

Strategy Research Project International Fellow

The Ill-Structured “Militia” Problem in Africa’s Great Lakes Region

by

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United States Army War College
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Abstract

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The presence of armed illegal non-state actors in the DRC continues to pose a security challenge not only to Uganda but also to the entire region. The study analyzes several of the militias that have established bases in the DRC. The militias to have dispersed to distant locations that make it hard for the military to counter them. The resulting insecurity has forced some communities to acquire arms for self-defense, which drives insurgency. Cross border, attacks have dragged the affected neighboring countries to intervene in the DRC. The DRC must build capacity to defeat the militias with the help of the regional partners, the international community, the restructured UN intervention force and the US in support and enabling roles.

The Ill-Structured “Militia” Problem in Africa’s Great Lakes Region

The removal of military authoritarian regimes and inception of liberal regimes by the mid 1990s, followed by the independence of South Sudan a decade later should have ushered relative peace in the Africa’s Great Lakes Region. However, for the past 20 years or so, several militia groups have built bases in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, formerly Zaire), which pose a threat to the host and to the neighboring countries. The list of notorious militias includes the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), the Allied Democratic Forces, Peoples Redemption Army,¹ Armed Forces of Congo (FAC), *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC), the *Interahamwe*,² and Hutu extremists, the National Congress for the Defense of the People or the Congress National pour la defense du people (CNDP), *Mai Mai*, and recently the M23. Why do militias select the DRC as bases for their operations in the sub region? The present study seeks to analyze several of the militias, their impact on the security of Uganda, and recommends policy options for their redress.

The term militia in this paper connotes illegal armed non-state actors. According to Paul Collier, Professor of Economics and Director for the Center for the Study of African Economies at The University of Oxford, a country with a dispersed population has a 50% risk to face conflict because it is harder for the government to control its territory.³ Steven Metz,⁴ a Research Professor of National Security Affairs at the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College, notes that insurgencies have organic life cycle with founding fathers.⁵ Whereas some insurgencies die in their infancy, others thrive due insurgency raw materials, which is a combination of motivation, desperation and opportunity.⁶ Motivation occurs when a group defines its social identity not shared by a dominant group and adopts insurgency to force the state

to change its policies.⁷ Desperation is history specific - repetition of certain events. Opportunity manifests when the state is unwilling or unable to deal with either the motivation or desperation.⁸ Greenwood and Hammes define ill-structured problems as interactively complex, where experts honestly disagree on the definitions and solutions, but seek to determine what is good enough.⁹ Lastly, the formulation of an ill-structured problem and conceiving the solution are identical and simultaneous cognitive processes.¹⁰

The paper starts by analyzing some of the militias and their role in shaping relations between the affected countries and then evaluates the current intervention strategies to disarm the militias in the DRC. It concludes by noting that using the militaries from the affected countries with the US, regional organizations, the UN, and the EU in support and enabling roles, would pacify the DRC for a defined period.

The Militias

This section analyzes the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) the only group with links to Al Qaeda, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), the Mai Mai – a group of many swing militias, and the March 23 Movement (M23) militias, which have shaped how the affected countries relate to each other. It requires a strong National Army to defeat them. Early in 1990, a militia group known as the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) operated clandestinely in the Ruwenzori Mountains at the border between Uganda and the DRC. By 1995, NALU merged with an Islamic fundamentalist Tabliq group to form the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which attempted to establish bases in western Uganda at Buseruka on the escarpment overlooking Lake Albert near the border with the DRC. After failing to establish bases in Uganda, the ADF crossed into the DRC where it

received support from Sudan¹¹ and from the DRC under President Mobutu.¹² Under the al Qaeda trained leader *Jamil Mukulu*,¹³ the ADF made several incursions into Uganda killing, abducting and displacing a sizeable section of the local population.

