

Committee: United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Issue: The situation in the African Great Lakes region

Student Officer: Maria Pandria

Position: Deputy President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Maria Pandria and I have the honour of serving as a Deputy President in the 4th DSTMUN UN Security Council.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my congratulations to all of you for participating in the 4th DSTMUN. As a matter of fact, the Security Council is one of the most demanding as well as fascinating MUN committees - the crucial issues that Security Council delegates are expected to address are of utmost importance and hold great influence on a global scale. Thus, I am beyond elated to meet and cooperate with you all in our Security Council journey. It will be a great chance for both us, the presidency, as well as for all of you, to extend our knowledge on perplexed, controversial matters of global security by engaging in fruitful and prolific debate.

The purpose of this Study Guide is to provide you with basic, necessary information regarding the topic at hand, namely "The situation in the African Great Lakes region". Though this document shall constitute an introduction to the topic, delegates are strongly encouraged to conduct their own research as well. It is important for you all to understand the roots of an issue as complex as the decades-long feud in south-central Africa, in order to create draft resolutions that could effectively and realistically influence the conflict in its current state.

I rest completely assured that you will all do an incredible job as Security Council Delegates, as well as enjoy the entire process to the fullest. Should you have any questions regarding this year's Security Council, ranging from procedural matters to information about the topic or the role of the Security Council in general, do not hesitate to contact me via email (maria.pandria@gmail.com). I would be more than pleased to aid you in any way possible and I cannot wait to officially meet you all in the 4th DSTMUN.

My best regards,

Maria Pandria

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Throughout the entirety of the 20th century, turbulence and instability have plagued the African Continent as a whole. Even nowadays, numerous conflict zones remain active and pose a threat to the security of the continent. A particularly conflict-prone region would be that of the African Great Lakes, located in eastern and central Africa, which refers to all countries bordering lakes Victoria, Edward, Albert, Kivu, Tanganyika and Malawi. The aforementioned nations have been in a constant feud for a long time, which escalated to an alarmingly dangerous degree in the past decades.

Since the 19th Century, the vast majority of African nations have been subject to numerous drastic political and geographical changes, especially during the eras of late-colonialism and post-colonialism. From the establishment of new controversial state borders by colonialists, to the constant interchange between democratic, totalitarian and military governments, changes in the region have been rapid and severe. Uncertainty amongst citizens regarding matters of ethnicity, religious identity and well-being have constituted ground for unrest and conflict. Military rebel groups, terrorist organisations and independent civilian armed forces incite conflict by launching attacks and performing coups against regional governments and ethnic populations, thus putting the security of citizens at great risk. Coup d'états are also a common phenomenon in the region, as the aforementioned groups tend to incite structural violence in their capacity as de facto political leaders, if their attempts to severely influence the current government succeed.

Conflicts in the region of the African Great Lakes rarely remain domestic, since the vast majority of them quickly become regional. Multiple ethnic groups with independent militia forces, such as the Hutu and Tutsi people, are spread out among all nations in the area. Rebels of those ethnic groups, who are also citizens of their

respective countries, often launch attacks collectively and target the Great Lakes area at large, rather than a single African nation. Those separatist rebel units show eminent desire for independence from their home countries and perform devastating acts of

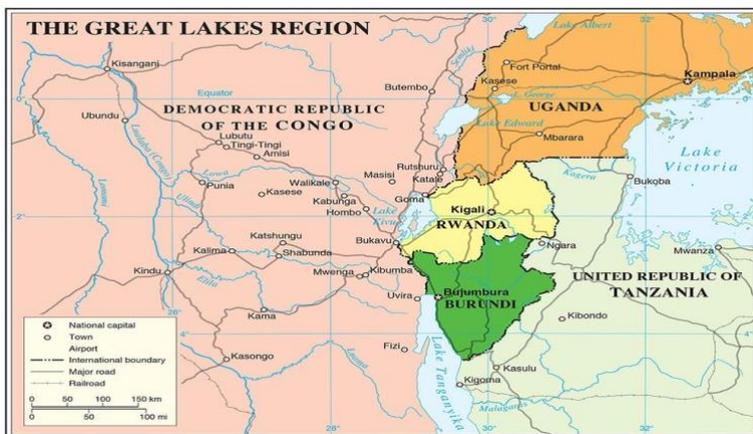


Figure 1: Map of the African Great Lakes Region

terrorism which endanger civilian nationals, with the prospect of achieving their goal.

It is, therefore, evident, that the graveness of the situation in the African Great Lakes region cannot be overlooked. Thus, the members of the Security Council are urged to address the issue at hand and find feasible solutions in order to mitigate the security risk in the area.¹

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Postcolonialism Era

"Postcolonialism is the historical period or state of affairs representing the aftermath of Western colonialism."²

Decolonization

"Decolonization is the process by which colonies become independent of the colonizing country"³

Coup d'Etat

"Coup d'état, also called coup, is the sudden, violent overthrow of an existing government by a small group. The chief prerequisite for a coup is control of all or part of the armed forces, the police, and other military elements."⁴

Political Instability

"The standard definition of political instability is the common tendency of a government collapse either because of conflicts or rampant competition between various political parties."⁵

Structural Violence

¹ "Conflict in the Great Lakes Region – ACCORD." ACCORD, 13 May 2016, www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/conflict-great-lakes-region/

