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## **Transnational Insurgencies and the Challenges of Diplomatic Relations in Africa's Great Lakes Region**

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### **Abstract**

*The article explores transnational dynamics of the major intrastate wars in the Great Lakes Region (GLR) and analyses how transnational insurgencies have been and continue to be the engine in the architecture of diplomatic relations in the GLR member-states. The article is hinged on a theoretical framework pertaining to transnationalism and transnational insurgencies. It provides the background to the conflicts in the GLR and highlights the role of colonialism and neocolonialism causing and perpetuating the conflicts. It is argued that transnational insurgencies were mainly a postcolonial phenomenon sustained, first via cold war politics and later through engagement in illicit businesses. This is followed by an analysis of the approaches in the management of transnational insurgencies where unilateralism and multilateralism are examined. It is posited that unilateral approach squarely centered on revenge and clandestine and or overt support of insurgents by host states. This dominated most part of the early neocolonial period until the year 2000 and is responsible for much of the inter-state belligerent relations in the GLR. The multilateral approach, i.e., regional, collective security, transmitted through various inter-state bodies in the region, is interrogated and the cardinal motivations for the shift in approach, provided. It is advanced that this shift was occasioned by both the realization of the contradictions inherent in the single state approach and the growing international demand for regional governance and cooperation under current globalization. The last part of the article, the conclusion, probes the challenges to the current diplomacy of regional collective security, upon which recommendations are constructed.*

**Key Words:** *Transnational, Insurgency, Diplomacy, Diplomatic Relations, Great Lakes Region.*

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**Introduction:** Civil wars have become the dominant mode of organized violence in the post cold war international system. Yet such wars rarely occur within the territorial boundaries of one state; they have international and transnational dimensions that make them a proper subject of study for diplomatic historians and other international relations specialists (Checkel, 2009:3). Contemporary insurgents are characterized by militant groups that span national borders, benefiting from sanctuaries in neighboring states. Such groups have

complicated traditional counter insurgency operations and have sparked off serious interstate conflicts. While some states have engaged in cooperative strategies to contain transnational insurgencies, many have been drawn into prolonged complex conflicts over the issue of foreign sanctuaries (Salehyan, 2009:12).

This article explores transnational dynamics of the major intra state wars in the Great Lakes Region (GLR) and analyses how transnational insurgencies have been and continue to be a major driving force in the shaping and sustenance of diplomatic relations among other member states in the region. It is premised on three objectives. First, to explore the origins of transnational insurgencies in the GLR of Africa. Second, to examine the approaches in the management of transnational insurgencies and the influence of these approaches on interstate relations in the region. Third, to highlight the challenges of the current diplomacy of collective regional security approaches for the total annihilation of transnational insurgencies in the GLR.

The article begins with a brief theoretical framework on transnationalism, transnational insurgencies and conceptualization of the GLR to give perspective to the analysis. A background to the conflicts in the GLR follows, highlighting the role of colonialism and colonialism in the causation and perpetuation of conflicts. It then gives the GLR experience with transnational insurgencies of observing that transnational insurgencies were mainly a post colonial phenomenon sustained first through cold war politics and later through engagement in illicit business. This is followed by a discussion of the approaches in the management of transnational insurgencies where unilateralism and multilateralism are examined. Unilateral approaches mainly centered on revenge and clandestine and or overt support of insurgents by host countries. It dominated most part of the early independence period till early 2000 and was responsible for much of the interstate hostile relations in the region. The multilateral approach – regional collective security, delivered through various inter-governmental bodies in the region, is discussed and the main motivations for the shift in approach given. It is urged that this shift was mainly occasioned by the realization of the problems wherent in the single state approach and the growing international demand for regional governance and cooperation. The last part, the conclusion highlights the challenges to the current diplomacy of regional collective security. Through the analysis of the various cooperative mechanisms, the article identified the major challenges to regional cooperation in the in the realm of peace and security and makes recommendations for the promotion of cooperative diplomacy as a means of ensuring peace and security for a non hostile interstate relations environment in the region.

The article draws on multiple cases of transnational insurgencies that have operated and continue to operate in the GLR to provide a broader view of the phenomenon under analysis and illustrate the inextricable linkages between internal and external, state and non state actors. It is presented in historical perspectives to demonstrate how interstate relations have evolved from conflictual to cooperative perspectives; with the increasing role of regional cooperation and integration through the Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the expanded East African Community (EAC), the new International Conference

on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and through the Western powers. It is built on the proposition that transnational insurgencies influence international relations often causing hostile interstate relations and these insurgencies evoke different diplomatic responses ranging from revenge and alliance formation to collective security measures.