These incursions made it hard for Uganda, to defend her borders. The Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) operations in the DRC from 1998 – 2003 and *Forces Armee Democratique Repbulique du Congo* (FADRC) operations in 2009, weakened the ADF though it continues to build capacity 2,700 kilometers from Kinshasa. Recent arrests of Pakistani nationals near the DRC border by Uganda authorities confirm an earlier UN report that the ADF has established links with the Somali Al Shabaab network.¹⁴ The ADF poses a threat to peace and stability not only to Uganda but also to US interests in the region.

In 2005, when the UPDF denied them space, the LRA crossed to *Garamba*, located about 3,000 Km from the DRC capital of Kinshasa. The *Garamba* area is vast with a huge jungle, a sparse population, and little or no DRC government presence. It is located near the border with Sudan, South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). In 1986, the victorious National Resistance Army (NRA, the current UPDF) attempted to integrate into its ranks several fighting groups previously opposed to the deposed government, including the former members of the defunct Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA). Some members of the UNLA fled to Sudan where they reorganized and mutated into the Uganda Peoples' Democratic Army (UPDA). In August 1986, the UPDA crossed into Uganda at Bibia, a border post between Uganda and Sudan to start a civil war. Shortly after, a young woman named Alice Lakwena formed another rebel group known as the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM). The UPDA

signed an agreement with the Uganda government, and many of its members were integrated into the government forces (the NRA), while the HSM suffered, defeat and Alice Lakwena escaped into Kenya. Remnants of the UPDA and HSM mutated into the LRA with Joseph Kony, a cousin of Alice Lakwena, as its leader. The LRA wanted to overthrow the government of Uganda and replace it with a Christian government based on the Ten Commandments. In what may seem on the surface to be a surprising move, the Khartoum government offered logistical support to the LRA. Why would an Islamic government offer support to a rebel organization, the LRA, whose objective is to overthrow the Kampala government and establish a government based on Biblical Ten Commandments? Perhaps Khartoum saw the formation of this new militia as an opportunity and developed a strategy to use the LRA to contain the rebels of the Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA), and to disrupt the Uganda Government for supporting the SPLA. Regardless, this support produced a symbiotic relationship where the Sudanese National Islamic Front (SNIF) government could provide logistical support to Joseph Kony's LRA in exchange for his group attacking the SPLA and causing insecurity in Uganda. The SNIF government believed that since "Museveni and the late John Garang de Mabior (the former leader of the SPLA) had been classmates at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania"¹⁵ and had been very active in Africa's liberation struggles, Uganda automatically supported SPLA. The relationship between the LRA and SNIF could not continue, however, because of a combination of military and political pressures: Uganda's military offensive in Sudan, the International Criminal Court (ICC) summons, and the Sudanese Peace Accord.

In 2002, the government in Khartoum allowed Uganda to attack LRA bases inside Sudan. As a result, the UPDF launched a massive military offensive code named Operation Iron Fist.¹⁶ The Sudanese government was sought to distance itself from accusations of supporting international terrorism. At the same time, President Museveni referred the LRA leadership to the ICC. This meant that Khartoum was now under obligation to arrest the indicted LRA leadership. The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) between the government of Sudan and the SPLA that gave the latter self-determination denied the LRA space to operate freely inside Sudan.

The *Forces Démocratiques de Liberation du Rwanda* or the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR)¹⁷ is another militia in the DRC that mutated from the former Rwandan Armed Forces, Hutu extremists, and the *Interahamwe* who murdered one million Tutsi in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The FDLR is one of the biggest militia groups in the Eastern DRC with a strength estimated to be “approximately 3,000-4,000 combatants.”¹⁸ In 1994, about two million Hutus also fled into the DRC as refugees.¹⁹ Such a population that lives near its country of origin has a potential to keep a conflict active. First, it provides an opportunity to the FDLR to build a network to coordinate its activities; secondly, it will provide the youth for enlistment. The argument is that such UN relief activities that do not encourage repatriation or emigration of refugees will create a “Hutu refugee nation”²⁰ that will constantly replenish the FDLR. The UN can avert this by implementing policies that support voluntary repatriation or relocation of these refugees deeper into the Congo.

