

4. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND STATE BUILDING IN A POST-WAR DRC

Roger Kibasomba

4.1 Introduction

There are as many definitions of leadership as there are authors talking about the concept. However, the concept generally involves three core qualities. First, a leadership system has the capacity of developing a vision of a better future. Second, it has the capability of influencing and mobilising people or a group of people toward the achievement of goals corresponding to a vision for a better future. Finally, a leadership system should possess the capacity of attaining expected results by matching specific management styles with specific demands. Because it is difficult to have these three qualities at the same time, a leadership system is always a collective and cooperative effort. An excellent vision (idea) without popular support or occurring in a wrong place at the wrong time is likely to undermine rather than enhance a leadership system.

Political leadership derives from the need to *work collectively and co-operatively* in order to yield effective and satisfactory (popular) results. In the private sector, it is often argued that one could obtain favourable results (profits or growth) without “leadership”. This hardly happens in public management and government where leadership is defined in terms of executive power. The executive must be the prime mover of the operative machinery of government. Consequently, the executive is and should be the aggregate or totality of all the workers who are concerned with the execution of the will of the state as that will has been formulated and expressed in terms of law. Government workers perform different functions; administrative, diplomatic, military, legislative, judicial or developmental (economic) function. “Collectivity” and cooperation are created through co-ordination of all these functions. A tremendous growth in the authority of the executive in modern democracies is mainly due to three fundamental factors. First, a democratic government is more and more judged not simply by elections and majority rule but its effectiveness in giving the people food, shelter, clothing, education, safety and other basic human security elements. Second, modern democracies operate through party systems that link the executive with the legislature. The cabinet is supported by the party, the party discipline and the party agenda. Democratic countries are ruled and managed by ruling political parties. The legislature only exerts control and gatekeeping functions. Third, the executives are as democratically elected as are the members of the legislature. Hence, they are directly elected by the people and hold a popular mandate. This increases the prestige, authority, legitimacy and integrity of the executive over the legislature. “As things stand today, nations are safe and secure under a continuous, strong and well-informed leadership vested with enormous powers”¹.

The critical question is: what do leaders do with all the powers given to them? The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has dynamic political parties and has been conducting presidential and legislative elections. But why have executive leadership systems in the DRC failed to consolidate democracy and promote socio-economic growth? Why have popularly supported leaders encouraged the development of predatory and self-serving behaviours rather than to the establishment of a solid democratic tradition? What are the reasons for the high level of political disengagement among the Congolese grassroots population?

This paper argues that a leader’s personality or the leadership system itself, would hardly ensure the peace equation in the DRC unless peace initiatives are directed to the restoration of the institutional base for democratic values and practices. The distinction between advanced industrialised countries and the developing world is fundamentally a difference in the level of institutionalisation of democracy. The significant point is that institutions matter, for once in place, they condition and constrain the actions of individuals. Greater scope and incentives for individualised interventions including kleptocratic, nepotistic and predatory behaviours in the Congolese leadership systems since independence derive from a systematic erosion of institutional foundations that cement and drive democracy and good governance. Weiss argues that where nation-states have experienced sustained threats to national security – whether in the form of military challenge, resource scarcity or economic pressure, or some combination of these – this (national security) has perhaps done more to galvanise elites of newly formed (or reformed) states to widen and deepen institutionalisation”². Like Meiji Japan and post-war Taiwan

and South Korea, sustainable solutions for the chronic Congolese leadership crisis need to evolve from strategic institutional building.

Asian political systems have managed to institutionalise the Confucian (Chinese) doctrine into their organisational culture and social discipline. Europeans and Americans have perfected bureaucratic governance (Weberism and Taylorism) and solidly integrated it into their core organisational values and lifestyles. They have learned to consolidate their unity and solidarity through contradictions, disagreements, opposition politics and progress through change. This is only possible where institutions are created and protected to maintain and promote historical values and collective intelligence. Africans lost such capacities and are more divided than united, more dissensual than consensual, more destructive than constructive, and easily manipulable. Africans are not weak but “attackable”. Our political behaviours can easily be simulated for civil wars and self-violence. Whether such simulation is from outside or not, sustainable peaceful solutions to crises on the continent critically depend on how Africans will consolidate their internal strengths henceforth.

The main concern is that Congolese in the DRC remain deadly opposed to each other. Although Mao Zedong’s dictum: ‘Power grows out of the barrel of a gun’ remains the exception rather than the rule in contemporary international relations, Africa’s Great Lakes region has the world’s highest post-Cold War rate of assassinations of top executive leaders, systematic genocides, massacres of defenceless civilians and war-related calamities. The first step in the DRC peace process is to halt the enmity among Congolese themselves. This is only possible if the Congolese regain a political conscience about their national security and interest. In the absence of such a conscience, the people of the DRC will continue to be vulnerable to foreign attacks and manipulation. Weaker nations are essentially weak from within. External forces take advantage of their internal weaknesses. The Rwandan and Ugandan invasion of the DRC in August 1998 must be understood in this context.

This chapter argues that the failure of the state in the DRC, has been the result of an ineffective leadership system that led to the insecurity that affected the political, administrative, economic, military, social and environmental structures of the Congolese state. The chapter concludes with reflections on prospects for ending the DRC conflict and managing externally overt and covert interventions in the crisis that arose from the removal of Mobutu Sese Seko.

4.2 Political leadership: the need for decentralisation

The security and productivity of counties, cantons or villages constitutes the starting point of a strong state. The general tendency is to use these entities only as electoral constituencies, and isolate them immediately after the electoral campaigns – a marginal utility. An effective leadership system needs to optimise their total utility for they constitute vital nodes for economic growth and security management. Decentralisation, delegation and devolution of powers and resources to county or village level would require a federal system of government. However, ethnicity and the uneven distribution of resources in the DRC necessitates a unitary system operating with strong federal principles. The DRC needs a presidential executive leadership that delegates many duties to the elected local and provincial authorities with the capacity to promote development initiatives and private and public sector partnerships.

To remedy the chief weaknesses of a unitary system and to promote democracy, the presence of strong local governments and the existence of an effective opposition cannot be overemphasised. An effective opposition does not strive to obtain power by wars and coups, but through a political process of elections. A credible opposition party acts as a “check or a brake” on the ruling government³. The DRC needs an effective, visionary and charismatic opposition movement to balance presidential powers. Under Mobutu and Laurent Kabila, presidential powers were excessive. These presidents exercised legislative power by decree, following consultation with their cabinets. They were the head of the executive, the armed forces and had the authority to issue currency. They had the power to appoint and dismiss members of their government, ambassadors, provincial governors, senior army officers, and senior civil servants. Once in power, Laurent Kabila passed a decree banning all political parties. However, the armed opposition that arose to check and reduce such presidential powers must be carefully examined. The rebellion led by the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) to topple Laurent Kabila clearly demonstrated that its armed opposition was unpopular, clouded with hidden agendas, counter-productive, opportunistic and prone to self-destruction.