² "Postcolonialism | History, Themes, Examples, & Facts." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/topic/postcolonialism

³ "Decolonization | Definition, Examples, & Facts." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/topic/decolonization

⁴ "Coup D'etat | Definition, Examples, & Facts." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/topic/coup-detat

⁵ "Can Political Stability Hurt Economic Growth?" *World Bank Blogs*, www.blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/can-political-stability-hurt-economic-growth

“Structural violence refers to a form of violence wherein a social structure or social institution may harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs.”⁶

De Facto Leader

“In politics, a de facto leader of a country or region is one who exercises power as if legally constituted, even though it is not”⁷

Ethnic Group

“Ethnic group, a social group or category of the population that, in a larger society, is set apart and bound together by common ties of race, language, nationality, or culture.”⁸

Refugee

“Refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country.”⁹

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Era of Post-Colonialism in Africa

In order to attain a concrete understanding of the national division and the complex geopolitical situation of the African Region in the 20th century, one must initially examine the early beginning of foreign colonialism in the continent. In the late 19th century, European nations collectively occupied African territory. Nations such as Germany, Belgium and France gained de facto control over areas with natural wealth, such as oil and diamond mines. Thus, the new colonial borders were drawn by the occupying European Nations based on their own financial benefit, with no regard to the indigenous peoples’ national identity, common cultural characteristics and ties to specific areas of land. African tribes, communities and unities were forcefully divided in newly created, colonized countries for the sake of exploitation of land. This resulted in a complete loss of previous national identity in

⁶ "Structural Violence." *ScienceDirect.com | Science, Health and Medical Journals, Full Text Articles and Books*, www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/structural-violence

⁷ "Definition of DE FACTO." Dictionary by Merriam-Webster: America's Most-trusted Online Dictionary, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/de%20facto

⁸ "Ethnic Group." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/topic/ethnic-group

⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "What is a Refugee?" *UNHCR*, www.unhcr.org/what-is-a-refugee.html

Africa, as ethnic populations were separated and culturally diverse people became citizens of the same colonial nation.

As the years progressed and the era of colonialism came to an end with the involvement of the United Nations, European colonizing nations eventually withdrew their territorial claims as well as their armed forces, leaving the newly formed colonial nations in Africa to their own devices. Due to the aforementioned national identity crisis caused by the colonial division of African populations, geopolitical instability dominated in the African continent during the post-colonial era. Regional

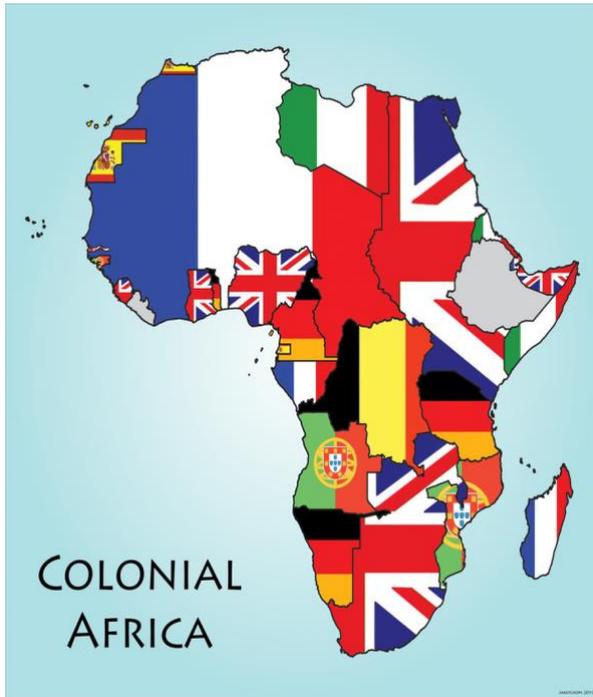


Figure 2: Map which shows how African territory was divided among western colonizing nations

political groups made attempts to establish national governments, secure unity and functionality in the area and build modern African nations within the newly drawn borders. An abundance of rebel organizations, separatist groups and independent militia, however, showed intense resistance against such political groups, fuelled by the remaining cultural diversity and strong ethnic identity from the pre-colonial era in the continent. The Great African Lakes Region poses a prominent example of such political instability and rebel resistance - separatist rebel groups in the area strongly demanded cultural and national independence from the newly arising Congolese, Ugandan, Rwandan and Burundian

governments in the area. That is due to the fact that most ethnic groups in the area were separated among those four nations in the 1880s and desired to become independent, self-governed communities again.¹⁰

The Roots of the Conflict in the African Great Lakes Region

Eventually, the separatist movements in the African Great Lakes became increasingly devastating, reaching the point where the entire central African area had transformed into a conflict-zone. Attacks by armed forces, mass public

¹⁰ "The Impact of Colonialism on African Languages." *Speak Africa*, 23 Nov. 2017, www.speak-africa.com/impact-colonialism-african-languages/

executions, arsons, sexual violence and even civil wars were commonplace for the region, performed on a daily basis by multiple different rebel groups, separatist organizations and government armies.

