



The Anatomy of Conflicts in the East African Community (EAC): Linking Security With Development

**Theme for 2007-
Development Policy and the Security Agenda for Africa: Reassessing the
Relationship**

**Keynote speech to Development Policy Review Network-African Studies
Institute, Leiden University, The Netherlands**

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Introduction

All triggers of conflict: structural, political, economic, social and cultural, are at play in the east African region. Likewise, all types of conflict are also present: violent and non violent; sporadic or occasional and endemic or intractable. The politics of belligerence, social tussles over dwindling resources, guerrilla strategies and crime in Africa have all opted for a type of violence that relies more on the use of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). This has brought immense challenges to the modernising African states. The internationalization of SALW and its consequent fuelling of conflicts and crime has challenged the legitimacy and capacity of the East African Community states (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi) in providing human security.

Conflicts are not just about power and resources but are rooted in the denial of human needs such as identity, security, respect and recognition. These are ultimately needs to do with the human spirit and social reality¹. Conflicts in this region are not just a product of the power of the states but are also a result of the weakness of the states in managing two critical transitions: the transition from the colonial to the independent state in the early sixties and the transition from authoritarian/undemocratic regimes to democratic change in the early nineties².

It is always important to remember that many forms of 'violence' do not necessarily involve conflict. This is the case when victims of oppression are not in a position to resist or fight back. These may include political (or ordinary)

prisoners, as well as members of the public who suffer at the hands of those in possession of the state's coercive instruments and there may be other actors involved here besides the state³. This makes it imperative to pay attention to actions of domestic elites and how they contribute to conflict. Various combinations of causes imply different policy responses.

The recent expansion of the East African Community to include Rwanda and Burundi is one avenue that has opened up for enhancing regional security governance. Other than Tanzania, all the other countries in the EAC are experiencing major conflicts (directly or indirectly) that pose a violent threat to many of their citizens. The broader aims of the community are to develop policies and programmes aimed at widening and deepening cooperation among the partner states in political, economic, social and cultural fields, research and technology, defense, security and legal and judicial affairs for their mutual benefit (Article 5 (1)).

The big questions remain: Will this integration benefit the security sector and will it enhance human security? How do we inculcate democratic cultures across these countries so as to build and sustain peace and political stability? and How do we get those directly affected by conflict to have a say in development issues? Women have been largely marginalized in formal conflict resolution processes and post conflict governance hence issues that affect them get scant attention. Violence against women [domestic] and the fact that many wars are fought on women's bodies, means that their voices are crucial and critical for reforming the security sector.

Another important question is: Can sustainable development be possible in the absence of stringent security measures to police the borders in the region? Each of the countries in the EAC has at least three neighbours and for each country, at least one of its neighbours has at least one raging conflict. Uganda is surrounded by conflict zones except for its southern neighbour, Rwanda. Kenya has a coastline that stretches for about 600km and its proximity to southern Sudan makes policing a big challenge especially since the security situation has deteriorated since 2006. It also shares a border with Somalia which is experiencing a collapsed state phenomenon. These porous borders have exacerbated the insecurity of citizens and those conducting business in these areas. Cross border conflicts have affected all the countries in the envisaged union and the historic causes of these conflicts merit attention if integration is to contain the rather shaky peace deals. Can economic growth flourish under such conditions? Insecurity has resulted in stagnation of national and regional development. Conflicts result in resource diversion at the expense of development programs that would sustain a development oriented environment. Regional conflicts create doubt on investment returns, exacerbate the cost of doing business and make it less attractive, hence unemployment will only get worse.

The incessant conflicts in the countries bordering the horn (Kenya and Uganda)⁴ require a well coordinated and inclusionary approach to building security and it is imperative to find the missing links in the search for what is increasingly appearing to be elusive peace, development and stability for the region. The horn is plagued by intra-state conflicts that end up sucking in the entire region in one way or another. The wars, the consequences, conflict resolution and mediation, all spill over to other countries and this complicates the pre-conditions for peace. (Somalia and Sudan are good examples of national conflicts with regional consequences).

There is concurrence amongst regional security experts that the greatest challenge to human security has its roots in the way countries in the region pursue state security at the expense of people's rights. This regime oriented security approach poses a challenge to issues of citizenship.

It is thus imperative to ask if the East African Community will rise to the occasion of enhancing security as a regional group. If good government is about the protection of life and property, the enforcement of law and order, the administration and dispensation of justice, the settlement of disputes and the defense of the polity against external aggression, how do we rank the performance of the east African countries? First of all, all EAC countries have joined the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development and the Africa Peer Review Mechanism indicating that there is hope for building local and regional networks that work towards peace building and maintaining peace.

The region, just like much of Africa, naturally adopted a militarized concept of security which is challenged by the holistic concept of human security⁵. Whilst securing the territory is paramount for post-(colonial) conflict states, equally demanding issues such as hunger⁶, healthcare, crime prevention, political and civic freedoms, war prevention and democratic participation, all compete for government attention amongst other issues. Development indicators listed below show how the region is struggling in terms of the quality of life experienced by the citizens.

Table 1: EAC Development Indicators

Country	Population (million)	Human Development Index	Ranking (Out of 177 countries)	Adult literacy rates (% ages 15 and >)	Life expectancy at birth (yrs)
Burundi	8.09	0.384	169	59.3	42
Rwanda	7.5	0.450	158	64.9	44.2
Uganda	27.8	0.502	145	66.8	48.4
Kenya	33.5	0.491	152	73.6	47.5
Tanzania	37.6	0.430	162	69.4	46

Source: Human Development Report 2006 (2004 HDI values)

Tracking the changes in human development over a 35 year period reveals the marginal positives changes and even regression or stagnation at times (table 2).

Table 2: Human Development Index Trends

Country	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2004	Mean Change	Change 1975-2004
Burundi	0,285	0,312	0,344	0,351	0,325	0,344	0,384	0,0165	0,099
Rwanda	0,342	0,388	0,401	0,339	0,337	0,426	0,45	0,0180	0,108
Uganda	n/a	n/a	0,414	0,411	0,413	0,474	0,502	0,0220	0,0880
Kenya	0,465	0,513	0,533	0,548	0,525	0,504	0,491	0,0043	0,026
Tanzania	n/a	n/a	n/a	0,437	0,423	0,42	0,432	-0,0023	-0,007

Source: Human Development Report 2006 (2004 HDI values)

Change is computed for the period data is available!