Under Mobutu and Kabila Senior, the presidential and unitary system in the DRC suffered from

nepotism and patrimonialism. Nepotism often occasions incompetence and unproductivity. Patrimonialism usually leads to personal rule and dictatorship. Charismatic and visionary leadership in governmental management must dismiss incompetence, unproductivity, discrimination and the personalisation of institutions. Hence, what is vicious in a presidential and unitary system is not the system but the leader's personality. The required personality is to serve the public interests competently and without discrimination. Arguably, the institutional behaviour with a Weberian universe hardly exists in real life situations. Leaders and managers in both public and industrial organisations tend to capitalise on loyalty, commitment and cooperative predisposition of relatives and friends to get things done, minimise production costs and retain profits and benefits for family aggrandisement. But nepotism and patrimonialism are not endemic to Africa or the DRC, but are human practices experienced worldwide. Wealth and institutions in North America, Europe and Asia are also controlled by families who own them. Therefore, organisational instruments such as constitutional and administrative laws to minimise the negative effects of human factors on organisational performance and growth, are needed.

Peace and stability in the DRC appeals for the urgent need to design and adopt a democratic constitution. To be legitimate and credible, this process must be owned or at least accepted by the grassroots peoples and actual or potential regional and international friends. Mechanisms such as the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD) should be an in-depth discussion that aims to generate a constitution to be approved and endorsed by the people through a popular referendum. The Congolese elite should optimise this opportunity to make intellectual inputs from countries or peoples who demonstrate higher desire to realise the DRC's potential of being a powerhouse. Past and immediate realities of the DRC make the direct participation of Belgium, France and the US, imperative.

However, existence of a democratic constitution does not imply the eradication of deviant personality problems. Constitutional dictatorships still exist. The function of a democratic constitution is to protect or restore the traditional legal order in crisis situations or domestic or foreign emergencies⁴. When it becomes chronic, it simply means that the government or leadership is not capable of managing political affairs or to function politically. The consequence of poor political management is militarism: "the excessive or illegitimate influence of military institutions, policies and values on civil society"⁵. The problem with militarism is not so much the problem of political power. The main concern is the destruction of civil society and civil life. The encroachment of a nation's military sector onto the civilian domain destroys the working classes and economic systems. Moreover, it destroys the whole security sector. The entropy of the army and police reach a stage where soldiers resort to selling their uniforms, weapons, ammunitions, training fields, looting and criminality in order to survive.

Mobutu's regime destroyed any possibility of economic growth and development by depriving the state of those essential means and resources required for satisfying the basic needs of the population. The state was privatised in such a way that Mobutu and his coterie "succeeded not only in abolishing the distinctions between state and personal property but also in destroying the country's economic infrastructure and social fabric"⁶. Mobutu's personal rule was so 'absolute' that he turned the DRC into the most voracious 'kleptocracy' on the African continent. As an accomplished Machiavellian, he used his ill-gotten wealth and personal power of patronage to outfox potential opponents or political opposition and keep wavering officials in line.⁷

Consequently, we need to bring both a constitution and leadership to the grassroots populations of the DRC. In a republic, the leaders are only the managers of the state or the state's 'contracted' or 'mandated' employees. When the social contract between leaders and the people breaks down, neither laws nor guns can restore order and discipline. This is why both rebels and governmental forces in the DRC are failing to progress. A sustainable peace initiative does not need laws or guns but an in-depth *learning* dialogue. The Inter-Congolese Dialogue should, therefore, be a National Organisational Development Session (NODS) adopted to bring about a planned organisational change. It almost always concentrates on the "values, attitudes, relations and organisational climate – the people variable"⁸ as a point of entry rather than on the goals, structure and technologies of the organisation. The learning factor is completely absent in proposed peace variables of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement that was signed by the belligerents in the DRC conflict on 10 July 1999. The political leadership in the DRC has not yet acknowledged the decisive capacity of people's power and social forces, and if they have they tend to forget this aspect when they are in power. "As states evolve, there is a natural tendency of state authorities - whether military or civilian - to seek the concentration of political and economic power in

the central government's hands, often by constructing civilian institutions on military models and/or by involving the military elite in the management of state-run agencies and enterprises"⁹.

As a result, electoral campaigns and voting do not suffice to sustain a democracy. The sustainability of a democracy is directly linked to governance and the effective socio-economic management of all state entities (polities) including every single canton, county or village. The village viability constitutes a sustainable and responsive strategy for effective management of (minority) problems. In Congo, the system of proportional and minority representation did not work. Pressures for minority representation at central government occasioned chronic and malign reshuffling of government (cabinet) – two to three times per year. Such insecurisation of senior officers and officials accelerated corruption and aggressive defensive behaviours, which seem to have contributed to the assassination of Mzee Kabila in 16 January 2001. It is true that proportional and minority representation recognises an important fact of modern life, namely the existence of diverse interests in a society, and the need to give them due representation. But, the idea may be dangerous in practice¹⁰. Jaktar and Rao argue that “while it is true that all minorities will be represented in the legislature, it is also true that the legislature will become an arena, a battlefield of the different minorities. Minority representation can lead to a multiplicity of political parties, with all their inherent defects. The majority party itself will be reduced to a minority and will find it difficult to form a stable and cohesive government. Coalition governments which are weak, irresolute and short-lived will become the order of the day”¹¹. Gavin Cawthra has argued that, “central government that retains considerable veto powers over provincial policy and continues to fully control defence, foreign relations and other key areas to exercise extensive central control over policing, falls significantly short of federalism”¹². But is federalism the best option for lasting peace in the DRC and the Great Lakes Region?

4.3 Political leadership and state failure

Failed states are security-deficient states or states that have failed to protect and develop their people, institutions and other resources located within their territorial claim. This is primarily why the state in the DRC has failed and thereby attained such a level of vulnerability. The Rwandan and Ugandan invasion could not have occurred if the Congolese people, society and institutions were securised. A rebellion, even when it is created and sponsored from outside, is unthinkable where the majority of citizens benefit from the distribution and allocation of national wealth and political power. The Congolese people are generally nationalistic. The fact that Rwanda and Uganda managed to create rebel movements in the DRC proves that internal demands for change exist in opposition to what the government offers. Are wars necessarily conducted to express such demands or to change an undesirable situation? Is there any relation between democracy, opposition and war? Why the have rebels in the DRC failed to convince most Congolese that “wars of peace” and “wars of democracy” are the correct option for expected post-Mobutu change? Why is it difficult for the Kinshasa government to stop war and secure the country?

This chapter argues that unprofessional and poorly regulated security forces often compound rather than mitigate security problems. Military solutions to political and socio-economic problems aggravate human security problems. Wars and violence are likely to generate chronic poverty, insecurity and self-destruction. Wars occasion excessive war-driven security spending and devour scarce public resources that could be better used in other sectors contributing to poverty alleviation and unemployment. Put simply there are no military solutions to democratisation. African states need constructive and peaceful approaches to transition. Even radical or structural change must go through a democratic process.