Mai Mai, which means “self-defense” in local east DRC languages, is a collection of several militia groups operating in North and South Kivu provinces. Notable ones

include; the *Mai Mai Yakutumba*, *Raia Mutombaki*, *Mai Nyakiliba*, *Mai Mai Fujo*, *Mai Mai Kirikicho*, and a coalition of Congolese Patriotic Resistance. The latter also known as PARECO, is a Congolese Hutu militia group against Congolese Tutsi's,²¹ while *Raia Mutombaki*, (angry citizens)²² is a militia group against FDLR. The communities have acquired arms to provide themselves with security, which the DRC government has been unable or unwilling to provide. Over the time the militias have started to enrich themselves as they engage in criminal activities such as looting, banditry and illegal mining. Clearly, this explains the reason why there is widespread insecurity in eastern DRC.

Removal of Mobutu

South Kivu is home to the Congolese Tutsis known as the *Banyamulenge* who form one of the minority ethnic groups that settled on the *Mulenge* highlands in the seventeenth century. It is also a home to Rwandese Tutsi refugees displaced from Rwanda when the Hutus overthrew the Tutsi monarchy in 1959. The displaced Tutsis settled in neighboring countries, including in the DRC. The Tutsi refugee group is the *Banyarwanda*, which means the people from Rwanda. The *Banyamulenge* acquired arms for self-defense when the FDLR militias started to kill them. In November 1996, the Allied Democratic Forces attacked Uganda at *Mpondwe* near the Western Uganda town of Kasese. At the same time, the Hutu militias who were responsible for the 1994 Rwanda genocide intensified their attacks on Rwanda from the DRC. Laurent Kabila, who had been fighting Zaire president Mobutu with little success, saw it as an opportunity to realize his long sought wish of creating a credible opposition to the Mobutu regime he had opposed for so long. He therefore reorganized the *Banyamulenge* militia, gave it a national outlook and turned it into a credible force,

which he named the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL). The fact that Mobutu had supported the National Union for the Total independence of Angola (UNITA) against the government of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) made it possible for Kabila to get Angola's support.²³ The strategic security concerns of Uganda, Rwanda and Angola were a driving factor that enabled Kabila and his AFDL to get regional military support that led him to power after the ouster of Mobutu in September 1997.

Once in power, Kabila did not address motivation and desperation factors that enable insurgency to coalesce and grow. He allowed militias opposed to Uganda and Rwanda to operate freely in his country. The Hutu cross border attacks into Rwanda²⁴ and the ADF cross border attacks into Uganda²⁵ as well as its intensified improvised explosive device (IED) attacks in Kampala prompted Rwanda and Uganda militaries to reenter the DRC in pursuit of their respective rebels.²⁶ However, once in the Congo, Uganda and Rwanda supported the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) and the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) respectively, while Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe supported the government led by Laurent Kabila.

The Sun City Agreement that accrued out of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in April 2003²⁷ was a follow up to the Lusaka Peace Accord that brought various political factions in the DRC under a unified political umbrella. The parties involved in the dialogue included among others the RCD, the MLC, the opposition parties, and civil societies. The political integration would lay a foundation for the military integration. However, this could be possible after the withdrawal of foreign troops. In July 2002, the bilateral accord between the Congo and Rwanda led to the withdrawal of Rwandese

Forces. The September 2002 agreement between the Congo and Uganda laid a framework for the withdrawal of Ugandan Forces. The DRC government embarked on integrating various military factions to form a national army at the same time preparing for the political legitimacy. This culminated with the first ever-multiparty elections in 41 years in 2006.