When the 3 East African giants, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, unveiled their 2007/2008 budgets, the notable achievement was that all countries have attempted to address key issues such as infrastructural development and poverty alleviation. However, much more still needs to be done. Especially in terms of rationalising and harmonizing administrative expenditure. The table below provides a summary of these challenges, especially those of inward servicing political institutions. Relating the number of deputy ministers to ministers, and these to the number of ministries and ultimately to the population, leaves us wondering if these countries are really more different than they are similar, and more importantly, where their priorities lie.

Table 3: East African Budget Comparison

	GDP <i>Billion</i>	Annual budget <i>Billion</i>	MPs salary (monthly)	Population	Cabinet portfolios	Assistant deputy ministers
Kenya	1 600	500	877 500	35.9m	32 [23ministries]	50
Tanzania	913	163	116 666	38.4	27	17
Uganda	546	135	180 000	27.6	25 [15ministries]	44

Notes all in Kenya shillings (exchange rate 1usd:66.5ks)

A quick glance tells us that the predatory nature of some of the states has not changed even in the face of the security challenges they have to deal with. Public spending on critical areas essential for achieving the Millenium Development Goals remains very low (table 4).

Table 4: Priorities in Public Spending (% of GDP)

Country	2004	2004	2004
Burundi	0.7	5.2	6.7
Rwanda	1.6	n/a	2.2
Uganda ⁷	2.2	5.2	2.3
Kenya	1.7	7	1.6
Tanzania	2.4	n/a	1.1

Source: Human Development Report 2006 (2004 HDI values)

Notes: All health and education figures are for the periods 2003-2004 and 2002-2004 respectively.

On the other hand, Rwanda appears to be doing well in meeting the MDGs. Since 2002, a Poverty Reduction Strategy focused on the Millennium Development Goals has been under implementation, with spending on health and education increasing annually. With over one-third of the Government's budget now being spent on health and education, access to education and health services is increasing rapidly. Rwanda is definitely well on the way to meeting the education MDG, with net primary enrolment at 94%, and the ratio of boys to girls enrolled in primary schools at 100%. Infant and maternal mortality rates are improving too.

Challenges remain in providing rural inhabitants with access to safe drinking water (table 5). The question though is how do we explain the similar levels of rural people with access to safe water in Uganda which has experienced decades of conflicts and stable Tanzania? The answer is quite simple, low state capacity, a lack of political will and lack of a vision for the future.

Table 5 Population with access to safe water

Country	Period	Urban	Rural
Burundi	1991-1993	97	55
Rwanda	1995	79	44
Uganda	1995	65	36
Kenya	2003	83	46
Tanzania	1991-1993	65	45

Source: World Health Organization, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Health For All Strategy, 1997

What are the security problems in the EAC?

A conflict in any one of the EAC countries has far reaching effects as it inevitably affects the whole region in one way or another. Conflicts everywhere in Africa transcend ethnicity and physical borders and this always complicates the magnitude of the conflicts. The regional dynamics of conflicts and the cross border nature of security threats such as arms and human trafficking require the collaborative role of regional and sub regional actors who have intimate understanding of the local contexts⁸. Human trafficking is one clear indicator of defective security sector governance and all EAC countries are victims to this menace either as transit points or as places of origin where syndicates operate (Bryden 2005).

The past ten years have seen major changes in relations between countries in the region making it necessary to focus attention on the causes of these changing relations. For instance, Uganda has recently discovered oil and this could shift the nature of regional alliance formation in the region. The key issue now meriting attention is: What is the role of resources in shifting regional alliances?

Complexities of the violence in the EAC have been partly caused by, and have resulted in hostilities amongst individuals, groups and states. Although colonial legacies have fuelled the conflicts, contemporary violence seems to be a result of failure in both statecraft and state capacity to provide a secure and decent life for

the citizens. Exclusionary governance styles are largely to blame for many of the conflicts since exclusion from government usually means exclusion from all other developmental prospects.

Manifestations of insecurity in the region.

Insecurity in the region takes many forms: There is a pervasive climate of lawlessness as evidenced by increasing levels of piracy off the Somali coast, cross border smuggling between Kenya and Sudan, and between Kenya and Somalia. There is a general increase in violent crimes in all the cities: burglary, hijacking, poaching in the game parks, banditry/robbery and cattle rustling in the rural areas.

a. Cattle rustling is clearly an economic activity for some population categories. The cross border nature of the raids complicate redress mechanisms as collaboration with neighbouring countries have to be strengthened. Livestock pastoralists lack government support. The absence of a national policy for pastoralist economies marginalizes this group compelling them to turn to illegal activities for sustenance.

Consequent redress mechanisms like forced disarmaments have proven elusive since governments have resulted in at times co-opting citizens to carry out disarmament policing and this has spiralled into un-checked 'government enabled militias' whose activities have also not been so objective. This has exacerbated violence, increase the number of weapons into the conflict epicenters and decelerated development in the areas. Clearly, purely militarized remedies have given a blind eye to the development alternatives where the answer sought should be based on understanding the cultural matrixes of these communities. As such, tapping into the social-cultural alternative modes of resolving such conflict should be part and parcel of peace-building national policies for cattle rustling areas.

b. Ethnic tensions (inter ethnic violence)- Decades of ethnic violence deter the achievement of political and social harmony- this has resulted in different types of killing societies e.g. Burundi's history of ethnic cleansing of Tutsis [1965,1972,1988 and 1993] and unworkable peace deals that condone violence by allowing perpetrators to go unpunished. In 2000, a Burundi peace deal allowed both political parties and genocidal forces to play equal roles in national institutions hence peace remained elusive until September 2006.