Renewed interest in security sector reform is somehow related to the weakening of state capacity in many developing countries. Weaknesses are mainly characterised by strong dependency on foreign aid, chronic armed conflicts, unstable and weak governments, and the disengagement of foreign investors and donors. Security sector reform assumes that wars and violence are negative consequences of political failures and democracy deficits. Hence wars and violence cannot rectify political failures and democracy deficits, but can only aggravate them. Therefore, there is a need for structural change. Security sector reform focuses on security as a development objective with a great emphasis on human security and sustainable human development. As a result, “the negative developmental impact of a dysfunctional security sector is magnified in countries that have experienced a significant deterioration in their capacity to deliver services – ‘failing states’ – and in war-torn societies”¹³. The security sector in

the DRC is currently characterised by these two features: limited state capacity to deliver public and social services; and wars of invasion and rebellion. Whether this situation is due to historical factors such as colonisation and Mobutu's legacy or external factors such as invasion does not exclude the fact that Congo's people and society have been denied access to basic commodities and public utilities for several decades. The political system under the Mobutu government failed to use state resources for socio-economic development and practically stopped delivering expected services since 1980.

A major reason why so many political systems in Africa have experienced turbulence is because the crisis of the state has been accompanied by an equivalent crisis in the legitimacy of the regime and loss of faith in the leadership systems. Underlying much of the present state of affairs are two parallel developments: a decline in the economic sector (much of it attributable to ineffective state institutions) and a lack of confidence in the political institutions that African countries took over from colonial powers and never bothered to reform beyond the relatively superficial act of deracialisation¹⁴.

Is Congo a failed state? Congolese academics often argue that government failure does not necessarily imply that the state does not exist. They agree that the country is bankrupt but not insolvent. Insolvency does not imply inability to pay debts but rather a situation where one's liabilities exceed their assets. Like many donors, the Congolese people are unanimously convinced that if stability, democracy and good governance are restored, the DRC can rapidly pay its debts, improve its productive and investment capacities, and play a significant political and economic role in the region and in the global economy¹⁵.

In 1992, Congo suspended virtually all payments on its foreign debt, leading the World Bank (WB) to close its Kinshasa office in 1994 and the DRC being suspended from the IMF the same year. The DRC's total external debt is currently estimated at US \$150 000 million, equivalent to about 255 per cent of the country's Gross National Product (GNP). Since 1991 private investment has virtually ceased. The country was declared as dangerous and prohibitive for exporters, investors and bankers. At the outbreak of the rebellion to topple Mobutu in September 1996, the inflation rate rose once again, reaching 741 per cent at the end of that year. The need to finance the war effort also prompted the government to cease the repayment of debt arrears to the IMF altogether¹⁶. A WB study estimated that it will take 46 consecutive years of 6 per cent annual real GDP growth in order for annual income per head in the DRC to rise to a mere US \$450.

But political bankruptcy is not the most critical threat. Chronic wars constitute the real threat. Wars create higher excesses in government spending. The best explanation for the tremendous growth in the public sector and for increased expenditures by the central government are wars or threats of wars¹⁷. Insufficient revenues for funding the war effort, in particular paying soldiers' salaries, and the inability to borrow internationally forced the Kinshasa government to mortgage the country's natural resources. Leases to strategic minerals and oil reserves were distributed to those who supported the Kabila government's war effort.

In 1998 monetary reform, however, illustrated the possibility of rapid recovery. The Economist Intelligence Unit's 1997 and 1998 country reports on the DRC commended Laurent Kabila's government for its policy in efforts to tackle the legacy of poor economic performance and mismanagement¹⁸. Critical to the success of the Congolese Franc (FC) was winning the confidence of the Congolese population. Before 1997, monetary policy was determined by vendors especially women in the street. Inflation in Kinshasa was by 1997 reduced to around five per cent.

Some have argued that state collapse occurs when people have seen the public realm as a very insecure place; when rules have become more and more arbitrary and participation in public affairs is often associated with personal risks; when the state is no longer fulfilling the role of protector of life; and when local vigilante groups have emerged to carry out the tasks that in a functioning state belong to the police and other relevant security organs¹⁹.

While securisation through an adequate distribution of the 'national cake' constitutes the core of the internal problem, political instability and parallel administration affects external confidence. Debt cancellation or non-recognition of bad debts contracted by previous governments or pseudo-governments, constitutes a threat. The International Financial Institutions were not happy with Kabila's government because of his debt and contract cancellation. In 1998, for example, the Kabila government unilaterally dissolved the Canadian mining company, Banro and Sakima (*Société Aurifères du Kivu et*

Maniema), and cancelled its 25-year exploration lease and its exploitation of 47 gold mining concessions in an area of 10 200 square km in north and south Kivu. Kabila found it unfair that Banro possessed 93 per cent of the stake while his government had only seven per cent. Kabila's unilateral cancellation of the contract provoked Banro to approach the WB's International Centre for the Settlement of Disputes (ICSID).

During Mobutu's reign local companies took over the role of the state at high cost. The Social responsibility for local communities represented over 40 per cent of overhead costs in most Congolese companies. The country's diamond parastatal, *Mines de Bakwanga* (MIBA), based in Kasai, repaired roads, paid Mobutu's soldiers, and supplied water and electricity from its power station to its workers. It established a social fund of US \$5 to 6 million a year (8% of its budget), to maintain hospitals and schools, and sponsored a private university. MIBA also paid taxes to local and central governments and subsidised soldiers and gendarmes guarding its premises. The same applied to other mining companies and commercial organisations. In the Katanga province, the state-owned *General de Carrieres de Mines* (Gecamines) represented over 75% of the country's GDP. It had practically become a state within a state.

Nonetheless, the core of the DRC's security problem lies with the Congolese leadership elite. The DRC has a problem of leaders to whom "you can give money and comfort, and they will easily sell their country, even for crumbs"²⁰. Given that the current war is driven by outside forces, lining personal pockets has ultimately led to the insecurity of the country and its people.

Moreover without a sense of nationalism and patriotism, internal security will always be vulnerable to external attacks and wars of aggression. Political identity and economic nationalism were, and will continue to be, the principal development factor in all developed countries. The responsibility of a leadership system is to generate and promote political identity and economic nationalism. As Salim Ahmed Salim, the former secretary-general of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) argued: "while Africa must democratise, our efforts will be hamstrung by the non-democratic international economic system in which we operate"²¹. After all "organised war, is not a human instinct. It is a highly planned and co-operative form of theft. And that form of theft began ten thousand years ago when the harvesters of wheat accumulated a surplus, and the nomads rose out of the desert to rob them of what they themselves could not provide"²². What is happening in the Great Lakes region is an organised theft in which, unfortunately, Congolese and Africans are themselves involved.

Economic nationalism includes mercantilism, statism and protectionism. Its central premise is that economic activities are (or ought to be) subordinate to the goal and primacy of state building, national security and interest, and military power in the organisation and functioning of the international system. The safeguarding of national economic interests constitutes the minimum essential to the security and survival of the state. Hamilton (1971) describes the mercantilist aspect of the American economic development in these terms: "not only the wealth but the independence and security of a country appear to be materially connected to the prosperity of manufactures". Economic nationalism is called 'malevolent mercantilism' when it becomes an arena for imperialist expansion, national aggrandisement and hegemonic leadership. "War economies' that have, and continue to, devastate Africa are fuelled by malevolent mercantilism of international mineral, oil and arms industries.