As part of the process of integrating various militias, the Congolese government promoted Colonel Laurent Nkunda the commander of the RCD Goma military wing to General. The integration was short-lived due to resentments within the Congolese ethnic groups and Rwandese refugees specifically the Tutsis and Hutus. The *Banyamulege* have accused the DRC authorities of killing 120 recruits all of them of the *Banyamulege* ethnicity who were part of the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) undergoing training at *Kamina*.²⁸ This is perhaps a genuine ground, which Nkunda used to articulate the formation of the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP).²⁹ Human Rights Watch has accused Nkunda whom it alleges of committing gross human rights abuses where he himself participated in beating and killing of two UN workers.³⁰ Whether true or false, Ben Shepherd, an expert on policy and research in the Great Lakes, notes that many Congolese view the mutation of CNDP as a Rwandan proxy, with the bilateral agreements between the DRC and Rwanda only succeeded in removing an overt Rwanda military presence in the DRC.³¹

In 2006, the ICC indicted John Bosco Ntaganda, for allegedly recruiting child soldiers while he was the deputy to Thomas Lubanga, Chief of the UPC rebel force, which operated in *Ituri* province. When the ICC indicted, arrested, and tried Lubanga, Ntaganda joined the FARDC where the Kabila government promoted him to General

before deserting to join the CNDP. By 2008, Nkunda had signed several agreements with Kabila's government, which he violated to resume hostilities against the Congolese government. In 2009, Congo and Rwanda agreed to fight all the militias opposed to their governments, which resulted in joint operations by Rwanda and Congolese Armies against the militia the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR)³² and led to the arrest of General Nkunda.³³ On 23 March 2009, Dr Desire Kamanzi, the new leader of the CNDP and the Congolese minister for regional cooperation, signed a peace accord,³⁴ which temporary halted the hostilities for three years.

At the beginning of 2012, DRC president Kabila decided to arrest General Ntaganda and hand him over to the ICC. Since 2009, Kabila had been under international pressure to arrest Ntaganda³⁵ but was reluctant for fear that his arrest may reignite the conflict. To achieve this, Kabila also deployed FARDC units, which had integrated former CNDP combatants from Kivu to other provinces. Ntaganda deserted from the FARDC with 300 soldiers.³⁶ This opened the way for massive desertions in ranks and file. Later, 17 FARDC Colonels officially tendered their resignation letters to president Kabila expressing their dissatisfaction with unimplemented promises that dated back to the Goma Peace Accord.³⁷ Kabila sent a powerful delegation of Army Generals to dissuade the soldiers with a promise to address their grievances politically before the situation went out of control but in vain.

These events marked the beginning of a militia group that mutated into the March 23 Movement (M23). The fighting between FARDC and the M23 created 800,000 internally displaced and forced 163,000 refugees to flee into Uganda.³⁸ It also forced a battalion of the FARDC to "tactically withdrawal to Uganda."³⁹

The mutinies, desertions and defections, a service commander who arms militia groups,⁴⁰ serious abuses, killings of innocent civilians, and raping of women⁴¹ by the national army, degrades successful counterinsurgency operations. It is apparent that such lapses in FARDC's discipline may be due to the criteria used in the enlistment of personnel into the national army. The DRC has enlisted most of its soldiers through integration of various militias with different political ideologies. Whereas that is prudent to achieve unity of command, lack of an operational code of conduct and the enforcement of high standards is what compromises discipline.

Certainly, the DRC is a huge country that will require a strong, disciplined force to deny militias ground, protect its people and safeguard its borders. A strong army is required "to establish and maintain a stable environment that sets the conditions for political and economic development."⁴² This will occur when the DRC emphasizes the development of warrior ethos as part of the human dimension of its Army through training, and enforcement of justice to eliminate impunity. The DRC will have to vet, legalize and integrate some of militias into Army. It should investigate and take to court all those who have committed atrocities especially in operational area. The conduct of training exercises with neighbors such as the CAR, South Sudan, Uganda and Rwanda will also assist the DRC to strengthen its military. Such a security arrangement will help stabilize the region and attract support from the international community, the US and EU.

Fixing the problem in the DRC

The United Nations Intervention

From the outset, the 1999 UN intervention had an ambiguous objective. Cultural composition, cases of sexual abuses by peacekeepers and failure to protect civilians,

failure to disarm militias have made the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) lose its credibility. It should be noted that the first ever UN intervention on the African continent, was in the Congo in July 1960 one month after it had attained her independence from Belgium.

