

Geostrategies in the Great Lakes Conflict and Spatial Designs for Peace

Dr. Richard A. Griggs, Independent Projects Trust, Durban

(Dr. Griggs is Research Director for Independent Projects Trust--a non-governmental organization in Durban, South Africa. Griggs is also coordinator for the Center for World Indigenous Studies Fourth World Atlas Project.)

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This article discusses proposed solutions to the regional conflict affecting areas of Eastern Zaïre, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania. It begins with an analysis of the structural conditions that spawn conflict, the actors who seek certain geopolitical outcomes, and the discursive formations that support these strategic designs. This generates a list of factors that can be fitted into a matrix and used to evaluate eight major proposals for peace. Two proposals that address the regional problem of ill-fitting political boundaries earned higher overall scores than those that rely only on force or new distributions of power within individual states.

1. The Structural Conditions of Conflict

Structure refers to relatively immobile social, physical, or economic factors that either constrain or facilitate conflict and help shape the geostrategic responses and discursive practices of key actors. Three such factors in the present situation are: (1) irrational political boundaries; (2) land shortages and environmental stress; and (3) ethnically differentiated access to power and wealth.

1.1 Political Boundaries

In pre-colonial times the rigid political boundaries demarcating European-designed states in Central Africa did not exist. There was only the hilly, fertile, well-watered, malaria-free and defensible plateau that overlapped the boundaries of today's Burundi, Rwanda, eastern Zaïre, south-west Uganda, and north-west Tanzania. The Berlin Conference delimitations of 1884 and subsequent boundary adjustments had two major impacts: (1) the traditional Kingdoms of Rwanda and 'Urundi' were reduced in size and left without sufficient resources for healthy economic development; and (2) substantial numbers of Tutsis and Hutus were left as minorities within Uganda, Tanzania, and Zaïre.

Colonial boundaries that may have served German and Belgian interests left modern Rwanda and Burundi as tiny landlocked countries with little mineral wealth except scattered nickel deposits. Lucrative mineral deposits were left on the Zaïrean side of the border. The prime wealth of these two states rests in their

fertile soil but this resource is not distributed evenly and many lack sufficient land to even produce food. At least two million Rwandese and Burundians rely on international aid for sustenance. Tea and coffee production which have accounted for seventy percent or more of foreign exchange since 'independence' occupy much of the fertile land area. This is an acute example of the neo-colonialist pattern in Africa whereby induced dependency on former colonial markets persists limiting the opportunities for developing: a middle class [requiring a wider distribution of wealth], a diverse economy, strong local trade, or a competitive position on the world market.

Within Rwanda and Burundi the ethnic distribution is approximately 85% Hutu, 14% Tutsi and 1% Twa. About two million of an estimated fifteen million Hutus and Tutsis are located directly outside the boundaries of Rwanda and Burundi. Some 400,000 Tutsis [and some Hutus] trace their ancestry to either eastern Zaïre's North Kivu province [the 'Banyarwanda'] or its South Kivu province [the 'Banyamulenge']. Between 750,000 and one million Hutus are located on the Tanzanian boundary with Rwanda and Burundi. Tens of thousands of both Tutsis and Hutus reside along the Rwanda/Uganda boundary because of the British-negotiated 1910 cession of the Kisoro sub-district to Uganda.

The situation of Hutus and Tutsis living on the boundaries of much larger and more ethnically diverse states has helped to destabilise neighboring countries, offered a justification for expansionism and a tool for demagoguery. Zaïre's September 1996 effort to 'repatriate' ethnic Tutsis to Rwanda despite their centuries-old ancestry in Kivu triggered the current round of fighting [the Banyamulenge Rebellion]. Similar problems could occur along the Tanzanian border with Rwanda and Burundi where Hutu militias launch cross-border raids [Van Eck 1996].

1.2 Land Shortages

Burundi and Rwanda could easily have the highest percentage of disturbed, overpopulated land in Africa. Discounting uninhabitable areas [e.g., 10% of Rwanda's 26,340 square kilometers is National Park], the population density within Rwanda and Burundi exceeds 400 persons per square kilometer.