**Theoretical Framework:** No picture of global politics is complete if the complex pattern of interactions between national and international and the traditional notion of sovereignty has undergone a major paradigm shift in which non state actors have encroached upon the prerogatives of the sovereign state (Johari, 2009:33). Transnational groups such as guerilla movements and terrorist organizations move across national boundaries for sanctuary and aid in order to move violent attacks on people in power that they identify as enemies. These groups may take a variety of forms as fractions of nationalist or separatist movements based on nationality factors or premised on a given ideology (Salehyan, 2009; Johari, 2009). Transnational Insurgents which scholars like Salehyan, (2010) refer to as rebels across borders, or transnational rebels, influence international relations often causing hostile interstate relations and evoking different diplomatic responses ranging from revenge and alliance formation to collective security measures. Once rebels cross borders, they cease to be an internal affair and, therefore, necessarily draw in different countries (Stanland, 2005; Salehyan, 2010:6).

The survival of transnational insurgents is attributable in large part to foreign sanctuaries, diasporas and porous borders through which they rebuild and replace their human power. Especially helpful to insurgents on the run, is a neighboring state that is either sympathetic toward their cause, or is unable to effectively control its own borders. According to Stanland (2005) when insurgents fail to successfully defend and govern territory in the face of hot government counterinsurgent operations, they find new ways to maintain political and military power that may be located in a neighboring state. Sanctuaries in neighboring states can provide a safe haven for training and organizing tasks that would be difficult inside the actual combat zone. In escaping the daily pressures of basic survival looming in their home territory, insurgent groups may even eventually resemble professional military organizations (Salehyan, 2009; Stanland, 2005).

Salehyan (2010) observes that once transnational insurgents have established themselves in a foreign soil, the conflict ceases to be wholly domestic and necessarily draws in neighboring governments. Transnational insurgents generate conflicts between states because they normally employ the tactic of supporting their neighbors insurgent movements as a means to undermine their foreign enemies and rival neighbors in turn empower insurgents as an alternative to the direct use of force. Some states use coercive bargaining against their neighbors to press for the eviction of insurgents of their territory. This coercive diplomacy often involves troop deployment along the border, launching cross border strikes against rebel bases and at times, direct confrontation with the armed forces of the rebel host country as a means of increasing pressure on the rebel host to take action (Salehyan, 2005:8) .

According to Stanland (2005), insurgents often foment rebellion and instability in their neighbors in order to undermine rival governments. In these cases, transnational rebels are not only tolerated on the host state's territory, but they may be actively encouraged and supplied by the host government and when two states view others as hostile, borders are likely to be "hardened" and even minor incursions by the neighboring state will be seen as provocative. Several examples demonstrate this phenomenon. In the current Sudan case, conflict has not been contained by national borders as Darfur rebels operate in Eastern Chad, where they share ethnic ties with locals and Sudan has frequently accused Chad of harboring and aiding rebels.

Contemporary insurgents have also developed an ability to sustain themselves through traffic in high value resources under their control which became a new pattern in insurgency war financing in especially the post cold war era. For example, throughout the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) forces operated in areas of Southern Angola devoid of such resources and their needs were met by access to South Africa, the United States and some other supplies and funding (Turner, 2007:80) UNITA. In the 1990s, UNITA, now short of cold war support, shifted its military operation to the diamond fields and found a lucrative means for self sustenance. All the Congo Kinshasa armed factions since 1998 have financed themselves in this manner and also in large measure, the foreign armies supporting one or another of the factions (Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, etc) and Uganda's LRA. This dimension of self substance makes resolution of conflict almost impossible for a number of reasons. One, insurgent leaders ignore the need for popular support and concentrate on the need to control the resource source by all means including depriving the local people of basic survival needs. The result is disaffection with the local people which creates animosity between insurgents and the local population (Buhaug and Gates, 2002). The absence of popular backing makes recruitment of adults difficult and insurgents resort to recruitment of children who are brutally transformed into child soldiers. LRA is a classic illustration of how disaffection with the local population makes resort to child recruitment an unavoidable undertaking (Young, 2007:26).