The main perpetrators of such violent acts have been the two following ethnic groups - the Tutsis and the Hutus. Over the past 600 years the two ethnic groups co-existed peacefully on the territory surrounding the African Great Lakes. Hutus originally resided in the region, until Tutsis migrated there around the 14th century. Tutsis undertook the task of raising local cattle, as well as exercised lenient governance over the area and Hutus complyingly occupied themselves with agriculture and crop production. There was no significant power imbalance between the two groups, until German colonizers enforced a Tutsi monarchy in the region and heavily disenfranchised the Hutus. The ethnic division grew even further when the two groups were separated between the nations of Rwanda, Zaire (later renamed DR Congo), Burundi and Uganda. Thus, the Hutu population, who were forcefully concentrated in Uganda, lost access to their national land, which now constituted the Tutsi-occupied Rwanda. In addition, as European nations began colonizing the African Great Lakes area, people from both the Tutsi and Hutu populations were forced to reside together in Zaire as citizens of the same nation due to the new colonial borders, even though the ethnic tensions between the two had become increasingly intense and violent.

Subsequently, a century later during the post-colonial era, such vile feuds quickly resurfaced. Multiple rebel groups and militias that were created by Hutus, Tutsis and other regional ethnic groups alike, revengefully desired national independence and repatriation. Prime examples of such rebel forces would be the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL), the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALiR) and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). In the span of a few years, those rebel groups became increasingly powerful as they gained the support of numerous civilians and even governmental branches and organizations. The rebels and their armed forces continuously attacked both civilians, as well as each other, in attempts to gain de facto control over urban and rural areas. The atrocities committed by armed rebel groups include multiple raids of villages and cities, arson in rural areas, terroristic military coups and mass killings.

Assassination of political leaders and government officials - including both de facto or elected ones - were also a common occurrence. The assassination of President Melchior Ndadaye, namely the first Hutu President in Burundi, by Tutsi rebels in 1993 was one of the most significant incidents of its kind. In addition, a year later the plane which Juvénal Habyarimana and Cyprien Ntaryamira had boarded was struck down by the Tutsi-rebel-led RPF. That was due to the fact that both

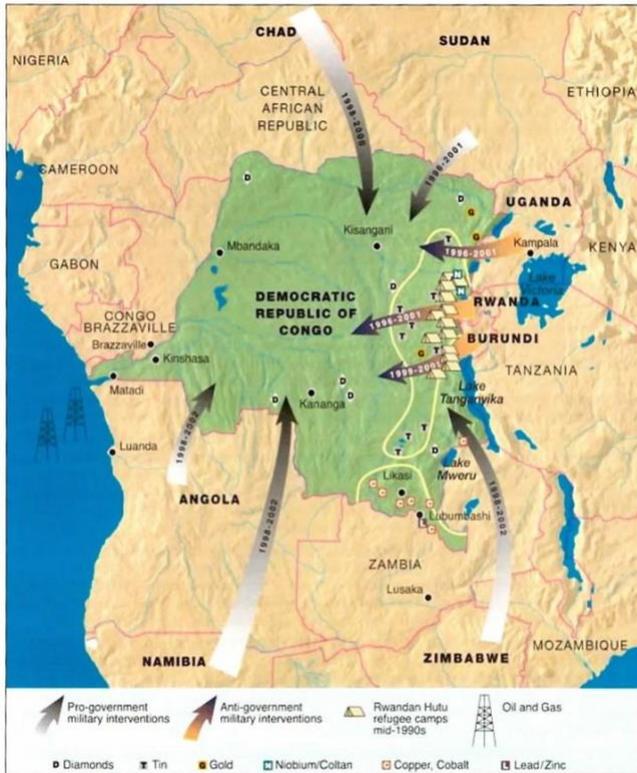
Habyarimana and Ntaryamira expressed leniency towards the Hutu population during their time as Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi respectively.

Thus, acts such as the aforementioned assassinations constituted the main reason behind a major turning point in the already conflictual situation in the area of the Great African Lakes - the phenomenal tragedy known as the Rwandan or Tutsi genocide. In 1994, the world was appalled to watch over a million of Rwandan civilians, composed mainly of Tutsis as well as a few moderate Hutus, be executed in masses by multiple anti-Tutsi organs. Hutu rebel groups were backed by regional governments, such as that of the DR Congo, in order to exterminate Tutsi people and deprive them from exercising any political influence in the area.

The First and Second Great African Wars

In the following years, the conflict among numerous ethnic groups, as well as nations in the area, became increasingly intense and devastating for all. Two significantly conflictual periods of time for the African Great Lakes Region would be the First and Second Great African Wars (1996-1997 and 1998-2003 respectively), also known as the First and Second Congo wars. Armies and rebel groups backed by several governments, including those of DR Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Sudan constantly invaded neighbouring states, extradited civilian and rebel populations to foreign ground and carried out multiple mass-killings. Political figures and government officials sparked strong contempt among ethnic groups with provocative speeches and actions, which led even civilians to commit atrocious hateful and violent acts as well. All peace attempts made by government leaders proved to be totally fruitless, as tension in the region was never sufficiently overcome - though the constant attacks were halted for short periods of time, the hate among African people was severely rooted into the ideology of ethnic populations as a whole. Thus, temporary measures, such as the Lusaka peacekeeping agreement proved to be majorly ineffective. The aforementioned agreement was signed by African Nations after much deliberation, with the sole help of the then Organisation for African Unity (OAU) acting as a peacekeeper between feuding nations.