Land scarcity, soil exhaustion, and a limited food supply were problems already noted in pre-colonial times. Colonial policy then intensified this environmental and demographic stress by encouraging large scale coffee and tea plantations. Through various policies of taxation, the German and Belgian administrators destroyed subsistence farming and communal ownership to force most of the rural population into coffee production. Consequent land shortages decreased per capita food production.

Although complicated by many factors such as high annual population growth rates [3.5%], the political economy imposed by colonialism still contributes

substantially to environmental degradation and conflict over scarce land. When the price of coffee plummeted during the 1980s, Rwanda lost 90% of its grasslands as land-hungry farmers expanded into new and often environmentally-sensitive areas [World Bank 1995].

Much of the ethnic conflict in the region today is tied to the hope of gaining land whether by territorial expansion, genocide, or expelling certain ethnic groups. At different times both Hutu and Tutsi leaders have called for a 'Greater Rwanda' with reference to Zaïre's North Kivu, which belonged in part to Belgian ruled Ruanda-Urundi before 1910. In early 1996 Hutus at Masisi in North Kivu massacred ethnic Tutsis in an attempt to reclaim land. Key Hutu leaders living in Dar-Es-Salaam have called on Tanzania to annex Burundi. Tutsis claimed the houses, plots, and property of nearly two million Hutus expelled by the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Army in 1994.

1.3 Ethnic Class Divisions

Ethnically-differentiated access to resources, wealth and power has been entrenched since pre-colonial times. First, Hutu farmers settled among the indigenous hunter-gatherers [the Twa] and then Tutsi cattle herders arrived in the Sixteenth Century. The Tutsi adopted the language, beliefs, and customs of the Hutu but enforced class divisions based mainly on phenotype [the Tutsis tend to be taller with thin set features and the Hutu shorter with wide-set features]. The Tutsis perceived themselves as a warrior caste whose role was to defend the land and the Hutu farmers as labouring 'serfs'. After four centuries of cultural indoctrination, many Tutsis still seek to rule over the less educated rural Hutus while the latter seek to drive out their 'oppressors'.

German and Belgian colonisers reinforced these class divisions by favouring the Tutsis with educational opportunities and positions in the administration. Large tracts of land expropriated for the production of tea and coffee were worked by Hutus under the supervision of Tutsi overseers. Today the relative financial success of the Tutsis in agriculture, business and mining contributes to their military strength [well-armed] but also exposes them to ethnic animosities and demagoguery. The Hutu have had few economic alternatives other than labouring on plantations run by the Tutsis or engaging in illegal cross-border trade in ivory, gold, diamonds, heroin, and guns. This makes for a political economy riven with ethnic conflict because the group in charge of the army, police, or security forces controls this mode of production.

2. Actors and their geostrategic interests

War, refugees, sanctions, and environmental damage can be perceived as catastrophic for some but it can create geopolitical opportunities for others such as expanded influence in a region or enlarging a state's territory. Key political actors, their alliances, and their geostrategic designs can be assessed according

to: (1) the six Central African states directly involved in the conflict [Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan]; and (2) Extra-Regional Actors.

2.1 Directly Involved Actors

The geostrategic interests of Zairean Tutsis, Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda were laid bare in October 1996 with the creation of a pro-Tutsi controlled 300-kilometer-long strip of Eastern Zaire from Uvira in the South to Goma in the North. Since then pro-Tutsi militias have moved northward along the Ugandan border widening and extending the buffer zone between Zaire and its neighbors to the east by more than 1,000 kilometers nearly reaching the boundary with Sudan. This scattered all the rebel forces opposed to the regimes in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi and cut their supply lines.

While the geostrategies of the Tutsi-dominated governments in Rwanda and Burundi were achieved with the creation of a buffer zone as large as the eastern seaboard of the United States [see Figure One], the spread of the conflict may not offer a long-term solution. The map also illustrates that the positioning of pro-Tutsi forces is mirrored to the east by Hutu militias operating from bases within Tanzania. Many of the Hutu militias crossed Lake Tanganyika to take up positions in Tanzania and thence into Burundi and Rwanda where the civil war has intensified. This geostrategic configuration along with Zaire's threatened collapse, Uganda's heightening civil war, increased Sudanese support for anti-Ugandan forces, and the increased involvement of extra-regional actors has all the potential of developing into a major conflagration that will serve few long-term interests in the region. War and huge refugee movements could involve a score of states and affect more than 100 million African people.