The foregoing discussion has provided brief theoretical insights into the subject of transnational insurgencies in international relations and diplomacy and how they underpin operations of different neighboring states. This reflection now takes us to the specific issue of transnational insurgencies in the GLR. Transnational insurgencies are still active in the GLR and they exhibit considerable transnational elements that complicate matters and necessitate building strong relations to contain military as well as prevent disputes arising between member states. For example, the LRA and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) as well as Darfur rebels are still troubling countries of the Central African Republic, the DR Congo on top of Uganda and Sudan where they originate and these created different diplomatic implications. But before we go into details of transnational insurgencies in the GLR, we need to first understand what is meant mean by the Great Lakes Region of Africa.

**The Great Lakes Region Contextualized:** There are many perceptions about what constitutes the membership of the Great Lakes Region of Africa. According to Mpangala

(2004) the first and current perception of the GLR constitutes an area occupied by countries of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. The second perception is contained in a map in the Pan African Office in Kampala, Uganda. According to the map, the GLR constitutes core countries and parts of countries. Core countries include Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda and parts of countries include parts of Congo Brazzaville, the Central African Republic, Chad, Sudan and Zambia. The third perception defines the GLR as that part of Africa which constitutes countries of Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda (Mbwiliza, 2002). The fourth perception takes the region to mean the same as the Interlacustrine Region – historical region which constitutes the area between and around Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika, Kyoga, Kivu, Edward and Albert including Burundi, Western parts of Kenya, North Western Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda and Eastern parts of the DRC.

In this article reference to the GLR will mean all the eleven member countries making the ICGLR plus member states of IGAD. The ICGLR is made up of Angola, Central African Republic, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Uganda and Zambia and IGAD is composed of Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Djibouti. This choice is based on two reasons; one, the two organizations (ICGLR and IGAD) when considered together, encompass most of the countries in the foregoing perception. Two, these countries have in one way or another, shared the impact of transnational insurgencies and have been involved in making common regional peace initiatives and, therefore rich in examples of how transnational insurgencies have shaped diplomatic relations in the region. Accordingly, this article makes reference to what Mukwaya (2004:13, 2002:7) calls Greater, Great Lakes Region.

Having provided the contextual definition of the GLR, we now return to the issue of transnational insurgencies in this region. Like it has been asked about conflict in the GLR, what are the causes of perpetual conflict in the GLR? What specific issues led to the emergence of transnational insurgencies in this region? How have these insurgencies influenced interstate relations? The answers to these probing questions are the focus of the various paragraphs that follow in the next sub theme.

**Transnational Insurgencies and State Conflicts: The GLR Experience:** Understanding transnational insurgencies in the GLR requires an examination of the history of conflicts in Africa and the GLR in particular. Briefly, the history of conflicts in the GLR like elsewhere in Africa, can be analyzed at in three phases: one, the pre-colonial period in which conflict was among indigenous communities motivated by territorial expansion, solved by one defeated group relocating to another area due to land availability (Ali, 1996:117). The second period was during colonialism where conflict was between the colonial master and the African liberation movements (Mpangala, 2004). The third was the post colonial era where conflict was between movements struggling for access to power and control that had a great influence on African conflicts and these are examined in detail below.

First, is the conflict phase during the colonial period. According to Ali (1996), the advent of colonialism for the first time in Africa marked change in the character of conflicts where local conflict actors were completely dominated by external actors. The conflicts between local and external actors were usually the outcome of resistance to foreign domination which eventually transformed into liberation movements. These liberation movements were, however, suppressed at first by the colonial states. The nature of the state during the colonial days was Weberian in character; with sound ability to suppress rebellion and exercise effective domination on its territorial domain, with monopoly on the legitimate use of coercion. According to Young (2007:14), the colonial state had succeeded in its territorial domain and maintaining a civil order largely undisturbed until the rise of armed national liberation movements. In overcoming the tenacious and determined resistance to colonial occupation, the colonial state successfully disarmed the population and in an Africa almost entirely controlled by European powers, acquisition of weapons more lethal than spears or muskets was virtually impossible (Young, 2007:14).

As anti colonial agitation increased especially during the 1950s, the main weapons of nationalist agitators were internal political and skillful resources to an international audience and diplomatic realm increasingly hostile to the metropolitan powers was not feasible. (Zezeza, 2008:1-26). The agitators lacked military weapons, knowledge and skills but most importantly the anti-colonial rebels were surrounded by other territories still under colonial rule making transborder operation and sanctuary impossible. African neighboring independent states began extending support in form of sanctuary and arms (Ali, 1996; Young, 2007). African liberation struggles benefited a lot from an increasingly supportive international environment in terms of active diplomatic backing in world forums and military support from especially the former Soviet Union (Young, 2007; Lai 1996; Okoth, 2000. Unfortunately, it was this international support that later reinvigorated ethnic politics premised on ideological conflicts the United States and Soviet Union (Turner, 2007:78). The conflict between Angola's UNITA and DFLA provides a classical illustration of this point (Clark, 2007).