The crisis in the Great Lakes Region is about the Rwandan and Ugandan ambition to take over the leadership of Eastern and central Africa after removing Mobutu. Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, justified his government's involvement in the DRC as a contribution to war for democracy. There were two major handicaps for this project. First, Central and Eastern African nations never mandated or acknowledge such a leadership role to Uganda or Rwanda. Second, the consensus is based on a wrong assumption. The modern world system or the contemporary global economy is a consequence of the development of the North rather than the cause of its development. There, the growth and success of modern capitalism was due to the achievement of *internal efficiency*. It has been the rapid development of the core and its need for food and raw materials that has led to the integration of the periphery into the world system and the subsequent growth of those peripheral economies that could take advantage of this fact²³.

These two strategic miscalculations prevented Museveni's Uganda from playing the Western-intended leadership role in the Great Lakes Region. In southern Africa, the ANC government in South Africa had been very hesitant about accepting to assume such a leadership role and responsibility. As a result, it

played a soft but effective and constructive leadership role in economic and political transformation of countries such as Mozambique and Lesotho. The most critical success factor of the South African approach is its non-militarist dimension. Uganda, having failed in Central and Eastern Africa and Nigeria also faced stiff resistance from west African countries for being too militarist and donor-driven. Without local ideological consensus, economic nationalism easily occasions the conduct of economic warfare. In the Great Lakes region, the Ugandan leadership role brought more instability, authoritarianism, violence and economic ruin rather than peace, democracy and socio-economic progress. It is true that an economically healthy and politically stable Congo would be a development engine to many African countries especially the neighbouring countries²⁴. In this sense the US intent to capitalise on some leading countries to promote democratic practices and economic growth could be benign. But, do we need guns to establish strong and effective leadership?

Economic nationalists argue that a nation needs both 'guns and butter'. Guns are needed to protect the local production against external disturbances. Guns are needed for defence not for aggression. The main objective of nationalists, is for industrialisation to procure economic self-sufficiency and political autonomy. Industry is prized because it is the basis of military power and central to national security in the modern world system²⁵. In other words, "a state's control over resources is also a matter of a state's control over outcomes in international disputes, conflicts and wars"²⁶. Therefore, nations seek independent sovereign states. Boundaries serve not only to safeguard the state's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty but also as critical management instruments for development and protection of the national natural resources and interests.

Political and economic nationalism are vital to African human security and development. For too long African governments and leaders have exploited their own people and sold off their own resources. Human resource development remains a highly neglected sector of economies throughout the continent. Colonial powers were concerned about human resources for labour productivity. The Belgians in the Congo assumed that conscientious concern for the physical well being and economic needs of the indigenous population would prevent the rise of a nationalist movement²⁷.

State borders are meant to protect a certain group of people living within a specific territory. Without borders, it is difficult to manage peace and security. Hence, territorial frontiers and state sovereignty are primarily management instruments, before being political or power instruments. All big wars came from the idea of creating or acquiring immense and infinite space. Hitler, Napoleon and the Roman Empire are classic examples. Most recently, the fall of the Soviet Union and Communism expansionism constituted a perfect illustration. The Soviet communist empire collapsed simply because it was no longer possible to provide, promote and manage peace (human security and human development) inside and outside Soviet power space. Expansionism has been the origin of most wars, conflicts and violence, the origin of failure in human security and human development within states.

Although the DRC may be bankrupt, better management of its natural and human resources can help it rapidly reduce the severity of threats to human security and development. It was the responsibility of Laurent Kabila's government to demonstrate its capacity to re-launch the democratic process, restore law and order, unite the nation, promote internal and attract foreign investments. Foreign donors and investors expected not only the establishment of a democratic and credible government but also a government that does not exclude traditional economic partners. Like many other countries, the DRC needs to have constructive political coexistence and economic interdependence with the industrialised North.

"A military regime has no revolutionary objectives with regard to socio-political change, although it may fulfil counter revolutionary functions if class conflicts or disputes between social and political elites become wide-spread"²⁸. The 1961 and 1965 coups in the DRC did not restore democracy or prosperity. Instead, attacks upon the existing political and social order were intensified with the assassination of Lumumba and the removal of Kasavubu from power in November 1965 up until Mobutu's exile in 1997 culminating in the paralysis of the DRC state. The British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) *Focus on Africa* spoke of a "ghost of an army" and "a shadow of a state". As a result, literally everything, roads, hospitals, schools, currency, the civil service and agricultural production, not to mention trust between the government and the governed, needs to be rebuilt. Despite its enormous natural resources, the DRC is by most accepted indicators among the poorest countries in the world.

Fortunately, the Congolese people and society have survived the collapse of the state and its failure to fulfil its social responsibilities. Although the failure of a state and government affects the ordinary people profoundly, humans nevertheless have the ability to adapt and change ineffective and wasteful institutions. Effective cure to state collapse is not war but rather democracy and management of state institutions and resources. For the DRC, human resource management would include efforts to discourage counter productive practices such as coups, invasions, wars and violence.

4.4 Environmental sector: People and Resources

Spanning a territory of approximately 2.35 million square kilometres, the DRC is the third largest country on the African continent and one of the world's richest in natural resources. Mineral resources dominate the formal economy with mining of cobalt and copper being traditionally the leading exports. Diamonds, tin, manganese, zinc, silver, cadmium, gold, tungsten, and offshore oil are also commercially exploited. The DRC has been a producer of offshore petroleum since 1975 and by 1996 its output reached 10.7 million barrels. Onshore oil exploitation near the Ugandan and Tanzanian borders was estimated to have reached 187 million barrels in 1993.

The DRC's population is estimated to be 50 million, 70 per cent of whom live in the rural areas. However, the DRC's rich biodiversity has enabled peasants to produce food crop surpluses and even practice natural medicine. Coffee, tea, rubber, palm oil, cocoa, sugar cane, and many other lucrative crops constitute the main cash crops, while cassava, bananas, rice and maize are the major food crops. Traditional farming in the Bas-Congo and Bandundu provinces constituted the most strategic food-security base for the capital city's over 5 million inhabitants.

The illiteracy rate among Congolese averaged 23 per cent in 1998²⁹. Eighty per cent of the literate population are specialised in all areas of modern science and technology. But organisational deficiency characterised by nepotism and self-enrichment has been the single major handicap to the mobilisation, integration and employment of the country's human capital. As a result over 80 per cent of the DRC's specialised expertise live and work outside the country. Given that the ruling elite had in effect privatised the government, creating a business niche, which they defend against potential competitors, there has been no governmental effort to promote the repatriation of the skilled labour force.

An estimated 80 per cent of Africa's inland water is found in the Congo basin. With an average flow of 40 000 cubic metres per second, the Congo River carries the second largest volume of water in the world, constituting almost half of the total hydroelectric potential of the continent (about 100 000 Megawatts). The prospects for further power generation at the Inga Dam are enormous and has the capacity of fulfilling the electricity needs of the whole central, eastern and southern Africa. It is a strategic resource to regions like the Southern African Development Community (SADC) that is constantly exposed to threats from energy and water deficiency occasioned by drought and the expansion of the Kalahari Desert.