Though the conflict in the Great African Lakes region was extremely devastating for the entire African Continent, foreign actors and organizations failed to act efficiently or quickly enough. The United Nations, for example, solely offered minimal aid to the area, in comparison to the actual great need for foreign peacekeeping involvement in the region. Only in 1999 did the UNSC belatedly establish a peacekeeping force in the area after being prompted to do so by treaties such as the Lusaka agreement, namely the United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The aforementioned body did, however, prove to be significantly ineffective in its first years of action, since all



Map 3: Regional actors in the Second Congo War
 Carte 3: Acteurs régionaux de la Seconde guerre du Congo
 Source: The New Internationalist

Figure 3: Map which shows the position of forces simultaneously attacking Congolese territory during the Second Congo War

existing peace agreements were quickly overturned and the Second Congo War commenced. In the few following years, the United Nations solely supported the area with humanitarian aid, though with no substantial efforts to diminish the violent acts between ethnic groups and regional governments.

Eventually, the war was declared a stalemate in 2003 and the tension in the area got progressively minimized. The presence of the OAU in the area and the creation of the ever-stronger institution of the

ground for discussion among various African states regarding peace, security and prosperity in the area. In addition, the UN Security Council had begun taking more effective action regarding the issue at hand. SC resolutions formed a concrete plan regarding the re-establishment of peace in the area, which all regional governments were expected to abide by. Thus, the extreme violence in the area was partly diminished and by the year 2003 the African Great Lakes region was in a much more secure state than in the previous conflictual decades.

The Ongoing Current Conflict in the African Great Lakes Region

Almost two decades have passed since the official truce between nations in the African Great Lakes area, which marked the end of the Second Congo War. Ever since, significant steps towards restoring peace in the area and minimizing the prevailing violence in the area have indeed been made. Diplomatic ties between neighbouring governments have been established, some to a greater and others to a more limited extent. Transnational trade and financial relations have helped the area progressively flourish in the realm of economics. The national division, ethnic segregation and hatred among various populations remains alarming and evident as ever.

As a matter of fact, the ongoing violence among ethnic groups in recent years has spurred from the continuous controlled instigation of hatred for various populations into people. Political leaders, military officials and numerous persons of power strongly advocate vile detest for varying ethnic groups. As people of great influence, they have vast numbers of supporters who will follow their lead. Thus, when a person of such power expresses hatred towards a specific group of people for their own benefit, their supporters subliminally develop similar negative feelings against said population. There are multiple examples of political leaders expressing dissatisfaction with an ethnic group, e.g. the Tutsi population of Rwanda - afterwards, their supporters commit atrocious acts against said population, with the aim to satisfy their political or military leader. Additionally, even if citizens do not act violently against those ethnic groups, the innate hatred instilled in their minds by political propaganda remains. Thus, it is currently impossible for many African people to feel any sense of unity with all populations in their region.

Apart from atrocious acts committed by fanatic political supporters, rebel groups from the two Congo Wars remain as the main violent actors in the African Great Lakes region conflict. Rebel and separatist groups such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) still perform multiple organized attacks, coup d'états and violent acts against regional governments and citizens. The ethnic division between Hutu-led and Tutsi-led rebel forces remains apparent as ever, since the two solely fuel, rather than resolve their differences by engaging in armed fights. Regional government branches even back such rebel forces occasionally, supplying them with arms and information on their opponents - governments which would actually profit from the extermination or extradition of certain ethnic populations in the area.

The democratic deficit in the area, which puts the region in an increasingly dangerous state of political instability, is abundantly evident. The current governments in most nations in the African Great Lakes region are constantly threatened by rebel organizations, ethnic groups demanding separation and self-governance, military units electing de facto leaders in intrastate areas and exasperated citizens constantly protesting against national officials. The aforementioned political propaganda by influential political and military figures only fuels the uncertainty and political instability in the area. The social and criminal justice systems are in a devastating situation, since various government branches display biased and pro-conflict behaviour, such as segregation against specific ethnic groups and abuse of power for their own benefit.

The Devastating Effects of the Conflict on Civilians

As expected, in an area as vast and conflict-prone as the African Great Lakes region, the civilians residing there are constantly plagued by numerous life-

threatening difficulties, which greatly influence their well-being and drastically lower their quality of life. The significant security deficit in the area derives from a multitude of reasons and has devastating effects, not solely in the nations involved, but also in the African continent at large.

The most prominent factor of the security deficit is the fact that all areas, ranging from urban centres to rural communities and villages, are constantly subject to armed conflict. National armies, rebel groups, independent militia and even terrorist organizations clash on a daily basis, with no regard to the population residing in those areas of conflict. Attacks on civilians, infrastructure destruction, arsons, bombings and attempted assassinations are a common occurrence. Such incidents constitute the so called “power moves” made by all above types of organizations and rebel groups such as those mentioned above, with the aim of gaining control over areas and terrorizing the general public. The Allied Democratic Forces rebel group (ADF), for example, reportedly raided 25 villages, set fire to dozens of houses, and

kidnapped over 70 people in the span of three months in 2020. It is abundantly clear that the rebel groups’ conquest of control, power and influence endangers civilians to a great extent.



Figure 4: Internally displaced Congolese people receive emergency aid from UNHCR personnel

Subsequently, another negative effect of such violent incidents is, as mentioned before, the destruction of vital housing and facilitating infrastructure. This inflicts two major issues - millions of people are left displaced and local economies fail due to limited production.