Second is the independence conflict phase in which African liberation movements fought among themselves. During colonialism, the imperialists had succeeded in setting the stage for future internal and external conflicts by deliberately sub dividing ethnicities and nationalities into different colonial states (Karugire, 1980; Mpangala, 2004; Clark, 2007). The seeds of conflicts were sown under colonialism through three main aspects. First, colonialism created and consolidated divisive ideologies of ethnicity, racialism, regionalism and religious antagonism (Mpangala, 2004). Second, colonialism divided people through the policy of divide and rule and creation of artificial borders between colonies and this ethnic fragmentation left behind an in built disequilibrium of political and economic power in the region (Clark, 2007; Ali, 2007). The Wanyarwanda who before colonialism were found under the Kingdom of Rwanda were separated, some came under colonial Rwanda, while others were under colonial Congo. Within Rwanda they came to be divided first by German and then by Belgian colonial powers into antagonistic ethnic groups of the Tutsi,

Hutu and Twa. Third, and along similar principles, colonialism divided people in the colonies along economic lines by creating colonial division of labor on the basis of superiority and inferiority principles (Mpangala, 2004:14; Maxted and Zegeya, 2001:48). These divisions were later exploited by neocolonial forces and played a major role during independence struggles in Africa (Young, 2007:34).

Related to the foregoing divisive colonial policy was the period of struggles for national independence. This period marked the beginning of colonial legacy of ideologies of racism, ethnicity, regionalism and religious antagonism (Karugire, 1980, Mpangala, 2004; and Clark, 2007). Most of the political parties that were formed although united in terms of demanding for national independence from colonial governments, they were different in their characteristics. Some are said to have been sponsored by colonialists so that they would be used for neo-colonial purposes once they came into power. They were those that were ethnic and regional based. In Uganda, for instance, the Uganda National Congress (UNC) and the Progressive Party (PP) were both protestant and Buganda based parties (Karugire, 1980). The Democratic Party (DP) was a predominantly catholic party. *The Kabaka Yekka (KY)* was basically an ethnic based party as it was a party of the Baganda (Karugire, 1980). It was only the Uganda's People Congress (UPC) Milton of Obote which was viewed to be of national character though its position was weakened by being strongly anti-Baganda (Mpangala, 2004:12). The nature of political parties during the struggle for independence was a major factor for Uganda's post independence political instability and is partly responsible for the persistence of LRA in the region (Mugaju and Oloka – Onyango, 2000)

Of interest to note here is the influence of cold war politics. Immediately after independence, most African Governments experienced rebellion supported by either the US or the Soviet Union. The general case was that during this period, ruling regimes were backed by the socialist bloc while the rebels were financed by western powers. When socialist leaders collapsed, the ruling regimes were forced to negotiate on US agenda. This led to the rise of US supported dictatorships that were later militarily opposed.

Neo-colonial manipulations, authoritarian and dictatorial regimes and ethicized politics have, therefore, been important sources of conflicts in most African countries during the post –independence period. While conflicts have been taking place in many African countries, the situation has been worse in the GLR and the intensity of conflicts has been experienced in Burundi, Rwanda, the DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

It should be noted that conflicts in the GLR expanded and engulfed inter and intra state disputes mainly because of cross border ethnic linkages. At independence, most of the GLR countries had at least one of their ethnicities in a neighboring state. When internal disagreements reached a critical stage to the point of armed conflicts, the dominant groups would defeat the weak ones and the defeated ones would find bases in the neighboring states resting in huts of their kin. When this happened, the victorious group, which formed an exclusive government, would accuse the neighboring state of supporting or harboring

their enemies. The result was always interstate wars or hostilities. Because dominant groups excluded others from governance and resource access, there developed a culture of coups and autocracy punctuated by frequent regime change. It was this regime change characterized by overthrow and dissolution of arms that complicated resolution (Salehyan, 2010; Clark, 2007; Mpangala, 2004).