The 1999 Lusaka Peace Accord between regional governments and various rebel groups in the DRC provided a road map for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the DRC. It defined the UN intervention objectives as, the provision and maintenance of humanitarian assistance, the disarmament of all armed groups, the apprehension of all perpetrators of crime against humanity, and the repatriation of combatants to their countries. The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1279 thus authorized the deployment of the UN observer mission in the DRC (MONUC).⁴³ MONUC strength later expanded to include 500 observers and 5537 peacekeepers including a force that would protect the officials of the Congolese government of National Unity⁴⁴ among others. In 2008, the UNSC Resolution 1797 mandated MONUC to assist the Congolese authorities in preparation and conduct of local elections.⁴⁵ The UNSCR 1925 MONUC became UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.⁴⁶

Clearly stated, one of the MONUSCO objectives is to protect civilians and deter any illegal violent group in eastern DRC.⁴⁷ However, when the M23 rebels occupied Goma in November 20, 2012, MONUSCO did not attempt to block them. The reason the MONUSCO commander gave was that “once the FARDC had withdrawn,⁴⁸ they could do nothing to stop its advance. It will be hard for anyone to understand why MONUSCO accepted to coexist with an illegal violent group for ten days. The mandate

is very clear, to engage by fire only in self-defense, or to protect civilians and the FARDC. There is nowhere the mandate authorizes MONUSCO to coexist with an illegal, armed non-government actor. There are some concerns. First, the UN mandate sets ambiguous objectives for MONUSCO to accomplish in the Congo. Second, the composition of MONUSCO strategy employs the Indians, Pakistanis, Nepalese, Bangladeshis, and North Africans who despite being experienced peacekeepers are culturally misaligned. Lack of basic cultural and ethnic nuances, which are possible drivers of a conflict in the Congo, will affect the decisions they make. Third, the rigor, courage and commitment such a force has cannot match that of locally tailored force that is drawn from the affected countries. Fourth, MONUC has in the past also been involved in cases of sexual abuses.⁴⁹ All these coupled with the current worsening of the humanitarian situation in eastern DRC as the number of the “internally displaced increases to 1,000,000 people,”⁵⁰ makes MONUSCO lose its credibility.⁵¹ One can argue that failure to protect civilians, enables them acquire arms for culture of self-defense, which leads to their misuse for selfish ends, which breeds insecurity.

In any peacekeeping operations, protection of civilians should be the first priority. With an estimated annual expenditure standing at \$1.4 billion⁵² as of 2012, MONUSCO is the biggest and the most expensive UN peacekeeping mission in the world. One can argue that the UN intervention strategy in the DRC is not feasible, neither acceptable nor suitable. Ingrid Samset a Norwegian researcher on African Great Lakes clearly notes that such failures result from three levels of institutional realities, the nature of MONUC, the UN system and the Congolese state.⁵³

The US Strategy

Advancing peace and security forms one of the objectives of the US strategy towards Sub Saharan Africa.⁵⁴ This is reinforced by the Presidential Study Directive 10 (PSD - 10), which defines the prevention of mass atrocities and genocide as a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the US.⁵⁵ Guided by the above, the US has formulated the LRA Disarmament and North Uganda Recovery strategy with four core objectives, namely, to 1) increase protection of civilians, 2) apprehend and to remove the LRA leaders from the battlefield, 3) encourage defection and to support demobilization and reintegration of the LRA combatants, and 4) provide humanitarian assistance to the affected communities.⁵⁶ Implementing the strategy requires building consensus between the US, the UN, and the AU involvement. The AU has authorized the formation of a multinational force composed of militaries from Uganda, the DRC, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic. The US is only performing the supporting and enabling functions that include logistical support, and strategic lift of troops, the provision of intelligence, coordination, political access, provision of communication equipment, and training using a team of Special Forces, who are not involved in combat except to provide “the right balance of strategic and tactical experience.”⁵⁷ The strategy also involves that use of all elements of statecraft. As such, the US Department of State Rewards Program Update and Technical Corrections Act, has placed an offer for information leading to the arrest of the LRA leaders including Kony.⁵⁸ To implement this strategy, the US spends US\$ 30 million per year.⁵⁹