In essence the DRC is a 'geological scandal'. At independence on 30 June 1960, the Congolese were fully aware that only a democratic system would suffice in the exploitation of the country's abundant natural resources for their socio-economic development. Constitutional democracy was considered as a *sine qua none* for sustainable peace, prosperity, justice, equality and freedom for the more than 250 ethnic groups of the DRC. But the present concern about the DRC's immense natural resources stems from the activities that are taking place in zones occupied by foreign troops and rebel movements. The occupied areas contain enormous strategic resources that are vital for the 21st century technologically-driven industries and economies.

The impact of the current war on the environment and its people is extremely disastrous. Minerals and timber are savagely exploited to finance the belligerents' war efforts. Most resourced national parks are located in the central, eastern and northern provinces and are exposed to daily confrontations between warring parties. Endangered animal life like the mountain guerrillas were forced to flee into Uganda, a country with a higher rate of poaching. Landmines are also becoming a threat to humans and animals in the forests. Besides demining costs, landmines will compromise prospects for post-war food production and settlement. Landmines are likely to raise production and investment costs of any post-war exploitation of prospected resources.

The destruction of habitat and violation of human rights have gone beyond proportion – far more than the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The International Rescue Committee (IRC), led by American epidemiologist, Dr Les Roberts, reported that there have been 1,7 million (excess) deaths in the Kivu province (eastern Congo) since August 1998, when Rwanda and Uganda invaded the country. This equates to 77,000 deaths per month. About 34 per cent of these monthly fatalities were children younger than the age of five years. In addition to the death toll, war has internally displaced about 6 million inhabitants of the Great Lakes Region – 700,000 Ugandans; 400,000 Rwandans; 500,000 Burundians; and over 2-3 million Congolese from mainly the eastern provinces.

In addition to state failure, the human and ecological tragedy has made the Congolese crisis more complex. Peace initiatives would need to include the question of justice and reparation of the Congolese people. Criminal liability rests with the artisans and executors of the invasion and occupation of the DRC. Like the Rwandan genocides, we question the ability of courts and tribunals to do real justice. Efforts to cover the truth with all sorts of propaganda and sophist diplomacy already indicate the difficulties of doing justice through Western courts and tribunal systems. For the Congolese, finding solutions to psychological and ecological costs would be the most appropriate approach; hence the imperatives of stopping the war immediately and implementing a Simulation of Truth, Amnesia and Reconciliation (STAR) mechanisms.

4.5 The political sector

The current political crisis in the DRC is the result of 'leaders' moulding the state to conform to their personal idea about life and society. The present deficiency in the political leadership, is a result of the political dictatorship that flowed from Mobutu's militarism and politics of *authenticity*, which was publicly inaugurated in the 1961 military coup. Mobutu's policy of *authenticity* uniformed everybody: all Congolese were forced to dress, speak, think and act like him. Mobutu's own understanding of politics and organisation was administered by martial law within a state of siege. Chronic military interventions into political affairs translates into poor political management by a civil society. And the militarisation of politics under Mobutu did just that by paralysing the functioning of Congolese civil society and intellectual capital. As already noted, the encroachment of Mobutu's militarism on the civilian domain also destroyed the economic system and the creation of a broad-based working class.

The most neglected sector in African politics has been at the micro level. Mobutu's 33 years in power proved that he very effectively handled macro-politics³⁰ to the neglect of the micro-level and the Congolese masses. However, with the end of the Cold War, political elites started approaching grassroots constituencies when their respective foreign donors and allies diverted their attention to Eastern Europe. But it was too late. The grassroot population revitalised the traditional village administration to manage their problems, conflicts and resources. In the DRC elite politics was based on struggle for access to government resources. Improving efficiency of the Congolese polity was not a priority. Mobutu's dictatorship managed to eliminate the quasi-totality of political thinkers and practitioners by 1965. Promising to restore social, economic and political order and to remit power to a civilian government in 1970, Mobutu initiated his political career by "eliminating all opposition to his rule through the ruthless repression of dissent by the security police and the armed forces"³¹.

Traditional politics of village administration constituted the sole politics used by the Congolese to survive and exist. The government of villages and their hinterlands did not depend on the territorial principle, but essentially on the kinship principle. This is one of the reasons why the forest farmers, even when they speak the same language, have the same beliefs, recognize a common mythical ancestor, and have hardly ever formed political units larger than the village. Such politics of organisation does not work through a centralised system but through a co-operative synergy between different entities composing a state³². Loyalty to the central government and authority in the capital city, Kinshasa, did not unite the Congolese grassroots. Micropolitics in a state system operates on the basis of two important factors, firstly, village constitution as an administrative and developmental entity (polity), and secondly, borders as limits to social communications and economic cooperation. The Berlin Conference (1884-5) redirected administrative behaviours but hardly affected developmental behaviours. In the Great Lakes region, grassroot populations recognised that they are Burundians, Rwandans, Ugandans and Congolese belonging to different states but they never stopped cooperating and assisting one another within and across 'national' borders. The DRC invasion and occupation by Rwanda and Uganda undermined this cooperative co-existence.

4.6 The Village Administration and Leadership System

The Belgian colonial administration relied heavily on the village administration to govern the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. District administrators were perceived as direct representatives of the Belgian King. Actually, all colonial powers in Africa applied *realpolitik* to urban areas. Rural areas were sometimes administered by private commercial farmers. In Belgian Congo all ethnic groupings were rebaptised 'territories' and substituted with chiefdoms. The word 'territory' derived from the French word 'terroir', means a geographical space where different people live and work together co-operatively in relation to a common land. The land factor imposes the need to interact, communicate and cooperate. As a result, a common organisational culture arises from this need. Indigenous chiefs were generally tasked to assist territorial Belgian administrators in collecting taxes and mobilising low-cost labour. Freedom of movement was restricted beyond territorial borders. The modern formula for 'terroir' is the Swiss canton and, to some degree, the American 'counties'.

Micro-politics worked effectively because of two factors, firstly, manageable size of social and political entities, and secondly, the focus on existing grassroots structures and economic dynamics. At independence, Belgians were very much surprised to see that ethnic groups reconstituted themselves into larger ethnopolitical 'terroirs'. Through transactional and lineage processes, adult groups absorbed infant descendant or immigrant groups. According to Maquet (1972), "lineages cooperate with each other in ways other than matrimonial alliances; and develop a common understanding about the administration and government of the village. When the origins of the lineages in a village are more heterogeneous, the situation is still not very different from that when the lineages are related, for one village has always arrived first, then others been authorized to settle there and have thus recognised the supremacy of the first"³³.

The management of the border between the South Kivu province (in the DRC) and the Cyangugu province (in Rwanda) illustrates a higher level of adaptability, social intelligence and institutionalisation of political changes of grassroot population. The relationship between these two provinces has a historical significance in the conflict between Rwanda and Congo. Cyangugu (formerly called Kinyaga) was a Belgian colony before being incorporated into Rwanda as part of East German Africa (Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda) in 1885. The Belgians and the Congolese *Force Publique* (colonial army) conquered this piece of land by defeating Tutsi colonisation and the Arab slave trade. The same force failed to annex South Kivu especially the region around Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika during World War I. This zone has been used by Western powers to simulate attacks against Congo since its independence. Both the 1996 and 1998 invasions of the DRC proceeded from Cyangugu (Rwanda) to Bukavu (South Kivu, Congo). The point being made here is that the argument which views the current Great Lakes crisis as a problem of borders and ethnic quarrels, is not absolutely correct. The grassroot populations on both sides had always respected their established terroir or territorial borders. But cross-border social communications and economic cooperation remained (and are still) dynamic and peaceful.