Burundi's high density population (315 per square metre)- the second highest in the world after Rwanda's, points to the likely continuation of conflicts for as long as the majority of the population remain subsistence farmers. It also has the lowest per capita GDP in the world of \$90 [2005 est.] and half of its population is under 14 years-indicating likely waves of violence when they reach maturity only to embrace poverty and destitution.

c. Porous and insecure borders all around [along Kenya – Somali and Kenya – Ethiopia] serve as fertile ground for organized crime. The rise in violence in Kenya is attributed to the ease of access to guns from the Darfur and Somali conflicts. The pervasive poverty in the entire region enables easy infiltration and recruitment into crime networks. The most conspicuous thing to a visitor to any border town in the region is the continuous flow of human traffic at the entry and exit points. Entry and exit points amongst the countries occur through two main ways⁹;

(i) the official entry/exit point where the immigration officials, the police and/or the intelligence officers and the revenue authorities are located and;

(ii) the unofficial entry point commonly known as ‘panya’ routes which literally translated into Kiswahili means, ‘rat route.’ The *panya* route comprises a short-cut, usually a small path, commonly used by ordinary civilians living in the area to cross into either side of the two countries in the course of their daily business. In most instances *Panya* routes are of no concern to the border security officials and hence remain un-manned. They exist with tacit official approval, to facilitate the movement of ordinary permanent inhabitants of the border post area, who in most cases also have cross-border linkages through marriage, ethnicity or business. Unburdened by security clearances when crossing the border, inhabitants of border posts exploit the ‘freedom’ that goes with *panya* routes. However, *panya* routes constitute major conduit points for illicit trade not only in arms but also in Drugs, Foodstuffs, Human trafficking, Vehicle theft, Minerals and precious stones, Game trafficking and Money laundering.

Kenya is vulnerable because of its position as a conduit for aid to conflict zones in the region. The country has lost trading opportunities due to closed borders and conflict in the border areas- e.g. the Oromo insurgency affects the Ethiopia/Kenya border, and the Somali/Kenya border closure to prevent infiltration by combatants and conflict in neighbouring countries have not stemmed the heavy inflow of illegal SALW into Kenya.

d. Refugees

Refugees are a mobile community that creates community and regional threats. They are a vulnerable group that mostly relies on external agencies for food (mostly from the World Food Programme). The region has about four million Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)¹⁰ and over 600 000 refugees (table 6). The Ugandan conflict between the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the government has left many internally displaced making the populations vulnerable to acute food insecurity thus leading to a heavy reliance on external assistance.

Table 6: EAC Displacement

Country	IDPs	Refugees	Total affected population
Burundi	432 818	28 800	461 618

Kenya	382 000	251 000	633 000
Tanzania	n/a	543 145	543 145
Uganda	535 107	175 819	710 926
Rwanda	n/a	100 000	100 000
Total	1 349 925	1 097 964	2 448 689

Source:UN EAC Region <http://www.unsystem.org/SCN/archives/rnis38/ch04.htm>

The influx of refugees from conflicts in neighbouring countries retards development for both hosts and the refugees and consumes a substantial amount of energy for the law enforcement agents as determining who is a *bona fide* refugee is often very complicated. The seclusion of such people in camps creates situations for gross human rights abuses. Sexual exploitation of girl children by the government military army personnel in displaced camps in Uganda is rampant. Worse still, camps can be fertile ground for extremists to organize and recruit from. For example, Burundi has accused Tanzania of harbouring rebels in the camps. That camps often make the inhabitants vulnerable (especially women and girls), to abuse has been revealed in many reports. A good example is the low quality of life of the refugees in Tanzania that has become that of mere existence as there are numerous restrictions on their movements and they face constant threats of deportations.

Refugees trying to survive often turn to crime as the lack of appropriate documents deny them a chance to earn a decent living. Kenya has borne the burden of thousands of Sudanese refugees on its territory and most have no means of earning an income. Banned from moving out of the camps, the refugees are forced into illegal activities to survive. At a regional level, the EAC would go a long way in articulating a regional position on the treatment of refugees and allowing them to live a decent life that is devoid of fear. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) can use evidence of abuse in the camps as well as the low living standards of refugees to lobby for such a move. And more importantly, an independent monitoring body can continuously assess whether member countries are adhering to the commitment.

e. Child soldiers

Children are reportedly active in the Ugandan government army [Uganda People's Defence Forces]. Children freed from the LRA only have memories of killing yet the government has seen them as a positive resource¹¹. The government thus perpetuates the breeding and nurturing of killing generations.

f. Water

This is an issue that governments sweep under service provision and is usually seen as a problem when urban areas run dry or experience shortages. The fact is that for many rural dwellers, getting safe clean water is problematic and shall remain so until national budgets show a concrete commitment to making this a reality. In any case, the question of water for the region ought to trigger debate in the EAC. With Lake Victoria's reserves dwindling such that even Uganda, endowed with the bulk of Lake Victoria's resources, is struggling to generate

electricity, more hardships are likely to set in should the three big players in EAC fail to plan for future supplies. Insecurity triggered by access to water could fuel secessionist tendencies and new alliances could emerge.

g. Is rule of law respected in these countries?

The institutions of law and order –the courts, the police, the army, the judiciary, prisons and other security organs of the state are accused of major corruption, abuse of power and the violation of human rights. No longer confined to the barracks, soldiers man roadblocks, arrest and detain people at will and with impunity. Infact, they are the source of insecurity to the public and the entire fabric of society is thus manifested with corruption that inhibits democratic development. The National Resistance Movement, in Uganda, has been accused of rape, robbery and wanton killings- a situation that usually arises everywhere where law and order break down. Public opinion shows the public’s positive attitudes towards upholding the rule of law (tables 7a and 7b). However, perceptions of corruption in the region are equally disconcerting (table 8).