Young (2007), while writing about order and disorder in post colonial Africa and particularly about the distinctive aspects of African civil conflict before the 1990s, illustrates clearly how frequent regime change compound rebellion in Africa. Young (2007) argues that in contrast to a military coup, in which extant security forces remain impact, the standard form of regime change in the autocratic decades was forceful overthrow resulting in the dissolution of the existing army, whose personnel fled to neighboring states or their home communities, with their arms entering hidden caches or informal markets. The dissolution of armies made available experienced foot soldiers and officers trained in military academies of the US, Britain, France and elsewhere which made guerillas more formidable to defeat. He gives Uganda as a paradigmatic case; when Amin was overthrown in 1979, his former soldiers turned up as reconstituted militia in northwest Congo Kinshasa in 1996 and Congo Brazaville in 1997 (Clark, 2007). In all these cases, the consequences were a growth in number of militias far better armed than insurgents in the past. Ethiopia and Somalia had two of Africa's largest armies in 1991 when their regimes were dissolved and their weaponry vanished into the informal economy leading to the growth of illegal weapons markets (Young, 2007).

Young (2007) further argues that as civil conflicts persisted in the individual GLR states, the patterns of disorder spilled across borders in ways that made resolutions far more complex. States began constructing their foreign policy on geostrategic basis, with the destruction of rebel bases in the neighbouring states top on their agenda. The geostrategic interests of Zairian Tutsis, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi were laid bare in October 1996 with the creation of a pro-Tutsi controlled three hundred kilometer long strip of Eastern Zaire from Ivura in the South to Goma in the north (Clark, 2007; Turner, 2007). This action alone led to many Hutu militias moving to Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda where civil wars then intensified.

Uganda's geopolitical concerns in the DRC were two sets of rebels, the LRA and the ADF backed by Sudan operating in the DRC and Sudan. Sudan on its part felt it was doing the justifiable because Uganda had supported the SPLA with the hand of the US which was seeking a way of removing the Sudanese regime (Clark, 2007). Uganda's involvement in Zaire and Southern Sudan, therefore, helped to precipitate Sudan's increased support for the Zaire/Hutu alliance and the anti-Museveni rebels operating along Uganda borders in 1996 and 1998. It is also clear that this kind of development risked prolonging internal civil wars and also pulling countries into the pool of war. For example, as a result of these developments, Tanzania was pulled in the fray. Tanzania started providing Hutu with training bases and some Hutu in Tanzania began mooted the idea of annexing Burundi to Tanzania. The diplomatic relations between Kenya and Rwanda soured and led to the

closure of the Nairobi Rwanda embassy (Mpangala, 2004). A full scale war nearly broke out in the mid 1990s between Sudan and Eritrea over mutual incriminations over support for insurgent groups. Sudan accused Eritrea of supporting the SPLA and for its part, Eritrea accused Sudan of supporting the Militant Islamic Group of Eritrean Islamic Jihad.

**Distinctive Features of State Responses to Transnational Insurgencies in the GLR.:** As will be illustrated, from the beginning, by and large, states in the GLR used coercive bargaining against their neighbours to press for the eviction of insurgents on their territory. This coercive diplomacy often involved troop deployment along the border, launching cross border strikes against rebel bases and at times, direct confrontation with the armed forces of the rebels' host country. Earlier responses were also characterized by willful clandestine parties. In cases where individual states took it upon themselves to militarily overcome the insurgents through extra border incursions without permission from the host country, intrastate conflicts heightened and threatened regional peace as will be seen in the cases of 1996 and 1998 Congo wars involving Uganda, Rwanda and a host of other countries. When this approach proved futile, states began rethinking their unilateral approaches and resorted to cooperation through mainstreaming issues of peace and security into the regional economic cooperation agenda. But as we will see, the earlier forms of interventions badly damaged interstate relations and confidence to the effect that today states still suspect each other.

What, therefore, were the main intervention mechanisms in these cross border conflicts in the GLR? At first, intervention in these conflicts came from outside Africa driven by cold war logic but after the end of the cold war, the western world drew back from involvement in African conflicts (Young, 2007; Okoth, 2000:368-70). In the Sudan conflict, for example, in which Southern Sudanese Liberation Army (SPLA) opposed the Islamic Northern Sudan government, the Khartoum regime first enjoyed international support from the US (Ali, 1996: 143). OAU member states also provided political support in respect to Sudan territorial integrity on the principle of non interference. When international support waned, some transnational insurgent groups found sympathetic African Governments which helped to continue their operations. For example, SPLA established its headquarters in Ethiopia and obtained full support from the military regime of Mengitsu in form of weapons, training and refuge for SPLA gained impressive success in its operations where it was able to isolate provinces of Juba, Makalal and Wau. This was partly due to the retaliation for the support the Sudanese government provided the rebel groups, involved in armed struggle with the Ethiopian military regime (Ali, 1996:157). Other African states that supported Southern Sudan rebels include Malawi and the *Anya-nya* Movement is said to have gained from the conflicts going on in the neighbouring state of Zaire. The Zaire government was angered by the support the Sudanese government gave to the Simbas and Sudan was bitter because Zaire had become indifferent to the activities of the counter accusations as well as clandestine support for rebels in revenge for perceived support of rebels to an established government punctuated common reaction to the problem of transnational insurgencies in the region and this complicated internal conflicts. With diminished international interest in the

