POLITICS AND PLUNDER: Civil war and regional intervention in Africa

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DECLARATIONS

Candidate’s Declaration

‘I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made for text.

__________________________
Deanna Gross
26 November 2007

Supervisor’s Declaration

‘I believe that this thesis is properly presented, conforms to the specifications for the thesis and is of sufficient standard to be, prima facie, worthy of examination’.

__________________________
Dr Tanya Lyons
26 November 2007
SYNOPSIS

Over recent decades, civil wars in Africa have taken millions of lives and caused widespread destruction of whole states and regions. The living standards of peoples residing in such states in Africa which have been devastated by war are often deplorable, with violence, disease and poverty characterising life there. Lawlessness is another feature of such wars, making these states optimal places for international terrorist groups to operate in, and from. For both the above reasons, the West should not turn a blind eye to this issue.

These wars that have occurred in a number of African states, including Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan, have often become regionalised with surrounding states increasingly becoming involved. This is particularly the case when economic gain can be sought through involvement in the civil war. The introduction of regional actors into domestic civil wars frequently serves to intensify and prolong the conflict, through an increase of arms and troops entering the fighting. The surrounding state actors largely claim to be involved for political reasons, namely to provide security to their own state. However, numerous credible reports have shown that vast plundering of natural resources has been carried out in war-time by surrounding states in the war-torn state. Consequently, this thesis examines the motives of surrounding state actors when deciding to participate in domestic civil wars of their neighbours. To do this, I compile case studies on both Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo since both states had been ravaged by violent and drawn-out civil wars involving regional actors. Furthermore, the regional actors in both cases (Liberia in Sierra Leone, and particularly Rwanda,
Uganda, Zimbabwe in the DRC) have been accused of participating in the wars for economic gain.

The case studies showed that while political motivations largely drive the initial decision by regional actors to participate in civil wars in their region, it is subsequently economic gain that both allows and compels them to continue their involvement in the civil war. Henceforth, in the final chapter, I put investigate policy suggestions for the future including: prevention of resources being used to fuel warfare through controlling their access to legitimate channels; the use of aid to reduce the likelihood of those in poverty turning to war in pursuit of sustenance, including opportunities to target aid and use compliance with particular peace agreements as a prerequisite for attaining the funding; diversification of the economies of these weak states through development assistance to reduce risks produced by a high dependency on primary commodity exports for income and financial sanctions in the form of freezing of assets or asset blocking. These policy suggestions seek to address both the political and economic motivations of the surrounding state actors in participating in civil wars in Africa.
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GLOSSARY

ADF - Allied Democratic Forces
ADFL - Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo
ANC - Armee Nationale Congo laise
APC – All People’s Congress
AFRC - Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
ARB - African Reserve Bank
ASADHO - African Association for Human Rights
AU - African Union
CHDC - Congo Holding Development Company
DSP - Special Presidential Division
DRC - Democratic Republic of Congo (Formerly Zaire)
ECOMOG - Economic Community of West Africa Monitoring Group
ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States Economic Community of West Africa
FAA – Angolan Armed Forces
FAR – Forces Armees Rwandaises
FAZ - Forces armees zairoises
FDD - Forces for the Defense of Democracy/Forces pour la Defense de la Democratie (Burundi)
FLC - Front de Liberation du Congo
FNAL - National Liberation Front (Burundi)
FNLA – National Liberation Front of Angola
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
GNP – Gross National Product
GOC - Government of Congo (DRC)
IFRCS - International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMF - International Monetary Fund
IRC – International Rescue Committee
JMC - Joint Military Commission
LPA - Lusaka Peace Accords
LRA – Lords Resistance Army
LURD - Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MLC - Movement for the Liberation of the Congo/ Mouvement de Liberation du Congo
MONUC - Mission de l’Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo
MNC - Congolese National Movement/ Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo
MPLA - Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola/Popular Movement of the Liberation of Angola
NEPAD - New Partnership for African Development
NPFL - National Patriot Front of Liberia
NPRC - National Provisional Ruling Council
NRA - National Resistance Army (Uganda)
NRM – National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
OAU - Organisation of African Unity
PAC - Partnership Africa Canada
RCD - Rally for Congolese Democracy/Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie
RCD-G – Rally for Congolese Democracy (Goma)
RCD-K – Rally for Congolese Democracy (Kisangani)
RCD-ML - RCD-Mouvement de Liberation
RPA - Rwandan Patriotic Army
RUF – Revolutionary United Front

SADC - Southern African Development Community

SIEROMCO - Sierra Leone Iron Ore and Metal Co. Ltd

SANDF - South African National Defence Force

SOCEBO - Société congolaise d’exploitation du bois

SLPP - Sierra Leone People’s Party

SNEL - Congo's Societe Nationale d'Electricite (DRC)

TPVM - Third Party Verification Mechanism

UK – United Kingdom

ULIMO - United Liberation Front of Liberia

UN – United Nations

UNAMSIL - United Nations peacekeeping force

UPC - Union for Congolese Patriots

UPDF - Ugandan Peoples’ Defence Force

UPNA – Union of Peoples of Northern Angola

WNBF - West Nile Bank Front

XEU – Euros (currency)

ZDF - Zimbabwe Defence Forces

ZDI - Zimbabwe Defence Industry

Zanu-PF – Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front Party

ZESA - Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas online accessed at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa.html