Table 7a: The Citizen’s Attitudes towards the Rule of Law

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree, or agree?		KEN	TAN	UGA
The courts have the right to make decisions that people always have to abide by.	Agree / strongly agree	69	79	81
	Neither agree nor disagree	11	5	6
	Disagree / strongly disagree	14	7	9
	Don't know	7	9	4
The police always have the right to make people obey the law.	Agree / strongly agree	67	69	81
	Neither agree nor disagree	11	6	5
	Disagree / strongly disagree	20	18	13
	Don't know	3	8	1
The tax department always has the right to make people pay taxes.	Agree / strongly agree	59	59	71
	Neither agree nor disagree	9	5	8
	Disagree / strongly disagree	18	18	17
	Don't know	14	17	4

Afrobarometer Survey 2005 www.afrobarometer.org

Table 7b

Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B (percent agree / strongly agree)	KEN	TAN	UGA
A. It is better to find lawful solutions to problems even if it takes longer.	85	83	88
B. It is sometimes better to ignore the law and solve problems immediately using other means.	12	11	10
Do not agree with either	1	3	1
Don't know	1	3	0
A. Since the President was elected to lead the country, he should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong.	23	24	22
B. The President must always obey the laws and the courts, even if he thinks they are wrong.	69	64	76
Do not agree with either	5	4	1
Don't know	3	8	1
A. It is important to obey the government in power no matter who you voted for.	93	91	91
B. It is not necessary to obey the laws of a government that I did not vote for.	6	5	9
Do not agree with either	1	1	0
Don't know	0	2	0

Table 8: Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2006

Country	Corruption Perception rank(out of 180 states)	Corruption Perception Index ¹²
Burundi	131	2.4
Rwanda	111	2.5
Uganda	111	2.7
Kenya	150	2.2
Tanzania	94	2.9

The average global integrity score for the region across different issues is weak to moderate (table 9). This indicates low state capacity in delivering human security.

Table 9: Global integrity scores¹³

Country	Civil society, public info and media	Elections	Govt accountability	Admin and civil service	Oversight and regulation	Anti-corruption and rule of law	Overall rating
Burundi	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Rwanda	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Uganda	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Moderate
Kenya	Moderate	Weak	Very weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Moderate
Tanzania	Weak	Very weak	Very weak	Very weak	Weak	Weak	Very weak

NB: Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda scores for 2004. Survey not conducted in Rwanda and Burundi

h. Inequality – An assessment of the socio-economic and political conditions revealed that Kenya in particular is characterized by an excessively inequitable distribution of resources. Distributional conflicts tend to be intractable¹⁴. This is because minority groups who are denied space for political participation or cultural expression tend to recognize power hierarchies as unjust and rebel against them. Water conflicts in arid zones of north east Kenya and north east Uganda are a good example of high stake classic distributional conflicts. Conflicts in the Mt. Elgon area in Kenya are largely about access to land and water which are both diminishing¹⁵. The more one gets, the less the other gets, hence as long as there isn't adequate water supplies to meet every ones' needs, endless conflicts will prevail.

Security is always a priority concern for the poor and the marginalized and it affects different groups in different ways and state security decisions rarely take into account their needs. Insecurity disrupts lives, affects social capital networks of the poor which they rely on as a safety net in times of crises and generally affects human well-being, retarding progress in all dimensions.

i. The nature of politics in the region poses a threat to some ethnic groups that are marginalized politically and economically. Negative and exclusionary politics

de-motivate certain communities leading to high mistrust and distrust e.g. in Kenya in the Pokot/Samburu-Baringo /Turkana/Marakwet regions. The ethnic tensions in these northern communities exacerbate insecurity. Very often, there is deliberate political manipulation of tribal tensions. Ethnicized politics have bred widespread mistrust and there is a need to rebuild trust amongst several communities. There is a need to take into account the historical specificities of northern Kenya, that is, the cross border pastoralism/inter-clan conflicts amongst local communities that have resulted in the communities arming themselves. Issues of injustice are intractable mainly because people are unwilling to compromise on what justice means for them. A sense of injustice thus results in aggression and retaliation¹⁶.

Ethnic tensions tend to converge with social status issues. Since everyone wants to be on the same social top rank, be it political, social or economic, the struggle becomes perpetual. Social status issues are related to issues of unequal economic power, widening the wealth gap between the haves and the have-nots and this has contributed to insecurity in various forms such as violent crimes. Mungiki organized crime in Kenya also bears testimony to this fact. The politicization of ethnicity violates the United Nations and the African Union provisions that stipulate that all citizens deserve the same equal treatment, rights and protection.

j. The north eastern region of Kenya has remained one of the most insecure regions in the country. Government and civilians require armed escorts. The collapse of Somalia led to an increase in banditry, lawlessness, inter-clan tensions and villains from Kenya simply cross over to cool down in Somalia where they have relationships with warlords. There is a lack of initiatives by these local communities to engage in small scale business. At the same time, there is a tremendous rise in the cost of doing business in this region due to political risks that are based more on perceptions than on scientific evidence.

l. **Poor service provision**, e.g., the failure to develop road networks in some regions forces the public to resort to illegal activities and there is self-provision of security by some poor communities. Somalia/Ethiopian conflicts have destabilized northern Kenya and yet the lack of infrastructural development in the region leaves the black market with Somalia as the only alternative supply route for both countries. A negative consequence is that the cost of transporting food to northern Kenya is very high forcing the communities to resort to smuggling.

Kenya has benefited enormously in its role as a conduit of international assistance to Southern Sudan due to thousands of jobs/positions in the aid industry (operation lifeline Sudan) that are run from Lokkichokio in the north. Sudan's war has been 'good business for Kenya' but is this the kind of development Africa wishes for? Many Sudanese elites have business interests in Kenya and the ongoing chaos can be beneficial for them. But still we are forced to ask, how has this conduit business benefited the region?

m. The Kenyan government incurs heavy costs in trying to stabilize Somalia. But it became partisan to US interests in the anti-terrorism drive. This has resulted in the victimization of Somalis and Muslims resulting in the radicalization of the Muslim community thus the War on terror is perceived as a war on Islam by many Moslems. The maligning of the local Moslem community signals mistrust of the Muslim community yet Moslem cooperation/collaboration is central in fighting terrorism in Kenya. State security in Kenya is now infringing international charters and treaties. The country needs to work within the given framework.

n. There is general anxiety about the other negative effects of tourism- such as the sex trade, piracy and drugs that need to be fought. The absence of effective measures can result in vigilantism. Piracy in Somali waters is diverting tourists to other regions. Tourism inflows are determined by levels of security. They increase during stable periods and drop in direct relation to threatening events but they stabilize in the long term.

o. A sign of state failure in security provision is the increase in the privatisation of security and yet the security standards vary in the private security sector and these need to be standardised. The problem with private security is that it polarizes society by using the poor to secure the lives of the rich.