region and with the OAU tied by its provisions on respect for internal affairs of states, conflicts in the region could only worsen leading to millions of deaths and refugee crisis.

After the horrendous genocide in Rwanda in 1994, a much more active African disposition to intervene militarily emerged, primarily arising from two very distinct motivations. On the one hand, was the notion of the revised humanitarian and peacekeeping responsibilities of the OAU (partly explaining why Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia entered Congo against Rwanda and Uganda interventions in Congo in both 1996 – 97 and 1998 onward, was indisputably motivated by continued operation from Congo territory of former Rwanda army and the *Interahanwe* Hutu Militia, held responsible for the 1994 genocide (Clark, 2007; Young, 2007).

It should be noted that these new rules of cross border engagement lent a singular intractability to conflicts in the GLR. For example, each of the six African states that participated in the 1996 and 1998 Congo wars had unique interests in the DRC and finding the least common denominator among these conflicting agendas, while simultaneously providing minimal satisfaction to the four domestic military factions, required unique wisdom (Landsberg, 2007).

It is, therefore, clear from the foregoing discussion that transnational insurgencies in the GLR have their origins in colonial design and were propagated through neocolonial schemes. Attempt by the GLR states to singularly try and eliminate insurgents on foreign soil worsened interstate relations with an invaded state accusing the invader of violation of its territorial integrity. This act undermined state sovereignty (Matanga, 2013). In each of the examples mentioned above, the states whose sovereignty had been violated strongly objected and responded by hardening their borders and supporting the insurgent groups against a fellow state. This partly accounted for the longevity and survival of these insurgencies. As has been illustrated, the geostrategic configuration along Zaire's threatened collapse, Uganda's heightening civil wars, increased Sudanese support for anti Uganda forces and the increased involvement of extra regional actors created an explosive diplomatic situation in the region. As it later turned out, war and refugees involved scores of African states and millions of people were affected (Okoth, 2000:380; Clark, 2007).

**From Unilateralism to Multilateralism: New Approaches to Transnational Insurgencies in the GLR:** The foregoing discussion has shed light on the fact that several states in the GLR had been used as bases of rebels and arms and or for diplomatic and other kinds of initiatives that negatively affected interstate relations. It has been demonstrated that unilateral military action was inadequate and costly and in the face of continued presence of transnational rebel problem. The LRA, for instance, has become a regional problem that requires a regional solution. After realizing a common problem along the borders, states may engage in constructive dialogue and common counter insurgency strategies to preserve friendly relations and among these approaches are diplomacy and cooperation (Salehyan, 2010). It is perhaps the realization of the shortcomings of the unilateral approach that we see the reinvigoration of regional integration with peace and security top on the region.

Several multilateral arrangements on peace and security have been made among member states in the GLR to, among other purposes, control borders and curb the phenomenon of armed gangsters who terrorize innocent civilians across borders with provisions for joint counter insurgency operations. In the Central African region which has historical conflict relations with the GLR as conceptualized in this article, the Central African Council for Peace and Security (CACPS) was created in 1998 to deal with threats to Peace and Security of several countries in the sub region. In 1994, the idea of International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) was mooted as a diplomatic undertaking in search of peace, security and development following the horrendous acts of genocide in Rwanda. This conference picked momentum after intra and interstate armed conflicts in the DRC had threatened to develop into an all drawn out war for the entire region (Fanta, 2009).