Zaire

Zaire, a country of forty million people with an area the size of Western Europe, has been fragmenting along ethnic and provincial lines for more than three decades. Since 1965 dictator Mobutu Sese Seko has played the colonial game of divide and rule while siphoning off billions of rands from the national treasury to Swiss bank accounts. This fueled clashes between army units, tribes, provinces, and neighboring states. Mass refugee movements from Burundi/Rwanda into Zaire from 1993 through 1996 further destabilised its eastern border area and set off a civil war that could lead to the collapse of the Mobutu regime and bring its army into full scale war with neighboring states.

Following the April 1994 genocide of the Tutsi people in Rwanda, refugee camps along Zaire's eastern borders with Burundi and Rwanda received more than one-million people fleeing reprisals from the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front [RPF]. The camps offered food, shelter, recruits, and human shields for 55,000 former Rwandese forces [ex-FAR] and the Interahamwe militia credited with the

massacres. At the same time, Burundi's Forces for the Defense of Democracy [FDD], the military wing of the National Council for the Defense of Democracy [CNDD], established themselves in the camps. When considering solutions to the conflict, it is important to remember that these militias which are engaged in civil war in their own countries used international aid to rebuild their strength in the camps, re-arm, and conduct guerrilla raids.

Over time, Eastern Zaïre's complex ethnic rivalries and numerous guerrilla armies plotting the overthrow of the Zaïrean government made the camps an uneasy refuge for the Hutu militias. By September-October 1996 the experienced guerrilla fighter Laurent Kabila [a Luba from 'Katanga' province] had organised several large ethnic militias into an umbrella body called the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Kinshasa* [AFDL]. Kabila, a Katangan [not a Tutsi] contributed his own ethnically-mixed militia, *Forces Armées Populaires* [FAP], the armed wing of his political party, the *Parti de la Révolution Populaire* [PRP]. The Hutu militias had formed alliances with opponents of the AFDL including Zaïre's armed forces and certain ethnic groups in the area opposed to the Tutsi. Thus, complex ethnic rivalry is a significant factor in the conflict as groups like the Tutsi, Nande, Bashi Babwari, Maluba, and Kasaï are in opposition to groups such as the Hutu, Bufalero, Warega, Tembo, Hunde and Babembe. This complexity is seldom explained in news reports and the names of various militias [not all sharing identical goals] are often anglicised and new acronyms created by the press. The reader should refer to the sidebar for a sample listing of forces and militias operating in the region.

From September 1996 various militias within the AFDL were engaged in combat with both the Zaïrean Army, Hutu militias, and various ethnic allies. Suspecting Rwandese backing of the anti-Zaïrean guerrillas, South Kivu's deputy governor proclaimed that all Banyamulenge were 'foreigners' and had six days to 'move back' to Rwanda. This set off the mid-October Banyamulenge rebellion. Kabila led a Banyamulenge-dominated force [Alliance des Forces Démocratiques des Peuples or ADP] on a northward drive from the Mulenge mountains to successfully rout Zaïre's army and break up the refugee camps harbouring Hutu militias. Some 650,000 people returned to Rwanda. Others crossed into Tanzania, Burundi, or moved further east into the rainforest. The numerous militias of the AFDL consolidated their territorial gains and then advanced both northward along the Ugandan border to just short of the Sudan border and westward toward Kisangani, the head of the navigable part of the Zaïre river and Zaïre's third largest city [still held by Zaïrean troops in late February].