Causes of conflict and insecurity in the Region

Though it is acknowledged that many conflicts do have their origins in their colonial past, there is a generally informed perception and agreement that contemporary conflicts in the EAC and their neighbours are caused by some of the factors mentioned below. The direction of causality is not always clear such that factors and conflicts often tend to feed into each other.

a. The availability of an array of low cost weapons in the region leaves unemployed people vulnerable to crime. For many nursing grievances, access to weapons makes it possible for them to engage in violent acts.

b. Global economic pressures push recalcitrant governments to engage in rapid economic and political reform through mobilizing constituencies around ethnic or religious differences. This makes it possible for them to hold on to power and restore their positions of wealth and power. Such exclusionary governance styles drive ethnic groups to force inclusion violently. For instance, Burundi's ruling elite come from one province, Bururi leaving those excluded to use violence to fight for inclusion. In Kenya, former President Moi restructured distributional politics to benefit his Kalenjin group and the Kikuyus were not happy to lose their privileged position. Currently, the Kikuyus are unhappy and uneasy about the possibility of losing their current status again.

c. The entire region experiences poverty that is exacerbated by the unequal distribution of resources. This has always been a major cause of civil strife. For

example, Burundi has very high rates of poverty with over 60% living below the poverty datum line. Economic performance has not been good for a long time and even regressed between 1993 and 1996. Ignorance and a general lack of awareness is pervasive in Burundi. The low adult literacy rate which was 65% in 1995 has not changed much. The country is caught up in a conflict trap in which all are combined- poverty, bad governance, a fight for control of institutions and resources. Unfortunately, the situation that has developed is that the politicians believe that the solution is more power and resources.

d. Internal migration from the rural to urban areas has led to urbanization pressures that manifest themselves in violent forms in different ways. All the countries in the region have thousands of youths who flock to the urban centres daily hoping to find better prospects. With job scarcity and no opportunities for mobility due to inferior educational standards in rural areas, the result is urban violence between hawkers and traders, and between slum dwellers, developers and civic authorities over land evictions. These have become a permanent feature in Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu¹⁷.

There have been recent concerns that Mungiki organized crime syndicates are now also operating in Dar-es-Salaam and this highlights the volatility of regional security. The youths are unemployed, target the *matatu (dola-dola)* industry. Angry with being used as cannon fodder by the politicians, they are now demanding better governance through violent means. Use of the Mungiki name is what points to the unchecked crime levels in the region.

Dar-es-Salaam's resources are failing to cope with the migration pressures so is Nairobi which is witnessing massive expansion in construction and yet the water, electricity and sewerage systems have remained at the same capacity for more or less the last three decades. All countries in the region have high population growth rates of over 3 percent hence migration problems will continue to escalate. Only Rwanda has articulated a policy to control its potentially explosive population growth.

e. For the nomadic/pastoralists, the problems of trying to eke out a living from dwindling resources and harsh climatic conditions encourages people to replenish their wealth through illegal and violent means. Resource scarcity, population pressures and environmental degradation will worsen conflicts amongst the pastoral communities.

f. Natural disasters (drought, desertification and floods) force people to abandon their homes as their lifestyles become unsustainable. Land degradation is caused by climatic changes and human activities. Pastoralists and peasant farmers are the worst hit.

g. Ignoring the consequences of killing civilians: there has been a general trend in the glamorization of violence and impunity. Too many culprits go unpunished. Joseph Kony is already trying to avoid punishment for the excesses of the LRA.

h. Generally, the region has poor security policies. Any security measures, peace processes or development strategies that do not address the region's cross border challenges will be incomplete and will remain vulnerable to reversal. The region's politics, security and stability are interlinked. Ethnic confrontation in one country does have an impact on several neighbours, the displacement of people and large refugee populations strain local resources creating further tensions and conflicts over land, jobs and status.

i. Access to land is one issue that has led to perpetual conflicts since decolonization. Throughout Africa, the pattern has been largely the same with certain groups accumulating land to the disadvantage of others. Land policies are often complex and require fair redistribution models so as to stop the prolonged conflicts. CSOs, especially when they work with grassroots organizations and the support of customary leaders, can be involved in all land processes from the formulation of inclusive policies, raising awareness and disseminating information on key policy aspects, policy implementation, capacity building and monitoring socio economic impacts of the policies on gender. In rural areas, local chiefs and customary mediators will always retain legitimacy and their inclusion always has to be negotiated prior to post conflict debates¹⁸. Customary leaders will always retain influence in land issues and to avoid political interference in land distribution, their input is essential.

Kenya has had its share of conflicts generated by population pressure, agricultural commercialization and urbanisation. However, the failure to reform the traditional land tenure systems shows a lack of state capacity in adaptation to changing citizen needs. Many rural people have outdated land registrations and the high cost of registration prevents many from registering. At the same time, the state has not demonstrated any capacity in updating these records especially in the case of deceased land right holders. Widows in particular become very vulnerable when the men fight for the deceased's land which, traditionally, should be passed on to the man's family. However this violates constitutional provisions on equality. Most of the land conflicts are about boundaries with neighbours/relatives. This is followed by inheritance disputes and finally land sales. Over 90 percent of those involved in land conflicts tend to opt for informal conflict resolution institutions such as community elders' committees. The formal institutions, the land tribunals and other governmental institutions only preside over less than 50 percent of the disputes. This lack of faith in these institutions is disturbing.

j. Displacement retards the achievement of many of the millenium goals as both water and sanitation are difficult to access for those in camps in arid areas. Non-rain water availability for IDPs in northern Uganda is as low as 4-12 litres per

day¹⁹. Poverty is on the increase and food aid is often raided by rebels. Likewise, health and nutritional standards are very low in this region and infant mortality rates remain very high at 290 per 1000 live births against a national average of 88. With sex becoming a commodity in difficult times, Aids/Hiv continues to spread and young girls face a big risk. The HDI index for the region is a low 0.350 against a national average of 0.449. This shows a picture of uneven achievement of the millennium goals in the country and we expect this pattern to prevail across most of the countries for different reasons. A mass of educated people cannot be gullible to political influences that can threaten the stability and peace of a country. Evidence has demonstrated that it is difficult for multi-party democracy to coexist with widespread ignorance and illiteracy. The small groups of political elites manipulate the majority and deter the achievement of political maturity.