In addition, as far as internal displacement is concerned, it is caused mainly by bombings and arsons, usually initiated by regional rebel groups, which tear down entire villages and towns. Thus, civilians are left homeless and desperate, seeking asylum in other equally as conflict-prone areas as internally displaced people. A large number of the displaced population often illicitly attempt to cross national borders in order to find refuge in neighbouring nations, thus inflicting an alarming refugee crisis in the African Great Lakes area in general. Regarding the financial deficit caused by such incidents, it derives from the fact that local economies often get immensely

hindered due to destruction of infrastructure. Agricultural territories get burned down, local shops and production machinery get torn down and workers are often forced to flee the area due to life-threatening circumstances. Thus, regional economies in the African Great Lakes nations struggle to flourish, since production is so limited.

Lastly, circumstances such as the aforementioned inflict national destitution. Alimentary shortages lead to food insecurity and general instability in the area leads to high unemployment rates. Another common instance is the drafting of child soldiers in rebel armies, in exchange for minimal sustenance and shelter for their families. People are in desperate need for humanitarian aid, as the security and well-being deficit in the African Great Lakes area constantly increases.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly named Zaire until the name was officially changed in 1997, has constituted the main violent actor in the African Great Lakes conflict zone over the past decades. As a nation shaped by colonizing countries, the DR Congo is a home country to multiple African ethnic groups, including Tutsis, Hutus. Millions of people who belong to various indigenous African populations have fled to and from the DRC ever since the nation was formed. The country's alarmingly turbulent past includes instigation of both Congo Wars, the official governmental support of Hutu rebel groups which carried out the Tutsi Genocide in 1994 and significant failure to abide by Security Council resolutions regarding peace in the area. Even nowadays, the official Congolese army often engages in violent battles with neighbouring forces and rebel groups, despite all peacekeeping efforts in the area by multiple foreign and regional actors. Political instability is increasingly imminent on Congolese territory, as multiple militia-led groups gain civilian support by refuelling the ethnic hatred in the area with provocative behaviour and threaten to overthrow the current democratic government. Congolese citizens live under great danger as their security is threatened on a daily basis, due to the conflictual tension in their country.

Furthermore, as previously mentioned the DR Congo has shown significant noncompliance with Security Council Resolutions demanding peacekeeping efforts in the area, ever since 1999. The DRC continuously instigated violence against numerous ethnic populations, rebel groups and governments in the region. Thus, in 2003 the Security Council officially imposed sanctions on the DR Congo, which

remain in place until today. Structural violence, malicious attacks and hatred-fuelling propaganda are still extremely common phenomena on Congolese territory.

Rwanda

The country of Rwanda has for decades been one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse nations in not only the African Great Lakes region, but also in the entire African continent. It is home to multiple ethnic populations, including the Tutsi, the Hutu, the Twa and other similar African groups with prominent cultural, religious and national identities and characteristics. Thus, ever since the colonial border divide, Rwanda has paved an alarmingly turbulent path to its current situation. Rwanda as a country was devastatingly plagued by the Tutsi genocide in 1994, in which so many Rwandan Tutsi citizens were exterminated that the incident was later renamed Rwandan genocide.

Ever since, civil war among Rwandan citizens of different origin and as well as among Rwandan ethnic groups and most neighbouring nations, has been a common occurrence. Rwanda was a main actor in both Congo Wars, with rebel and separatist groups such as the Rwandan Patriotic Front inflicting major unrest in the area.

The situation nowadays remains grave as ever, with political instability, military coups and structural violence prevailing in Rwanda. Organizations such as MONUSCO do make attempts to gain control over the situation, though regional Rwandan governments and leaders have shown unwillingness to cooperate with such organs. Furthermore, UN organs such as the Security Council have only released very few resolutions, action plans and missions centred around Rwanda, specifically. Thus, more extensive measures need to be taken, in order for the volatility in Rwanda to be mitigated.

Uganda

Similarly to all countries in the African Great Lakes region, the newly formed colonial Uganda was and still remains composed of numerous feuding ethnic groups. The geographical placement of Uganda in the middle of the African Lakes Region, as it is bordered by most other feuding nations in the area, makes Ugandan territory alarmingly conflict-prone and dangerous. In the past, as well as nowadays, volatility in the area has been high, with multiple kinds of violent acts being constantly executed in the area. Furthermore, Uganda constitutes the home base of one of the largest and most dangerous rebel groups in the area, namely the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). The ADF is an anti-Congolese rebel group, which is even backed by the Ugandan Government with military support and promotion of its causes. Ever since the late 20th century, the ADF has taken both a military, as well as a political role in the area. The rebel organization has earned an abundance of Ugandan civilian

supporters due to their extremist political views, which heavily promote ethnic division and condemn unity in the region.

In addition, one of the largest issues faced by Uganda would be that of internal displacement. As an area that is exceptionally prone to conflict, domestic infrastructure that houses civilians and large urban centres gets constantly destroyed, along with all agricultural and market activity in the area. Thus, an alarmingly high number of Ugandans are left homeless and destitute within their nations' borders.

African Union

As of today, the African Union, officially created between 2000-2004, holds the role of the most prominent organization of African nations. It currently has 55 members - including all states from the African Great Lakes region - and constitutes a collective political, decision-making organ for all African countries involved.