Like any other operation, there are operational setbacks like the vast terrain, poor infrastructure and the presence of several armed illegal hunters in the area who look

like militias yet they are not the LRA fighters. All these complicate the multinational forces' operations against the LRA. Nevertheless, the regional forces have registered several successes by taking away from battlefield two of the LRA's top leaders,⁶⁰ securing the defections of several mid-level commanders, and reducing the numbers persons abducted and killed by the LRA. With 51 people killed in 2012 compared to 154 in 2011,⁶¹ and 865 killed from December 2008 to January 2009,⁶² such is a magnificent success to an ill-structured militia problem in the DRC. One can argue that involving militaries from the affected countries, brings in local flavor, the rigor, knowledge of the home ground, enables the understanding of the local people's culture, and a sense of a common purpose have contributed to success. Other attributes to success are movement and maneuver of the forces, the well-defined rules of engagement, good intelligence, the level of training forces, and sustainment have enabled regional multinational forces perform superbly.

The current US policy for the eastern DRC, calls on the leaders of Uganda, DRC and Rwanda to work together towards sustainable peace. The policy supports peace talks between the rebels and the government, and not to allow impunity to rebel leaders who were indicted by the ICC, and calls for governments to enforce travel bans and asset freeze imposed by UN sanctions.⁶³ The US also provides humanitarian assistance to Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC. The policy recognizes the challenges to MONUSCO in the DRC and need to improve its fighting capacity that incorporates the proposal of the International Conference on Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) of deploying a locally agreeable neutral force. This is an ambitious policy in the right direction. What remains is its implementation with all actors playing their part in eastern DRC.

ICGLR

The ICGLR is an intergovernmental organization (IGO) that was established under UNSCR 1291 and 1304 to promote peace and development. It signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the AU to cooperate in areas of peace and stability in the region. The leaders of ICGLR have held several meetings to address the militia problems and the impacts in the region. In Africa, the IGOs are taking a center stage and becoming more powerful in resolving conflicts on African continent. This is perhaps due to unity and the political will of regional leaders, cooperation with the US and the ability to recommend the effective tool to use but most important the synchronized communication. The withdrawal of the M23 from Goma in response to the three leaders order is a case in point.⁶⁴ ICGLR has also proposed the deployment of a neutral force as a way to boost the UN intervention.

At a critical moment when regional leaders were starting to discuss DRC security problems, the UN Group of Experts (GoE) leaked a report alleging that Uganda and Rwanda were providing military support⁶⁵ to the M23 rebels. Whereas, it did not affect the confidence the leaders had in solving the problem, it may have undermined their trust, though the leaders were aware that the ICGLR Secretary General had contacted Uganda president Museveni in his capacity as the Chairperson of the ICGLR to find a solution.⁶⁶ The argument is even if the GoE's had substantial evidence, the method it used and timing was not appropriate to enhance trust that was critical to providing the needed stability in the region. It is hard to establish the motives of the GoE. Whether it is rivalry or competition the goal of the UN and ICGLR is peace and stability in the region. It is prudent for GoE to synchronize their operations in the region.

The Suggested Solutions

To achieve stability, the DRC must defeat all militia groups through disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation all combatants to their countries of origin. It is not as easy as it sounds. It will require a separate strategy for each militia group while mitigating the consequences it may cause. The assumptions held are that some of the militias are likely to opt for peaceful resolution to the conflict, while others will require forceful disarmament. The possible approaches to the problem are, to: 1) restructure MONUSCO with a neutral force to disarm the militias forcefully. However, DRC must mitigate possible spills of the militias to other peaceful areas with the US, EU partners and regional neighbors in enabling and supporting roles. 2) Create a regional force based on the US anti- LRA model probably with two regional task forces (RTF), the first composed of MONUSCO, the DRC and Rwanda to disarm the FDLR and second RFT composed of MONUSCO, the DRC and Uganda to disarm the ADF, whose implementation must be phased.