k. Stereotyping that has persisted since colonization also contributes to conflicts. In the entire region there are aliens and indigenes; sophisticated and primitive regions; oppressors and the oppressed and rulers versus subjects, the predatory politicians and the revolutionaries²⁰. The case of cattle rustling shows the apparent lack of sophistication as these inhabitants devastate themselves, their neighbours and entire regions. Their lack of respect for private property is worrisome. Stereotyping perpetuates self serving attitudes and has often degenerated into mass ethnic violence, displacement and genocide. Paving the way for national reconciliation and working towards a common future is paramount across the region.

l. In ethnically polarized societies such as Rwanda and Burundi, relationships are retained by coercion and maintained by threats and use of force. In the absence of legitimacy, demands for change often result in instability and social unrest. In Burundi, Rwanda, DRC, and to some extent Uganda, governing political elites made choices that exacerbated inter group tensions²¹. Politics and economics were used both to affirm the dominance of one group, and to alienate the others, literally and figuratively. Myths were created and propagated about people and peoples, their origins, their history, national character, moments of triumph and their enemies. The truth of history is obscured and rejected as irrelevant. The myths and fantasies became the basis for conflict. What passes for anodyne ethnic, regional and religious discourse in other societies has caused violent conflict and heavy loss of life in the region. Conflict management in the region requires investment in exposing the fallacy and danger of the operative divisive political ideologies, and in promoting critical analysis especially among the most vulnerable sectors of society. Training and capacity building are therefore key components of the stability strategy, especially for Burundi and Rwanda, as well as the rest of the region.

m. Whilst innovative approaches to governance are welcome and essential for Africa, Museveni's 'no party democracy' forced homogenisation that leads to resistance yet there is no pressure on him by the US in particular to implement

political reforms. These double standards do not go unnoticed by other political elites.

n. Mistrust-Due to unhealed wounds from the past, mistrust about civil society is high in some EAC countries. Ideological differences by the governments are one cause of concern but so is the role allegedly played by some civic groups in fuelling conflicts. Civil society groups have to adhere to the countries' constitutions and desist from undermining unity and reconciliation-however, it is important to underline that many governments blatantly ignore their constitutions. Because some minorities tend to be disadvantaged in many cases, it can sometimes be unavoidable to have specific programmes and CSO groups that target to uplift such communities. Examples are the Twa in Rwanda, Burundi and in Southwest Uganda. The Batwa, a nomadic group, have been disrupted by the loss of their traditional land and their insecurity has worsened due to social marginalization, a lack of access to social services and chronic poverty²². Governments, donors and NGOs have so far failed to address poverty problems of the Twa. CSOs working with such groups have often be misread by governemnts as formenting ethnic divisions and fuelling secessionist tendencies and this mistrust complicates the task of uplifting these communities.

At a different level, governments in the region tend to display signs of mistrust towards each other. As mentioned earlier, Tanzania hosts many refugees from the entire region but Burundi has not taken kindly to its hosting of Burundian refugees and has accused it of supporting rebels. Even then, the refugees themselves have not shown much enthusiasm in returning to Burundi and their days are spent waiting and hoping. The recent conflict between Congolese Tutsis under Laurent Nkunda and the government of Joseph Kabila has also drawn Rwanda into the conflict and this is simply due to mistrust that another Tutsi annihilation is brewing.

Terrorism's challenge to the Horn and East Africa

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) member states have been the victims of terrorism and remain vulnerable. A 2005 IGAD assessment revealed that the region is vulnerable due to state fragility and failure in Somalia, the high levels of political instability and intolerance between governments and their opposition groups. Again in 2007, at an AU meeting in Algiers, the region was noted as the most vulnerable to terrorist activities. Challenges to the authority and legitimacy of the state can lead to utilization of terrorist methods. Terrorist incidents increase risk premiums. This can lead to lower investment and lower economic growth.

Several other factors make East Africa vulnerable to terrorist attacks:

- There is generally easy access to the region [porous borders and a vast coastline].
- Violence as politics creates opportunities for terrorism to flourish and
- Western bases in Djibouti increase the region's vulnerability

Challenges of post conflict reconstruction in Northern Uganda

Uganda has experienced cycles of conflicts since 1979 but three major ones have persisted. In the West Nile, there are thousands of refugees from Congo and Sudan who battle with locals over land. Then there is Karamoja where over 30 years of armed cattle rustling has intensified as grazing land and water access dwindles. Cattle rustling creates opportunities for banditry to flourish. This has displaced traditional agricultural communities into petty traders concentrated in safer trading centers and camps. Lack of state capacity in providing security to the citizens has resulted in these publics taking responsibility for their own welfare.

On the eastern border with Kenya, ethnic groups engaged in cattle rustling are believed to be armed by the Kenyan and Ugandan governments respectively²³. In the seventies, the Uganda government²⁴ armed the Karamojong in reward for fighting a rebel group and afterwards, it became impossible to disarm them. In fact, the nineties saw the government continue to reward them with more arms for resisting anti-government rebels. Hence cattle rustling and insecurity have been a part of Karamojong lifestyle for a long time. Attempts to disarm them have remained futile with only 12 000 guns being turned in against a total of an estimated 80 000 held by the warriors. Current attempts at disarmament of other neighbouring marauding tribes such as the Turkana and Didinga in Kenya have also failed.

The third conflict is the 20 year old LRA rebel war against the government²⁵. The LRA challenges the government's moral authority to rule and has terrorized civilians over the period. It drew support from other tribes (eg Lango) that felt marginalized by the government. At the same time, there are serious threats to Acholi land which point to issues of exclusion.

Threats to land include illegal occupation and logging by the Ugandan army officers and private investors. Another threat is likely to emanate from government efforts to engage in mechanized food production on customary land to address food insecurity problems and raise living standards for IDPs. IDPs naturally resist this move as it will mean another relocation/displacement again to an unknown destination. They dread spending most of their life starting all over again. Government has also been accused of settling IDPs and soldiers on private family land. However, a general long term threat is land grabbing by relatives and neighbours. The end of war in Uganda signals the beginning of other conflicts as returnees seek their land back. IDPs have little room to improve their living standards- they are restricted to a 2km radius of the camps by the army hence as many as 13% have no access to land and 50% have access to just less than half an acre. The army also prevents them from planting annual crops like sorghum and cassava as these can be used to feed the rebels. The net result is a community that can not provide for itself because of 'state security interests'.