Another current diplomatic initiative is espoused through the IGAD, IGAD clearly defines the approaches to conflict in the region through its objective statement on peace and security which stipulates that IGAD member states shall promote peace and stability in the sub region and create mechanisms within the sub region for the prevention, management and resolution of interstate and intrastate conflict through dialogue Fanta, 2009:8). IGAD has gone ahead to establish working structures of council of ministers of foreign affairs and a committee of ambassadors for continuous relations and many of IGAD'S activities are directed at peace efforts in Somalia and Sudan. IGAD now coordinates the activities of the East African Standby Brigade (ISBRIDGE) and ISBRIDGE is part of the African Standby Force (ASF). The ASF constitutes one of the most important and ambitious elements of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Upon the creation of the AU, the African Peace and Security Protocol was adopted at the 2002 summit in Durban. As part of the continent's new peace and security architecture, it established the AU Peace and Security Council as its centerpiece, the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise, the Peace Fund and the African Standby Force. A major impetus for the creation of the ASF was the international community's failure during the Rwandan genocide of 1994 (Dier, 2010; African Union, 2003).

In the field of peace making, IGAD has been, since 1993, involved in negotiating a peace settlement in Sudan. In 1999, a Secretariat was created in Nairobi to ensure continued engagement with the parties to the conflict and in 2002, the Machakos Protocol agreed by the government of Sudan and the SPLMA under the auspice of IGAD opened the way for the signing of a peace agreement in 2005. Besides Sudan, IGAD is also involved in Somalia. There are other ad hoc and pragmatic initiatives such as the Tripartite + 1 mechanism in the GLR made up of the DRC, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi which have also proved quite efficient in dealing with specific security issues in the region. All these cases illustrate a paradigm shift from unilateralism to multilateralism in the management of transnational insurgencies (Fanta, 2009:8).

Although these initiatives have not yet led to the total annihilation of transnational insurgents in the region as seen from the continuation of wars in Somalia, Sudan and CAR, these efforts represent a crucial shift in approach from revenge to dialogue and preventive

diplomacy (Mason and Fett, 2009). At this juncture, it is imperative to pose a question in regard to this new approach towards security and stability in the GRL. What can be said about the major motivations in the shift in approach, from unilateral regional security cooperation?

According to Mayer (2008), it is possible to relate the decision of the states to resume and diversify their cooperation at the regional level to three major events and developments: first, to the global economic developments, second to the states' rising awareness of their weakness and powerlessness as individual actors to provide security and deal with the increasingly obvious transnational dimension of security and related threats, and third is the post cold war international environment. We turn to these one by one. First, is the point of view of global economic developments. With the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, the superpowers' race for influence on the African continent lost its intensity (Okoth, 2000:370-71). This revised commitment by European countries and the United States was also translated by decreasing willingness to provide efforts and personnel for the consolidation of security and stability on the continent (Mayer, 2008).

This changing context urged the African states to emphasize the security role of their original exclusively economic communities in order to jointly compensate the vanishing external support (Young, 2007). The reorganization of continental cooperation and the step – by – step establishment of an African peace and security architecture went hand in hand with a strengthening of concerted security capacities at the regional level. (Fanta, 2009:5). This development was moreover endorsed by the willingness of the international community to financially or logistically support African regional security initiatives and operations, such as the FIMUC in Central Africa or the ECOMOG in West Africa. It can therefore, be urged that the changing international context especially the diminishing direct external support has been an important factor in influencing the decision to include security issues on the regional cooperation arrangement (Essack, 1994).

Secondly, the resumption of cooperation and the creation of the AU in 2002 to substitute the moribund OAU brought along a new consideration of security, defense and peace aspects at the communitarian level. The idea behind the AU's security policy is in fact to strengthen efficient communitarian security structures at the regional level as pillars to support the consolidation of peace, security and stability on the entire continent. Therefore, the adoption of the new diplomatic and cooperative approaches to transnational insurgencies in the GLR like elsewhere in Africa was partly in response to the peace and security architecture invented at the African Continental level. Chiefs of Defense Staff adopted a Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force to conduct African peace operations on the continent in response to the resolution by the AU to have an African Standby Force (Fanta, 2009:12; Onditi; 2015).

The third reason for shift in approach was the need for regional African states to compensate the lack of national security capacities in view of the transnational nature of insecurity in the GLR. According to Mayer (2008) due to the weak control and the

permeability of national borders, instability and violence can easily spread from one country to the other. The uncontrolled transborder traffic of arms or the flow of people, be it refugees, combatants, rebels or bandits originating from a country experiencing conflict can easily destabilize neighboring states and stimulate further tensions and conflicts. Under such conditions, a regional concerted security approach may prove an appropriate option to emphasize and address the potential regional impact of national insecurity and hereby to prevent a destabilization of the entire region. This argument is supported by Ayodele (2001). According to him, the most significant initiative in Africa against perpetual conflict was the Kampala document which contains the proposals for a conference on security stability development and cooperation (CSSDCA). Under the CSSDCA arrangement, one of the principles that was adopted by the Kampala delegates was that the security, stability and development of every African country are inseparably linked to that of other African countries and that instability in one country affects the stability of neighbouring countries and has serious implications for continental unity, peace and development. In the Central African region, in 1996, heads of state signed a pact of non aggression for purposes of restoring confidence between the various states of the region. According to Cosme and Yanaba (2004:74), the states of Central Africa were brought together as the result of terrible conflict and the search for peace was the starting point for regional togetherness that currently fosters positive linkages.