Zaïre has been disgraced by its ineffective army that has turned to looting Zaïrean citizens and sacking whole cities in its retreat. The Central African country has also lost any economic benefit derived from the timber, gem and gold trade in Upper Zaïre [now financing the AFDL]. Recent expansion of rebel territory into Shaba [the port, airport, and railway station at Kalemie on Lake Tanganyika], Zaïre's richest province, does threaten an avalanche of ethnic and

provincial secessionism. The rebel armies have grown rapidly through recruitment, the capture of strategic territory, and in their seizure of a significant number of Zaïrean arms. Thus, the geostrategic objective of the Mobutu regime is nothing less than averting collapse by reclaiming all AFDL-held territory. Apparently, Zaïre lacks the military capacity [less than 10,000 combat-ready troops] to do this alone and assistance is coming from France, Belgium, Serbia, Croatia, Sudan and Libya in various and unspecified forms [e.g., Serb and Croatian military advisers, military hardware, etc].

Uganda

Uganda's President Museveni is a Tutsi descendant and a solid ally of the AFDL and the Tutsi-dominated regimes in Rwanda and Burundi. Museveni, Kabila, and Paul Kagame [Rwanda's Vice President, Defense Minister and former head of *Uganda's* military intelligence] share close ties. Tutsis from both Rwanda and Zaïre were principal components of the National Resistance Movement that defeated the Obote regime and brought Museveni to power in 1986. In turn, the RPF assumed power in Rwanda with Ugandan support.

In geopolitical terms, Uganda's chief problems are insecurity along its borders and its landlocked status. First, Uganda has 18,000 troops of the Uganda People's Defence Forces [UPDF] combating more than one set of rebel militias that shell border towns and launch cross-border raids from either eastern Zaïre or southern Sudan [i.e., the West Nile Bank Front or WNBF, the Sudan-backed Lord's Resistance Army or the LRA, and the Allied Democratic Army or ADA]. With U.S. support, Uganda backs the Sudan People's Liberation Army [SPLA] seeking to overthrow Sudan's ruling National Islamic Front which took power by a coup in 1989. Uganda's involvement in both Zaïre and Sudan has helped to precipitate Khartoum's increased support for the Zaïre/Hutu alliance and the anti-Museveni rebels operating along Uganda's borders.

Uganda has a stake and seeks geostrategic advantages in its support of a Tutsi-held buffer zone along its western border with Zaïre extending north to Sudan. In fact, Uganda occupied an area of Zaïre around Beni for two weeks in late 1996 to facilitate the northward advance of the AFDL. Furthermore, in February 1997 AFDL forces engaged Ugandan insurgents [WNBF] within Eastern Zaïre proving the buffer zone to be of some worth for Uganda. Tutsi dominance of Rwanda, Burundi, and Eastern Zaïre could also see the fruition of Museveni's long-time ambition to relieve Uganda's landlocked status with a transport route across to Lake Tanganyika and hence south to the South African rail network. However, these geostrategic designs run the risk of both enlarging Uganda's own civil war and bringing other states into the conflict.

Tanzania

Tanzania is allied with Hutu militias from Burundi [e.g., the FDD, Palipehutu, and Frolina]. This could lead to either a Tanzanian invasion of Burundi or civil war [internal divisions and violent protests are mounting over support for Hutu militias]. Tanzania provides Hutu rebels with training bases [one is near Lake Victoria] and refugee camps from which the militias launch cross-border attacks. Should Burundian soldiers cross the border, Tanzania has warned it will use its army to counter-attack. The total economic blockade of Burundi that limits the resources available for protecting its boundaries was also engineered from Dar-Es-Salaam. Certain Hutu leaders would like to see Tanzania annex Burundi and in November 1996 Tanzanian officials threatened to invade to 'sort things out' [Van Eck 1996].

Kenya

It is also possible that Kenya could be drawn into the war. President Daniel Arap Moi is vociferous in his opposition to Tutsi-dominated regimes, houses extremist Rwandan Hutu leaders in Nairobi, has supported anti-Museveni rebels in the past, and has been generally supportive of the Mobutu regime. Diplomatic relations have already deteriorated between Kenya and Uganda and in July 1996 Kenya closed the Rwandan embassy. However, Moi's own internal problems of ethnic rivalry and political dissent would only worsen if Kenya were to enter the conflict in a more substantial way. Thus, Kenya's principle geostrategic objective is to use its influence in the West to build support for peacekeeping forces that might neutralise the pro-Tutsi rebels by creating a UN-held buffer zone.