Other smaller scale insurgencies have destabilised Uganda in the past. 1997 saw an insurgency in the western part of the country by the Allied Democratic Forces rebel group that was composed of former Idi Amin loyalists with an ideology based on Islam. Its cross border raids took place from the lawless eastern Congolese territory. Another group from the West Nile region, the West Nile Bank Front, an ethnic grouping of former Idi Amin's army commanders, aimed/aims to restore its lost glory.

There are questions surrounding the negative scenario of a return to war in both Uganda and Sudan. Mistrust between the North and South is likely to result in an uneasy and tense peace. This will further complicate the expected large scale population movements and will have far more direct and devastating effects on Kenya. For example, the Sudanese SPLA elite has vast business links in Kenya. This raises questions of how the war economy is to be transformed.

Delays in Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) could trigger instability. The Karamojong cattle raiding wars spill over into western Kenya and southern Ethiopia yet the Ugandan government failed to implement a successful disarmament exercise. The brutality of the security forces in forcing disarmament only resulted in worsening mistrust between the community and the government hence the community continued to arm itself as it had to provide security for itself against neighbouring cattle raiding groups [some use bows and arrows!].

The continued presence of the militias, Other Armed Groups (OAGs), is unhealthy for long term stability. DDR has to be planned effectively and timeously in order to ensure permanent disarmament and sustainable peace. Examples from other countries, Liberia and Congo, where the processes have failed point to the need to prepare a comprehensive plan that will guard against the exercises degenerating into dependent micro-businesses supported by collusion between the refugees and the officers in charge. Alusala cautions on guarding against 'DDR tourism', where ex-combatants move among countries to receive more money in exchange for their weapons. Extreme care during DDR is paramount: if combatants are not properly disarmed and armories not well protected, weapons might re-circulate in the society leading to disputes being settled with deadly violence as well as a relapse into conflict.

Tanzania

Let us not forget the real and potential threats to peace in Tanzania that were triggered by the introduction of multi-party politics in 1992. Political openness and economic liberalization has caused local and national conflicts. At the national level, political expression has taken the form of racial, ethnic, religious and regional sentiments. Economic tensions are felt racially between the black Tanzanians and the Arab Tanzanians who clearly dominate the economy. Hence after Africanisation, there are now calls for black empowerment (indigenization) or '*sera ya uzawa*'. Intolerance to opposition by the Chama Chama Pinduzi is

another indicator of a potential political conflict. The 1995 and 2000 election related violence in Zanzibar bears testimony to this fact.

Unequal development is played ethnically and regionally as the country is split into many ethnic development associations; and between the north and the more developed southern regions. Likewise political power is contested on religious differences where there is a perception that Moslems are being marginalised by Christians. As long as bargaining, persuasion and compromise are part of the conflict resolution modalities, the peace can hold. But still, we are inclined to ask; How long does it take for these animosities to flare into violence? And more importantly: How do we inject a sense of national unity, solidarity, hope, purpose and human respect into these nations that has held the peace in Tanzania for such a long time?

Lastly, visionary leadership is a key ingredient that is lacking on the continent. Whereas Tanzania's nationalist leaders (first generation) had the vision of a free society, without injustice and inequalities, many others failed to articulate clear visions let alone act on their visions. President Kagame in Rwanda is currently acting on his vision; tolerance, holding the peace, officially eradicating ethnic identities, development, translating blue-prints into action and though he has a strong hand- things are getting done in the country.

How can external actors engage with domestic actors?

Questions on why contemporary states with superior resources fail to overcome the resistance of traditional local power centres continue to be asked by theoreticians and practitioners. Over time, it has become clear that, in fragmented societies, the very act of trying to forcibly consolidate power over points of local control is what causes leaders to lose it hence the term 'elusive power'²⁶. Other actors, civil society in particular, partly hold the key to comprehending and effectively tackling the conflicts, the political and socio-economic crises in the EAC.

Participation in regional organizations is one way of compelling hesitant states to open up space for CSO involvement and capacity enhancement. The recent moves by Burundi and Rwanda to join the East African Community signal the willingness to be compliant with democratic norms that undergird the regional group. And an open political agora that allows CSOs scope to scrutinize state positions on certain policies is one benefit of belonging to the regional outfit.

Regional groupings in particular make it easier for CSOs to aggregate around regional issues at different levels especially in advocacy and institution building. In a region where poverty is pervasive, human rights violations are rampant and refugees are the norm, articulation of these problems at the regional level would make it easier to lobby the regional bodies and quickly get the problems on the agenda. In the effort to standardize the quality of democracy the grouping

delivers to its citizens, the more reluctant states would be pressured by their commitment to the grouping to take action-hopefully.

Despite recent democratization efforts in the region, civil society²⁷ has not really taken a leading role in the democratization of the military. The EAC is a rather fragile area and there should always be a careful balancing of the state and non-state actors. Promoting good transparent and accountable security governance is about changing the past values and behaviour and making sure there is coherence on all security policies. Effective security governance requires capacity building, policies and a genuine cultural shift within the region, that is, by all neighbouring states.

Much of the donor support for enhancing security has been directed at the OAU mechanism for conflict resolution peace fund, governance forums as well as seminars for the promotion of democracy and building a culture of peace and coexistence. On the other hand, there is a clear contradiction in the calls for good governance as a condition for aid and the transfer of armament technology to Africa. Such strategies that value stability over democratization need revisiting.

However, among the many hurdles to be conquered is the apparent absence of coordinated planning by the intervening/aiding forces. Fragmented interventions by all stakeholders –donors, governments, NGOs and the private sector– contribute to the chaos and difficulties in streamlining development. There is a general lack of alignment of short term and long term key objectives at both the national and international levels. Concrete examples are the (a.) EU/Donors who tend to look at short term goals and (b). The USA - 'Africa command' move by USA that threatens to weaken national and regional efforts at capacity building that is based on the African experience. There is therefore a need for a comprehensive integrated approach to managing security in the region and to enforce accountability and provide a framework for key actors.