It is even not proper to talk about Tutsi colonisation. Tutsi groups arrived in the region in the 17th century in search of cattle and crops following severe famine and drought in the Horn of Africa. Decisions to settle and create a kingdom resulted from increases in demand for slaves and later for colonies. Like chiefdoms, kingdoms were created by a few individuals to protect themselves from being taken by Arabs and against colonial exploitation. Tutsi leaders have always played an interface role, not an hegemonic one. The fact is that they were actually culturally colonised by the Hutu by adopting the Hutu indigenous language, which is a Bantu language. It is our firm belief that current ethnic conflicts can be better handled by grassroots organisations or an African Renaissance approach, if a favourable environment for dialogue is created – if war stops and everybody decides to work for peace and development, and if dialogue with Western powers openly takes place to avoid informal sabotage.

However, to optimise the canton or village participation and contribution, one has to overcome a major challenge: Neopatrimonialism. The village governance system should run according to constitutional and administrative laws. The traditional village system functioned in accordance with commonly accepted organisational norms, rules (customs) and values that excluded demagoguery, propaganda and selfishness. As Mani laments: "There is a danger that current efforts by national and international actors to restore the rule of law in post-conflict countries will contribute only to negative peace rather than building a

just and positive peace”³⁴. While ‘negative peace’ relapses into conflict, ‘positive peace’ consolidates peace by creating conditions conducive to reconciliation, regeneration and recovery.

The village administration still constitutes the grassroots base of a federal system of government. The American *counties* and the Swiss *cantons* evidence this assertion. This is probably the route that the African Renaissance needs to engage in. Lonsdale observed that “the most distinctively African contribution to human history ...is the civilised art of living fairly peacefully together, not in states”³⁵. Neo-patrimonialism is ascriptive³⁶ and often degenerates into higher power centralisation, dependency and authoritarianism³⁷ and situational manipulation³⁸. In a situational manipulation, leadership positions are used to satisfy the leaders’ own ends, to improve their personal effectiveness (political skills), and to obtain more power and wealth.

Appeals for federalism or quasi-federalism in the DRC were stronger in the 1960s than in the 1990s. The Independence Constitution, written and adopted under Belgian supervision, stressed the need for the Congo to be a democratic state that entailed the decentralisation and devolution of powers. The constitution provided for a parliamentary governance system. However, quarrels between Joseph Kassavubu (Congo’s first president) and Patrice Lumumba (Congo’s first prime minister) compromised this constitution. Aware of the immensity of the Congo territory, the president was favourable to federal principles. Kassavubu wanted to concentrate on his electoral constituency composed of the Bakongo people in the southwestern Bas-Congo province.

Patrice Lumumba, on the other hand, wanted a centralised system for two reasons. First, there was fear of the secession of the Bas-Congo and Katanga provinces. Second, Lumumba wanted a system that obliged the central government to cater for the marginalised or neglected provinces. In 1961, the constitutional project of Luluaburg provided for a Federal Republic of Congo. The pressing need for federalism or effective decentralisation conflicted with the problem of national unity. At the end of 1995, the Transitional Parliament amended the 1992 constitutional project, providing for a federal democracy. The name, the Federal Republic of Congo, was adopted and awaited a popular referendum that never materialised.

However, even if the federal models of the US and Switzerland fascinate many Congolese, there is a psychological consensus that the formation of a federal state must derive from the internal dynamics and democratic processes rather than through wars and coups³⁹. Federalism resulting from invasion and occupation would hardly be sustainable. In fact pure federalism will *ipso facto* not resolve the Congolese political crisis. The South African model of a unitary state with strong federal principles is more compelling because of its similarities with models which worked effectively in the Congo.

Accordingly, trends towards a federal village or canton model are emerging. Jean Pierre Bemba, the leader of the Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC), has exploited this organisational strategy effectively. The MLC’s popularity in the Equator province is mainly due to the focus on involving the youth, transparency and democratic elections of village leaders by the local population. Bemba also had the advantage of not being seen as part of the invasion by outsiders. He also benefited from his father’s (Bemba Saolana) business legacy. Saolana is one of the few indigenous businessmen who managed acquired nationalised plantations and firms successfully. In the Equator province, Bemba enterprises were the second largest employer after the government. Although, Saolana’s connection with the Mobutu regime may have reduced his impact on national politics, it is nevertheless, a connection that could also be used profitably by Western powers especially the US and French who seem intent on rectifying Mobutu’s legacy and regaining the confidence of the Congolese population. Strategically, other unpopular and undesirable rebellion movements could be absorbed into Bemba’s organisation. This implies that other movements especially the RCD-Goma should decline Kagame’s leadership and sponsorship and adopt President Museveni’s support. Apparently, many Western and African governments are trying to avoid the Rwandan route which has been too bloody, undemocratic and unconventional. Many Congolese have referred to this new trend as the ‘Third Route’.

The traditional local committees in the Congo did not transfer political power to grassroot organisations and was focused more on military (self-defence) security than with other human security threats. This idea has been also applied in Uganda through the zero-party movement system without consistent successful economic and political results. It suffers from neopatrimonialism and lack of effective decentralization and delegation. The post-war ‘Third Route’ for Congo risks falling into the same pitfall of

neopatrimonialism if constitutional and institutional measures are not devised to limit inherent effects of personalities, partisanship and ethnicity on governance and democracy. Special efforts are needed to reverse the instituted culture of the breaking norms and standards.

4.7 Borders and Common Security

After independence, many African grassroot populations broke inter-state migration protocols and started practising cross-border trade throughout the continent. Demographic movements and micro-businesses between Congo and all its neighbouring countries were very active since the 1960s. Foreign and immigration policies were meaningless not because grassroot populations disrespected the post-independence authorities and laws but because all these demographic movements and cross-border micro-businesses were never intended or meant for criminal and destructive activities. Without these cooperative networks, the success of liberation struggles would not have been as great, the feud between the Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda and Burundi would have been worse, and the economic hardships in Africa would have caused more human calamities.

Tanzania, Uganda and Congo have been the most vital 'safety valves' for the Tutsi and Hutu refugee flows since the 1950s. Local populations managed these flows without any national and foreign assistance. Because the system is losing its traditional purpose and nature (peaceful and constructive interaction and solidarity), local populations are becoming inconsiderate and some times reactive to flows of refugees or migrants. As a result, the cost of managing refugees and displaced persons has become unsustainable.

At the grassroot level, signs of reconciliation have emerged as plans for a Tutsi hegemony were demystified. Anti-Tutsi sentiments had been waning for five major reasons. First, Congolese Tutsis (Banyamulenge) opposed the Rwandan Tutsis' interests and claims. Second, the defection of many moderate Hutu and Tutsi leaders developed nationalist sentiments in search of national unity. Third, failure to defeat Laurent Kabila militarily, reduced the image of Tutsi superiority and invincibility. Fourth, there was a growing realisation that expansion of these wars and conflicts is to do with leaders' personalities and foreign powers more than with the professed issues. Fifth, countries such as Tanzania and Kenya expressed deep concern about the international tolerance of the Congo invasion and occupation by Rwanda and Uganda.