All the above are possible options to stabilize the DRC. However, involving Rwanda and Uganda in the operations to hunt down their respective militias will accelerate the disarmament of the militias in the DRC to set conditions for other lines of national instruments of power to consolidate peace and stability in the DRC.

Security Impacts

Regional instability is one of the greatest threats to the national security interest of Uganda.⁶⁷ In the past, insurgency has slowed the economic growth, led to loss of lives and forced many Ugandans to live in IDP camps. The LRA forced 2.5 million and the ADF forced half a million to live in the IDP camps in northern and western Uganda respectively. *Village of Hope* Uganda, an international Non Governmental Organization,

which has established an orphanage center in Northern Uganda, estimates that Uganda at a minimum lost US \$ 100 million per year,⁶⁸ or US \$ 2.5 billion during the 25 years of insurgence in northern Uganda.

Loss of life, serious injuries due to landmines laid by the insurgents and mass population displacements resulted in loss of production by rural famers. Ugandans in IDP camps lived under pathetic conditions vulnerable to different types of diseases like malaria, cholera and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS.

The continued instability in the DRC has increased the influx of refugees into Uganda, which exerts pressure on Uganda's meager available resources. For example, the *Rwamanja* camp in Western Uganda, which is the final destination for about 30,000 Congolese refugees and 35,000 Ugandans has only one health center.⁶⁹

Conclusion and Recommendations

The militias will continue to be a threat not only to Uganda but also to the entire region unless the international community changes its approach to the militias in the DRC. In the past, the LRA and ADF committed serious crimes and atrocities against Ugandans forcing 2.5 million people to leave in IDP camps in northern and western Uganda. Uganda lost US\$ 2.5 bn to the LRA insurgency in the North. However, having defeated all the militias and resettled the people, instability in the DRC poses one of the greatest National security concerns to Uganda.

In the DRC, the population is geographically dispersed, which makes it objectively harder for the government to control. As a result, some Congolese minorities like the *Banyamulenge*, the Hutus, and the Mai Mai communities in the two Kivu provinces have adopted insurgency as a means to force the government to respond to

their grievances - grant them citizenship and security. The repetitive cycle of insurgency, which always starts from Goma has continued to threaten Kinshasa.

The militias have taken advantage of the ungoverned space to establish their base in locations that make it harder for the FARDC to counter them. However, internal conflicts, poor civil –Military relations and socio-military conflicts such as mutinies, desertions and misconduct against its citizens, degrade the national army's capacity to counter successfully the insurgents. The DRC must develop the human dimension of its military and create a robust military justice system to end impunity.

The study shows that MONUSCO lacks a clearly defined strategy for the Congo. The UNSC mandate authorizes them to open fire in self-defense, protection of the Congolese and the national army. Asians form the bulk of the stabilization force. At a cost of US\$1.4 billion, it is expensive, yet critical measure of success is the protection of the people.

The US anti - LRA strategy has clearly defined objectives, employs regional militaries, and enables parties to cooperate with both the UN and AU. The US provides the enablers such as intelligence, coordination, training and logistical support. A comparison of the two strategies by measure of success and cost, indicate that the US anti-LRA strategy is achieving its intended objectives.

The militias in the two Kivu provinces will certainly require a comprehensive strategy that blends carrots and sticks. The success in the pacification of the DRC will depend on cooperation between the Congolese and regional leaders, the US, the international community, and international organizations such as the UN, AU, ICGLR, and the ICC. This paper comes out with two possible policy options to deal with rebels

in eastern DRC as follows; (1) restructure MONUSCO into a capable fighting force. (2) Create two multinational task forces composed of Uganda, Rwanda, the DRC militaries, and MONUSCO with the US and others from the international community involved in supporting and enabling roles. Both are feasible, and acceptable however, a force that includes Uganda and Rwanda will produce results quickly. This must be done concurrently with the DRC efforts to professionalize its national army using MONUSCO, neighbors, the US and the international community as enablers. If the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, ICGLR, UN, US and the international community align their approaches to deny the militias space in the Congo, the ill-structured “militia” problem will be solved.

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