Conclusion

Whilst containing the security task might seem like a Herculean task, the EAC governments do make 'some' effort to improve on security provision for their citizens. Specific areas and issues require targeting. States need to pursue state security that takes into account human security through:

- Establishing norms and standards that should be internalized by security agents.
- Incorporation of human rights into the national educational curriculum
- Civic education on human rights, vigilance against gangs/organized crime.
- Capturing the pastoralist economies into the mainstream economic activities to combat cattle rustling - The diversification of economic activities to lessen overdependence on livestock
- Strengthening community policing
- De-tribalising politics

- De-criminalising refugees. Efforts have to concentrate more on protecting refugees' rights and improving capacity for accommodating them
- Recognising that conflicts in the EAC cannot be compartmentalized-transnational conflicts imply an inclusive comprehensive regional approach
- Intensifying interstate peace building efforts at the regional level, increasing CSO presence in the region, introducing pro-poor policies that benefit the masses in the region, actively promoting of education that can help to reduce the negative impact of insecurity and conflict in the area
- Building professional militaries and security forces that are accountable to civilian authorities who safeguard the rule of law and human rights
- Advocating and organizing for inclusive citizenship laws across the EAC through civic education.
- Rebuild North-Eastern Uganda through significant non-political initiatives of rebuilding infrastructure to attend to basic standards of living as well as building local trust through local community services and safety nets.

Finally, it is also important for the EAC as a sub-regional regime, to embark on a diplomatic campaign that uses human rights and respect thereof as a diplomatic kite in all of its activities. It should be expected that human rights and democratization records ought to be used as a yard stick for 'eligibility' to membership and continued membership in the organization.

Endnotes

¹ Ndayizigiye Jean Berchmans 2005. Humiliation and Violent Conflicts in Burundi, paper for Roundtable 1 - Workshop on Humiliation and Violent Conflict, Columbia University, New York, Dec 15-16

² Shayka Anastase 2007. Background to the Conflict in the Great Lakes Region', Paper Presented at the Parliamentary and Security Sector Workshop, Kigali Rwanda, 19-20 September 2007. Sponsored by Amani Forum Rwanda Chapter and the Institute for Security Studies

³ Wolf Tom 2000

⁴ The Horn of Africa is composed of 7 countries: Uganda, Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya.

⁵ It is important to know that this is a contested concept and its debate is beyond the scope of this paper. The UNDP 1994 report defines these in 7 categories: economic, food, health, environmental, community, personal and political security.

⁶ Burundians mentioned the ability to eat one meal a day as the most crucial indicator of peace. The ability to travel without fear and to associate freely were also mentioned. See Center for UN Reform Education 2007. Update on Governance in Burundi, ReformtheUN.org, 3 September, www.reformtheun.org/index.php/euupdate/3389

7 For instance, Uganda has 2.5 million citizens afflicted with river blindness yet the disease can be contained at an early stage with a vaccine that works on the young worm that causes the disease.

⁸ The West African Civil Society Forum and the West African Network for Peace building in west Africa are good examples of successful regional networks.

⁹ Nelson Alusala 2007 Informal Trade and Cross Border Crime: The Case of the Great Lakes Region

¹⁰ The Burundi 1993 violence resulted in the death of 300 000 people, created 600 000 to 800 000 refugees and about 500 000 IDPs.

¹¹ See Unicef report, Uganda- child Soldiers Trapped in Vicious Cycle of War, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/Uganda_25184.html

¹² Index measures degree to which corruption is perceived to exist amongst a country's public institutions. Scores range from ten (squeaky clean) to zero (highly corrupt).

¹³ Scores are compiled from commentaries, references and peer reviews for 290 sectors

¹⁴ Maiese Michelle 2003 Causes of Disputes and Conflicts, Beyond Intractability Org. http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/underlying_causes, 10/18/2007

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¹⁸ Huggins Chris, Herman Musahara, Prisca Mbura Kamungi, Johnstone Summit Oketch and Koen Vlaseenroot 2007 "Conflict in the EAC Region: How Is It Linked with Land and Migration?" <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/VBOL-6AHGPL?> Open document

¹⁹ Reported in Nannyonjo Justine 2004 Conflicts, Poverty and Human Development in Northern Uganda, paper for WIDER Conference on Making Peace Work, Helsinki, 4-5 June

²⁰ Nil Justus Stereotypes as Sources of Conflict in Uganda, BMG Wordsmith, Kampala

²¹ Sezibera Richard 2007 Experiences With Conflict Management in the Great Lakes Region_A Paper Presented at the Parliamentary and Security Sector Workshop, Kigali Rwanda, 19-20 September 2007. Sponsored by Amani Forum Rwanda Chapter and the Institute for Security Studies

²² Mulgavh, Lucy, Nelson John & Jackson Dorothy. 2005. 'Central Africa: Great Lakes Region and Cameroon' in *The Indigenous World*, IWGIA's Yearbook http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/Africa/iwgia_yrbk_c_af_2005_eng.shtml

²³ See Ploughshares report for Armed Conflicts, 2007 <http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/ACRBriefs-Uganda.htm>

²⁴ Many former eastern European countries, the British, South Africa, China and Russia are blamed for selling arms to the Ugandan government. In turn, Uganda also sells some of these to the DRC in deliberate violation of the UN arms embargo against the DRC.

²⁵ Hundreds of thousands have been massacred in this conflict (about half a million), more than a quarter children were abducted by the rebels and about 2 million displaced over they years.

²⁶ Harbeson, John W. 1994. 'Civil Society and Political Renaissance in Africa' in *Civil Society and the State in Africa*, (eds.) Harbeson John W., Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan, Lynne Rienner Pub.

²⁷ Participation by civil society has been central in many development frameworks including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and the Cotonou Agreement. The International Cooperation for Development and Society (CIDSE) (2006) survey confirmed that civil society has overall played a significant role in improving governance. This, CSOs have done by improving access to public information, exposing corruption and by pushing donors to add distinct issues to their agendas such as addressing inequalities, enhancing transparency and accountability to voters. When provided with space for participation, CSOs and local authority partnerships can play significant roles in determining policy as well as its implementation.

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