Borders have not been the real problem to grassroot populations. With or without borders, grassroot populations have interacted, cooperated, traded and assisted one another. Therefore, the view that artificial boundaries constitute the root cause of insecurity among national minorities⁴⁰, is contestable. The argument that "had the boundaries of the eastern Congo and western Rwanda and Burundi been drawn differently during the colonial carve-up of 1884-5, the present instability might have been avoided"⁴¹, is disputable.

Managerial importance of territorial borders will continue to determine the political and economic reality of modern states. Borders are critical for the effective and efficient management of inter-state population and capital movements. Short-term violations such as raids and lootings and long-term violations like seizures and invasions of territory, is not only a violation of state sovereignty but also a gross interference on a population's livelihood. Even in the case where states, people and societies have lost the capacity to use or solicit force to retrieve lost territory, "it does not lessen their anger at having been violated"⁴². This is the case of the DRC with the second war.

4.8 The unarmed opposition

African politics has suffered from undemocratic governance as well as from undemocratic opposition movements. Consequently, the militarisation of African politics has become evident. A major factor for the continuation of war in the DRC is because the removal of Mobutu had been achieved through undemocratic means. The 1996 invasion to topple Mobutu, disrupted a significant democratisation process that arose from a five-year political dialogue between government, political parties, churches and other influential civil society and business organisations. For example, in 1991 political parties and civil society successfully forced Mobutu to announce measures for the "depoliticisation of the armed

forces, the gendarmerie, the civil guard, the security forces and the administration in general”⁴³. Although Mobutu manipulated the process, many political analysts argued that democracy in the DRC could not have been stopped if the country was not invaded in 1996.

In fact, Congo has a significant number of active political parties and a solid civil society, which defied Mobutu’s dictatorship and is still capable of challenging potential undemocratic governments. Congo also possesses an active but non-elite civil society mainly composed of the informal sector, nongovernmental organisations and churches. Catholicism is strong because the catholic clergy is multiethnic, highly educated and generally engaged in critical social and development activities. In many places, catholic missions constitute the only social institutions that provide public goods such as schools, hospitals, clinics, transport, radio-communications, electricity, employment, banking, and seeds. Protestant churches are less involved in socio-economic activities and have few highly educated cadres but their influence is considerable in both rural and urban areas. NGOs are concentrated in towns and cities but remain donor-dependent and oriented. Artisans and small vendors, who are usually the less schooled active youth between 15 and 35 years old, dominate the informal sector. Their concerns for political activities are minimal compared to the other category of schooling youth (students). Churches and students have been very instrumental for political activism in Congo.

President Kabila is nationally and internationally strongly pressurised to create a space for direct political dialogue with rebels, and Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, who have admitted in 1999 invading Congo. Government has been rejecting this option preferring to dialogue and reconcile with non-aggressive opposition parties.

The externally-backed and created rebellion to oust Laurent Kabila argued that the governance system under Kabila had fallen into the same pitfall of nepotism, arbitrariness, and ethnic-sectarianism as experienced under Mobutu. But according to Prof Wamba dia Wamba, the one-time leader of the rebel movement, criticised members of the rebellion for operating within the ‘logic’ of replacing Kabila whilst retaining the Kabilist system. Influenced by Museveni’s Ugandan model, Wamba dia Wamba proposed that all Congolese must be involved in choosing their own representatives from the village to the national level.

The DRC political crisis is also a result of the exclusion of the majority from accessing and enjoying national wealth. The majority of the Congolese are not asking to be presidents, ministers or commanders, but to be provided with jobs and an income. Unlike citizens with political ambitions, non-political social groups have sought government employment as a means of earning an income. After all, the government was seen as an institution for wealth accumulation and profiteering. “Human development focuses on expanding capabilities important for all people, capabilities so basic that their lack forecloses other choices. Human poverty focuses on the lack of these same capabilities – to live a long, healthy and creative life, to be knowledgeable, to enjoy a decent standard of living, dignity, self-respect and the respect of others”⁴⁴. This is what non-political citizens want when they seek employment in the public or private sector. Hence the conflict between non-political and political workers in government services in Congo has been about income distribution.

The Mai-Mai Resistance phenomenon is spreading as a consequence of the nature of the war. The mythology of their supernatural protection against bullets is a simple marketing artifice often used for motivating new recruits and signalling messages of combat charisma to enemies. The core message can be interpreted as saying “we are ready to defend ourselves using anything available even ‘waterpower’ against your ‘firepower’”. In this context, resistance to bullets simply refers to spiritual death. The Mai-Mai recently declared to Western media journalists that bullets can’t kill them because they are already dead. Kwesi Kwaa Prah lists the Mai-Mai movement among the most noticeable resistance movement against colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism⁴⁵. He ranks the Mai-Mai in the category of “social expression which were manifested as cults, secret societies, millenarian and messianic movements... sometimes combined with military activity”⁴⁶. The Congolese Mai-Mai resistance movement is fast growing in Eastern and Northern Congo, distancing itself from all other belligerents including government forces.

4.9 Economic sector

The DRC's post-independence has been characterised by two types of exploitative behaviour, firstly an over accumulation and systematic transfer of capital abroad by the indigenous bourgeoisie, and secondly, the lack of investments by multinational corporations. Since 1980, the economic sector basically depended on a 'survivalist entrepreneurship' – the establishment of alternative economies. An extensively informal, and often illegal, economy is the true lifeblood of most of sub-Saharan African countries⁴⁷. As a result the informal sector has become increasingly important in African economies.

The size and power of the DRC's underground economies has created a situation of absolute indifference to its political leadership systems. Jakkie Cilliers associates the need and pressure for political change to the culture of permanent disengagement or indifference. He argues that it "keeps the disastrous national economy going, contrary to mainstream thinking that sees the informal sector economy as an adjunct to the formal sector"⁴⁸.

Survival economies in DRC have been a 'benign community disorganisation' in response to Mobutu's 'malign community disorganisation'⁴⁹. The Congolese population has learned to survive extreme hardships and respond to their economic challenges. They have learned to take care of their basic needs with or without governmental and international assistance. As a response to the state's collapse, the Congolese survival economy transformed the mechanical solidarity of the peasant society into an organic solidarity based on the division of labour. While ethnic solidarity played a significant role at the macro-political level, economic exchanges and cooperation dominated social and interpersonal relationships at the grassroot level. Market places had become venues for social interaction and not just a place for the exchange of commodities. Subsequently, the population knew and supported one another and criminality was non-existent. Survival economies in the Congo had established a culture of entrepreneurship upon which positive market economies can be built. "Value is added and wealth is created not by cabinets and ministers, not by national leaders and national plans, but by a myriad of individual actions performed by a myriad of individual entrepreneurs"⁵⁰.

In relation to war and occupation, Rwandan and Ugandan agencies levy taxes on all economic activities taking place in occupied zones. No investments take place. Personnel of public institutions function normally but are not paid. Hence, forced savings constitute an important component of current war (dis)economies in the Great Lakes region. But, this also proves that domestic savings can be mobilised and achieved for human development if peace and stability are restored. Most grassroots Congolese do not support Rwanda and Uganda because they believe that they were better off before the war.