As a matter of fact, the conflict in the African Great Lakes region also influences other African nations, as well as general stability in the African continent. African economies, trade agreements, defence mechanisms, destitution crises and social problems are interconnected - the conflict-prone state of the African Great Lakes region influences multiple other nations on all expenses of the African continent. Thus, the African Union is an immensely significant organization in the pursuit for peace in said region, since all nations directly or indirectly affected by it can take equal part in the decision-making process regarding their shared issues. The African Union has, therefore, made multiple attempts to mitigate the security deficit in the African Great Lakes region, some more fruitful and long-term effective than others.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
Approximately 1980	The beginning of the post-colonialism era in Africa
4 August 1993	The Arusha Agreement was signed between the government of Rwanda and the Rwandan Rebel Patriotic Front
21 October 1993	Assassination of the first Hutu President in Burundi, ex-President Melchior Ndadaye
6 April 1994	Hutu Rwandan President Juvénal

	Habyarimana and Hutu Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira were assassinated by Tutsi rebels
7-15 April 1994	The Rwandan Tutsi genocide was carried out
8 November 1994	The Security Council created the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
November 1996 - May 1997	The First Congo War
8 December 1996	The Lusaka Agreement was signed between seven feuding nations
2 August 1998 - 18 July 2003	The Second Congo War
Late 2003	The Security Council poses sanctions on the DR Congo
9 April 1999	The first Security Council resolution regarding the African Great Lakes conflict was signed (Resolution 1234)
30 November 1999	The United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo was created by the Security Council
16 January 2001	Laurent-Désiré Kabila, the incumbent President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was assassinated
2002	The Luanda Agreement was signed between the Ugandan and Congolese governments
November 2004	The International Great Lakes Conference (IGLC) takes place with 11 official members
28 May 2010	Extended sanctioning of the DRC by the Security Council based on the Resolution 1925
24 February 2013	The Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC is signed by nations in the region
1 July 2021	The most recent extension of sanctions on the DRC by the Security Council, which remain in place

RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

Security Council Resolution 1234, 9 April 1999 ¹¹

Resolution 1234 constitutes the first time the Security Council formally addressed the conflict in the African Great Lakes region and specifically the volatile situation in the DRC. It orders for an immediate ceasefire to all violent action in the area and proposes peace-keeping measures such as international negotiations. The resolution follows the establishment of the MONUC peacekeeping force in early 1999 and constitutes a starting plan regarding the action that both MONUC and regional authorities are expected to take, in order to ensure stability in the accordant conflict zones. Though the clauses do not propose significantly effective or specialized measures in order to diminish violence in the region, an initial effort to establish a legal framework regarding peacekeeping operations in the African Great Lakes area is made by the Security Council.

Security Council Resolution 1925, 28 May 2010 ¹²

The Resolution 1925 constitutes further attempt at establishing peace in the area, reconsideration and redirection of the peacekeeping actions of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). Though the predecessor of MONUSCO, namely MONUC, had instigated moderate progress regarding peacekeeping efforts in the area ever since its creation in 1999, its action did not prove to be effective enough. MONUC lacked concrete legal framework and action plans regarding peacekeeping operations and the way the organization was structured seemed to be quite dysfunctional and ineffective. Thus, a necessary reform was in order. The Resolution 2010 undertakes the task of putting a re-structured peacekeeping organization in the area, namely MONUSCO. Resolution 1925 carefully plans out the course of action which the peacekeeping organization is expected to follow and focuses mainly on active UN involvement in the region, rather than passive observation and minimal involvement in the actual violent feud. Thus, MONUSCO proved to be far more effective, result-oriented and consistent in its actions than its predecessor.

Security Resolution 1533, 12 March 2014 ¹³

¹¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Security Council Resolution 1234 (1999) [Situation Concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo]." Refworld, www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f45dc.html

¹² "Security Council Resolution 1925 (2010) [on Extension of the Mandate of the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)]." Refworld, www.refworld.org/docid/4c174e522.html

¹³ "Security Council Resolution 1533 (2004) [on Establishing a Committee of the Security Council Consisting of All Members of the Council to Seek Information from the States in the Region Regarding the Actions Taken by Them to Implement Effectively the Measures Imposed by Paragraph 20 of

By the time that Resolution 1533 was signed, a significant number of treaties and peace agreements had already been signed by multiple organs, such as the UNSC and the African Union. The violent situation on Congolese territory did, however, solely deteriorate ever since the minimal efforts made in 2003 for peacekeeping in the region - armed attacks on civilians by DRC-backed forces, structural violence in the Congolese society and hatred-fuelling propaganda in the realm of politics never officially ceased. The aforementioned violent actions threatened the security of people in the region, instilled political instability and were classified as human rights violations. Thus, the Security Council ordered the imposition of sanctions on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, due to significant failure to abide by SC orders. Even nowadays, the sanctions have not yet been lifted, which only proves how devastating the conflict-like situation in the African Great Lakes region remains.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

After the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was created with the aid of the UN. The purpose of the ICTR was and still remains, to trial war criminals and people who made human rights violations throughout the duration of the Rwandan genocide. The court had the necessary jurisdiction to trial both civilians as well as people of an official status, if they were largely accused of crimes against humanity. The court is managed by the UN in cooperation with Rwandan authorities and legal experts and functions in accordance with major international UN Conventions, since the Statute of the ICTR was actually modelled after the Statute of the International Court of Justice.