Therefore, the increased crisis and conflicts all over the continent, the weakness of the states to adequately respond and re-consolidate the situation within their borders, as well as the changing and decreasing external support urged the African states at the end of the 1990's to reconsider the objectives of their cooperation initiatives at the continental level and to emphasize and strengthen their potential for the enhancement of peace and security through regional cooperation initiatives. Although these initiatives are in place, the GLR still faces a number of challenges from transnational insurgencies. The LRA as earlier noted is still troubling the region with its rebels routinely terrorizing CAR and Darfur as well as Southern Sudan and parts of the DRC and Uganda security forces are always on standby waiting for a possible return of LRA to northern Uganda. Continuing conflict in the region has put into question the government's ability and willingness to implement either security or regional economic integration planning commitments.

**Conclusion:** The GLR has had its share of transnational insurgencies and like most parts of the rest of Africa, conflict has not allowed desired development to take place. Realization that peace and security are inexorably tied to development, African states had of necessity to think of mechanisms that would bring destructive conflicts to an end. Importantly, states had learnt through the hard way that no single state was powerful enough to single handedly deal with the transnational character of insecurity. Therefore, cooperation and preventive diplomacy as opposed to threats of war and alliance formation against one another, were found suitable. The end of the cold war and the ideological politics that acted as catalysts of tension among African states gave them an opportunity to reflect on what could best work

for Africa. African continental self assessment resulted in the rebirth of the concept of “African solutions to African problems”. This was followed by the review of the OAU principle of non – interference in the internal affairs of states and the OAU member states. It was no longer acceptable for governments to freely massacre their citizens without any interference especially after the 1994 Rwanda genocide. This development was further followed by renewed interests in regional cooperation. AU member states now states have legal instruments that enjoin them to respect each other’s territorial integrity, exist alongside each other in peace and harmony, and unite toward off both external attacks, armed threat or aggression directed against a member state and internal armed conflict engineered from outside.

Much as there is renewed effort in Africa to jointly deal with problems of peace and security, there are still challenges of commitment and trust. According to Nzungu (2002:4), sub regional security mechanisms in theory are well structured to address issues of internal and interstate conflict but in practice, the absence of political will and appropriate logistics often frustrates these initiatives. For example, although IGAD has demonstrated increased activism in the management and resolution of interstate and intrastate conflicts in the Horn of Africa, many of the interventions are undertaken by individual states rather than collectively. The presence of only Ugandan, Burundian, Kenyan and Ethiopian forces in Somalia where all IGAD and other African states were supposed to contribute forces is testimony to lack of commitment for cooperation.

Establishing a basis for mutual trust and interdependence following such a history of interstate wars of regional scope creates enormous challenges, as is evident in the GLR . Tensions and suspicions still exist among governments and there is limited confidence of each other’s ability and or willingness to address the causes and drivers of conflict. These apprehensions also exist among and within communities, especially where access to citizenship rights and resources, such as land is contested, as evidenced by the Rwandophone community in Eastern DRC (Westerkamp, 2009).

Despite these challenges, it is evidently clear that GLR member states have taken it upon themselves to try and end the problem of transnational insurgencies through dialogue rather than revenge and counteraccusations. Regional cooperation and preventive diplomacy are now espoused as the most suitable highway to the successful management and annihilation of transnational insurgencies in the GLR. The idea of the IC/GLR to build a regional framework for consultations structured around the Pact on Security, Stability and Development adopted by member states in 2006 should be jealously supported because the challenges of transnational insurgencies still exist. The LRA, for instance, has become a regional problem that requires a regional solution with LRA fighter dispersed in the DRC, South Sudan and the CAR. Regional governments and their armies need to pool resources together and coordinate their efforts if they are to end insurgent groups like LRA operating across borders once and for all because unilateral efforts by Uganda have not successfully helped to eliminate Kony rebels. It is through such cooperative and preventive diplomatic

initiatives that states suspicious of each other will get a platform for mutual cooperation and confidence building.

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