There is a limit to popularist or survivalist economies. If not harnessed through adequate institutional frameworks, they can easily degenerate into malign community disorganisation factors. In fact, warlordism, terrorism, guerrilla movements and so on all capitalise on such underground networks.

4.10 Reforming the military sector

A priority for the post-war government of the DRC would be the establishment of one single national army. The merging of governmental, rebellion and militia forces constitutes an important agenda item at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD). Merging these different forces will prove difficult, but not unaccomplishable. For example, debts and military expenditures incurred by the Rwandan and Ugandan-backed rebels, may not be recognised by the new national army.

The militarisation of politics has been the main reason for the disorganisation and instability in the DRC. After the Berlin Conference (1884-5) had recognised King Leopold II as the uncontested ruler of the Congo Basin, he immediately organised a military apparatus called the *Force Publique* (Public Force) to exploit his estate. By 1948, it had become an ethnically heterogeneous and well-integrated body that had a sense of national security because of its role in the nation-building process. Its outstanding performance in World War II indicated the level of discipline, professionalism and cohesion it had achieved⁵¹. But the *Force Publique* defended the Belgian colonial authority and state in suppressing indigenous political dissidents and mass revolts. Nevertheless, this 'professionalism' ended with Mobutu's snatching of the military command structure from the Belgian authorities.

Mobutu's junta was quickly transformed into an absolute personal and Machiavellian rule. He used his power and ill-gotten wealth to create lineages of patrons to "outfox potential opponent and to keep

wavering officials in line”⁵². Speculations about Lumumba’s murder divided the country and army into four separate entities: South Katanga, South Kasai, Oriental Province (Kisangani) and Leopoldville (Kinshasa). “The most difficult military challenge in reunifying the post-independent Congo, was to bring these different military units together”⁵³. It was also the most critical political challenge. Under Prime Minister Lumumba the military was an organised institution, a symbol of state authority, perfection and supremacy. This reputation disappeared a few hours after its Declaration of Independence in June 1960. The Congolese Army of 25 000 men, demanded the removal of its Belgian officers and pay increases for the enlisted. Since then, demands for higher pay and special privileges became the main features of military officers and civilian authorities.

The struggle for the civilian control of the military spoilt prospects for good civil-military relations and called for UN intervention – the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC). The first step in undertaking successful peace missions in the Great Lakes region is to restore the rule of law as prescribed by UN, Organisation of African Union (OAU), and Southern African Development Community (SADC) constitutions.

Compounding Congo’s insecurity is its bankruptcy. The DRC needs both ‘guns and butter’ – a professional army for self-defence and peacekeeping, and a credible programme for rapid and sustainable economic recovery. An absence of mutinies, coups and insurgencies among governmental forces following the death of president Laurent Kabila will be a must for the reviving of professionalism and political maturity in the DRC armed forces.

4.11 Conclusion

The former and late DRC President, Laurent Kabila, naively ignored the fact that global capitalist forces that govern the world economy, have strategic interests in the DRC. The natural resources of the DRC are critical for the industries of the advanced capitalist countries (ACCs) of the North and for the DRC’s resource-starved eastern neighbours. As a result, the sponsorship of a rebellion through Uganda and Rwanda was the only way of ensuring that these interests were secured, especially after Laurent Kabila reneged on deals for the extraction of Congo’s natural wealth.

The best and most efficient strategy to fight and win the war economy in the DRC is to sever support for the rebels and their Rwandan and Ugandan backers from the principal donors, such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Belgium, France and the US. The DRC government should review these donors’ political and economic interests as business opportunities and strive to optimise them for the DRC’s own post-war reconstruction. Linda de Hoyos asserts that Rwanda and Uganda finance their military operations and interventions in the Congo through donor monies⁵⁴. Since the Ugandan-Rwandan war against the Congolese people continues to be financed by the western ‘donor community’, the smarter strategy for the Congolese leaders is obtain direct collaboration with these donors. To an extent this has already been initiated by the incumbent government of Joseph Kabila who may have convinced the donors that the Rwandan and Ugandan route is unlikely to lead them to a ‘peaceful’, hence easier and cheaper, exploitation of the Congolese resources⁵⁵.

However, this move can be very dangerous if the Congolese local capacities and competencies to manage and implement change are not enriched and consolidated. For this reason, the Inter-Congolese Dialogue should agree on the economic reconstruction of the country and debate issues such as, an immigration policy that attracts investors. Repatriation and settlement of human capital has been the most effective way of developing the national intelligence and expertise needed for the transformation of innovations into opportunities and growth. With its immense resources and complex problems, Congo needs a good labour market. Labour migration, settlement of investors and human resources development constitute the core critical success factors that build modern mercantilism in industrialised countries. The DRC government should fight those who wage war on the Congolese but at the same time be positively flexible to nations and people who want to bring technologies, finance capital or labour into the country through temporarily or permanent settlement (residence).

The Rwandan and Ugandan route to the Congo has been too bloody, unlawful and unconventional. Perhaps the international sponsors of the invasion of the DRC expected the same level of cooperation from the Congolese as was the case during the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of

Congo-Zaire (AFDL) campaign to topple Mobutu. A green light and cooperation from the Congolese were taken for granted. There would be less civilian resistance if the international donor community's objectives and interests in the DRC and the Great Lakes region were to consider the welfare and development of the Congolese population. While the post-Mobutu leadership under Laurent Kabila failed to understand the new constraints in international political economy, the global economic forces have failed to understand that "it is impossible to change the world successfully unless the people understand the way it works and are involved in some way in the processes that change it"⁵⁶.

The DRC's post-conflict reconstruction, will essentially be about 'guns or butter'. Butter without 'protective' guns can be stolen, flowing from the dictum that defence and security are to government and development what insurance is to business.

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- 47 J Cilliers, "Resource wars, a new type of insurgency", in J Cilliers and C Dietrich (ed.), *Angola's war economy. The Role of Oil and Diamonds*, ISS, Pretoria, 2000, p. 11
- 48 Ibid
- 49 A community disorganisation is a state in which any one or more of the several subsystems, for whatever reason, fail to function at some specified expected level of effectiveness, for more on the topic see: J Bernard, "Community Disorganisation", in D L Sills (ed), op cit, p. 168
- 50 B Godsell, "Six Strategies for African Development", in D Rimmer (ed.), *Action in Africa: The experience of people involved in government, business and aid*, Royal African Society, James Currey and Heinemann, London, 1997, pp. 32-3
- 51 K N F Emizet, "Explaining the Rise and Fall of Military Regimes: Civil-Military Relations in the Congo", *Armed Forces and Society*, winter, 2000, pp. 206-7
- 52 G Nzongola & D Green, op cit, p. 1002

53 K N F Emizet, op cit, p. 208

54 L de Hoyos, "US Policy Debacle Brings Death to Millions in the Congo", in T Rubasha, *Genocide Congolais*, July 2000, p. 3

55 See S Naidoo, "What price peace in the DRC?", *Global Dialogue*, vol 6.2, July 2001, p. 18

56 Edwards, 1994. p. 79