The Arusha, Lakusa and Luanda Agreements

In 1993, the Arusha peace Agreement was signed between the official Rwandan Government and the Rwandan Rebel Patriotic Front. The two feuding parties agreed to minimize violence in the area and settle the geopolitical issues between them with negotiations and leniency against each other. The agreement was, however, only effective for a short amount of time, since a few months afterwards the violent military attacks and separatist movements commenced again.

Later in late 1996, a month after the instigation of the First Congo War, the Lakusa Agreement was signed by seven feuding nations in the African Great Lakes region - DR Congo, Anzola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. The

Resolution 1493 and to Comply with Paragraphs 18 and 24 of the Same Resolution]." Refworld, www.refworld.org/docid/41123d274.html

agreement initially showed great promise, with measures as ground-breaking as suggesting that a UN peacekeeping force be stationed in the area. In an extremely short period of time, however, the Lakusa Agreement got violently overturned and the First Congo war commenced.

Similarly, in 2002, during the Second Congo War, the Luanda peace agreement was also signed between the Ugandan and Congolese Government. It proposed measures such as the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from the other nation's territory and re-establishment of civil relations between the two governments. Not unlike its predecessor, however, the Luanda agreement proved to be equally as ineffective as all measures proposed were blatantly ignored by both signers and violence continued to devastate the region.

MONUC and MONUSCO

In 1999 the situation in the African Great Lakes region was turbulent as ever - the Second Congo War had commenced and extremely violent attacks devastated the area on a daily basis. Thus, though very belatedly, the UN Security Council made the first decisive attempts to mitigate the volatility in the area. The United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was created by specialized UN representatives, with the aim of establishing an unbiased, all-inclusive organization that could efficiently handle the volatile situation, without fuelling any further dispute. MONUC got stationed in multiple conflict zones within Congolese territory and attempted to mitigate the alarming situation as foreign good-will ambassadors. In the first years, however, such attempts seemed to be fruitless, since the fighting continued and MONUC eventually undertook the rather passive role of an observer, instead of a peacekeeper.

A drastic change in the way MONUC operated was deemed mandatory. Thus, in 2010, the Security Council decided to re-evaluate the peacekeeping force in DRC and replace it with its successor, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The newly formed peacekeeping mission is much more result-oriented, takes an active role in the prevention of conflict and enhances the security of civilians in conflict-prone areas. It is stationed in a larger number of Congolese provinces and undertakes tasks such as the sheltering of displaced populations, the facilitation of fruitful negotiation among regional province leaders, the exchange of information regarding pending uprisings and the effective stopping of violent attacks. In general, MONUSCO has taken a much more active stance than its predecessor and makes steady peacekeeping progress by closely abiding by the orders of the Security Council.

Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC

As the violent conflict between feuding African nations seemed to be never-ending and ever-increasing, the situation called for further extensive measures to be taken. Thus, on 24 February, 2013, a provisional framework was created, regarding peacekeeping efforts in the Great Lakes region and mainly in the territory of the DRC. It was signed by multiple nations in the region and provided a number of innovative and promising solutions to major issues in the area. Examples of such propositions would be the strengthening of women's rights in the area, measures to tackle social inequalities between ethnic groups, consolidation of concrete democratic state authority and more efficient prosecution of war crimes.

Though promising as they seemed, the DRC, as well as most other nations involved, failed to abide by the new regulations and only put little effort into bringing the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC to fruition - an instance which also contributed greatly to the more extensive sanctioning of the DRC.

Thus, it became abundantly clear that moderate action such as provisional legal frameworks and peacekeeping propositions were not effective enough to mitigate the violence in the African Great Lakes region - there remains a need for more extreme measures to be taken, in order for security to be established in the area.

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)

In resolution 1234 the Security Council ordered the creation of an international conference to discuss peace and security in the region. Until then, the



Figure 5: The official emblem of the ICGLR

feuding nations in the African Great Lakes region did not have specific ground for negotiation and peace settlements, due to the lack of an official organizing body. Thus, in the immediate aftermath of the Second Congo War, the ICGLR was founded with the aid of the African Union and the UN. The organization is composed of twelve member states, namely Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Republic of South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia. The ICGLR indeed

created the much needed ground for peace-talks, cooperation and common problem-solving that the region previously lacked.¹⁴

¹⁴"ICGLR Overview." *Www.icglr.org - International Conference of the Great Lakes Region*, www.icglr.org/index.php/en/background

Ever since, through the ICGLR, all nations involved have made a considerably steady progress towards tackling regional problems as a unit. Government leaders have addressed the geopolitical instability in the area, the social inequality among ethnic groups and the grave regional humanitarian crisis. Though there has been no total effective ceasefire among those nations yet and constant attacks by rebel groups and major militias continue, the facilitation of negotiations has at least become more fruitful through the ICGLR.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Mitigating ethnic hatred in the realm of politics

In order to tackle an issue as complex as that of the conflict in the African Great Lakes region, one must initially identify the root of the problem and attempt to exterminate it. As a matter of fact, instilling of detestation for other ethnic groups in the minds of civilians by influential people of power, is an extremely common phenomenon in the African Great Lakes region. People develop strong hatred for neighbouring nations and populations, due to the political and military propaganda they are constantly subjected to.

Nowadays, biased media, dangerously influential pro-violence groups and abuse of political and military power by officials are all problems which plague the region and instigate ethnic hatred. Thus, the Security Council could propose solutions regarding the minimization of propaganda by influential persons and find ways to ensure transparency in the realm of politics. Ensuring that security in the area is effective enough to diminish the above mentioned factors of propaganda would greatly influence the violent situation in the African Great Lakes region, since civilian masses would neither be subjects of ethnic hatred, nor instigators of it.

