2019. This symposium is part of a series of deliberations on Kenya-Somalia dispute by the HORN Institute to understand the political, legal, economic, diplomatic, and security dimensions of the dispute.

The core objective of this symposium is to provide an opportunity for experts to further discuss the various dimensions of the dispute that pits two countries with a complex and long history. Confirmed speakers include local and international experts in maritime law, political scientists, lawyers, scholars, diplomats, and representatives of think tanks at the regional and international levels.

For an updated program and further details, contact

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### About the HORN Institute

The HORN International Institute for Strategic Studies is a non-profit, applied research, and policy think-do tank based in Nairobi, Kenya. Its vision is a progressive Horn of Africa and the African continent, served by informed, evidence-based and problem-solving policy research and analysis. Its mission is to contribute to informed, objective, definitive research and analytical inquiry that positively informs policies of governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and spaces.

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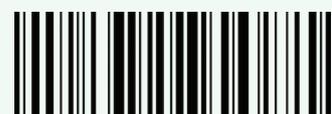
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