Re-Evaluation and Imposition of Sanctions and Arm Embargoes in the African Great Lakes Region

Ever since the first major devastating events in the African Great Lakes area, the Security Council has imposed, reinforced and strengthened sanctions and arm embargoes on multiple nations in the area. Nowadays, the only nation in which sanctions have not been lifted is the DR Congo - the initial sanctioning of 2003 has only been made more limiting ever since. The Security Council has reinforced those sanctions multiple times throughout the years, such as in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2020. A re-evaluation of such intensive sanctioning could be in order, whether that is to extend, maintain, diminish or annul them - Security Council members tend to have differing opinions on the matter.

Furthermore, the sanctioning of neighbouring states with a reputation almost equally as violent to that of the DR Congo could be considered by Security Council Member States as a more extreme means of warning for violent African countries in the area.

Lastly, the Security Council could order that total or partial arm embargoes be put in place, either in the African Great Lakes Region at large or in specific conflict zones with increased violent activity (e.g. South Kivu, Kinshasa).

Direct Action Towards African Rebel and Separatist Militia Groups

Over the past few decades major independent, self-governed armed forces have been initiating violence and political unrest throughout the African Lakes Region, such as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Allied Democratic forces (ADF). Since those groups are not government-controlled (though sometimes discreetly government-backed), Security Council orders regarding the African Nations in the area do not directly influence those large rebel groups. Thus, an attempt to directly approach those groups with security measures specifically tailored to mitigate their course of violent acts might prove to be effective. Should Security Council Member States choose to pursue such an expedition, it could be discussed by what means, to what extent and with what goal those rebel groups will be approached. Which route would, for example, be more beneficial - engaging in negotiations with the leaders of such organisations, proposing extensive pre-emptive measures if they remain equally as violent or taking intensive suppressive measures against them?

UN and Foreign Involvement in the Area as Peacekeepers

The African Great Lakes region is a vast territory with an outstanding number of conflict areas. The activities of MONUSCO include patrol of the area at large, in order to prevent as big a number of attacks, coups, protests and violent acts as possible. Exchange of information between MONUSCO units isn't adequately facilitated, due to the general instability and volatility in the region - unexpected uprisings constantly happen in various different areas. Thus, further patrolling measures could be in order.

The Security Council could order that an even larger number of specialized MONUSCO personnel be appointed as patrol and communication units. The scope of the actions of such personnel could also be decided by Security Council Member States. In addition, influential Security Members could act as observers in the area, with an aim similar to that of MONUSCO observers in the area. Personnel of SC Member States, such as the United States of America and France currently act as observers in various conflictual regions (e.g. South China Sea). Thus, a possible

solution to the issue of limited information exchange between peacekeeping operations could be the appointment of even more observer units, possibly from foreign nations. The extent to which observer States could get involved in the actual conflicts in the region is to be decided by Security Council Members, if observer states do indeed get appointed.

Lastly, the establishment of temporary buffer zones between nations in the African Great Lakes area could also be facilitated. Guarded by either MONUSCO, regional or international military personnel, a buffer zone between national borders could significantly decrease the number of uprisings between citizens of different countries. Furthermore, buffer zones could aid MONUSCO and other organizations gain better control over the immigrant crisis in the area, due to the fact that most movement of people and refugees between nations will be monitored.

Expanding the Scope of Action of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region

As of today, the ICGLR has been one of the most innovative and effective measures taken in order for peacekeeping in the area to be facilitated. It has created ground for discussion among political leaders and given nations the opportunity to tackle common social, environmental and financial issues collectively. Thus, an attempt to broaden the scope of the ICGLR's action could prove to be greatly beneficial for all nations involved.

Cultural, political, geopolitical, religious and violence issues could also be approached by all ICGLR nations in cooperation. The Security Council could propose fields in which African states in the region could create common policies, provisional legal frameworks and action plans. Combatting terrorism, sexual violence, criminal injustice and destruction of infrastructure together, would give national leaders the opportunity to see eye to eye on multiple aspects. UN (e.g. MONUSCO) personnel could act as observers and facilitators of discussion in such kinds of ICGLR meetings, in order to ensure that the decision-making process remains civil, unbiased and prolific.

Additionally, a panel of specialized UN political experts could work alongside government leaders in the ICGLR, with the aim of expertly helping them resolve differences on sensitive matters, such as national identity and geopolitical division. The UN panel could also provide ICGLR states with effective propositions regarding measures that are not only beneficial for all parties involved, but also for the entire African Great Lakes region as a whole.

Possible expansions of the scope of action of the ICGLR could be the following: The ICGLR could pursue the expedition of gaining more influence as a

political body. Citizens of all member nations in the area could be aided in developing some kind of common identity, cultural as well as political. Those African citizens could be prompted to engage in peaceful activities with their counterparts from neighbouring nations, all due to ICGLR unification and integration initiatives.

Lastly, ICGLR unity could even expand to the point where the nations develop a common regional army, formed by the fusion of military units from all nations. The aim of such a possible collective army could be discussed by Security Council Member States, with targets such as eliminating common threats in the area (aka. ISIS-backed terrorist groups).

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