2.2 Extra-Regional Actors

Extra-regional actors are those from outside the conflict area seeking to either ameliorate or exploit the conditions of war. The role of organisations such as the United Nations World Food Program, Doctors Without Borders, and the International Committee of the Red Cross will not be addressed here. Few if any governments appear to be involved for strictly humanitarian reasons and their geostrategic motives will be examined.

United States

The government of the United States is concerned about instability in Zaïre but is aligned with Uganda and Rwanda. The Americans need Uganda's support for their effort to overthrow the regime in Sudan which is charged with training Islamic militants and 'terrorists'. This includes \$20 million in funds for forces seeking to overthrow Sudan from bases inside Uganda, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. American special forces have also been assigned to train the RPF in counter-insurgency techniques.

France

France is aligned with Zaïre and ex-FAR forces. From 1990 to 1993 elite French forces along with the Zaïrean army and the Hutu-dominated FAR repelled RPF advances in Rwanda. They also intervened in 1994 to prevent further RPF attacks on the Hutu. A key French motive is access to the vast natural wealth of Zaïre [i.e., gold, diamonds, cobalt, copper, huge unfelled forests, vast hydroelectric potential]. France must compete with a score of other interested states [e.g., U.S., Canada, South Africa, Switzerland] and a clear alliance with Zaïre could offer a geostrategic advantages. France is very much threatened with losing its sphere of influence not just in Zaire but within former Francophone Africa if the fighting were to spread [e.g., Central African Republic]. France might send troops to protect the mineral-rich Shaba province on the southern border of South Kivu where the AFDL has made recent advances. Since 1960, the French have intervened more than once to prevent Shaba's secession as Katanga.

Other Extra-Regional Actors

Zaïre's natural wealth and the attraction between arms dealers and war has seen a rapid proliferation of extra-regional involvement. Surplus arms including shoulder-fired rockets and mounted artillery have come from Mozambique, Angola and former Yugoslavia to reach all sides at bargain prices [Ashworth 1996; Misser 1996]. Illegal operators and security firms in Britain and South Africa have also provided arms and mercenaries [Boggan 1996]. Yugoslav Jets were involved in bombing raids on rebel forces in February [*New York Times* 1997]. Some of the illegal arms have arrived in cargo planes chartered by charity organisations. Libya, China, Iran, are other states rumoured to be lending military support to Zaïre according to Reuters [1997]. There are also unconfirmed reports that the South African-based mercenary company, Executive Outcomes, is working with the Zaïre -Hutu alliance.

3. Social Constructions and Discursive Formations

Addressed here are two of the most significant social constructions in the conflict: (1) representations of genocide as the only alternative to Hutu/Tutsi conflict; and (2) extra-regional representations that demonise African political leaders while locating 'tribalism' and 'ethnic hatred' as the source of the conflict. Peaceworkers and researchers must intervene in these discursive formations because they facilitate mass mobilisations for 'ethnic cleansing' and misdirect extra-regional intervention [Griggs 1996].

3.1 The Philosophy of Genocide

Extremist Hutus employ a long-standing philosophy of genocide known as 'Hutuism'. Tutsis are represented as 'immigrants' or 'Ethiopians' who enslaved Hutus, took their land and killed them without justification. The basic tenet of this philosophy is that by killing every member of every Tutsi generation, the Hutus will regain the land they lost in the Sixteenth Century Tutsi invasion. This results

in the lack of any distinction between civilians and soldiers in war and a 'strike first' policy.

Tutsis engage more often in selective assassinations and massacres than genocide. Perhaps this owes to the hopelessness of eliminating eighty-five percent of the population and the Tutsi social construction that Hutus are meant to serve them. In Burundi in both 1972 and 1988, Hutu uprisings were ruthlessly put down by the Tutsi-dominated government. In each case tens of thousands of Hutus were selectively exterminated--the leaders, the better educated, and the elite.

3.2 Western Perceptions of Africa

Western actors and media commonly represent the instability of African states as a product of badly behaved dictators running states rife with 'pre-modern' tribalism. Owing to this behaviourist analysis, the promulgated 'cure' is democratic elections and 'nation-state' building based on the Western experience [ignoring the history of massive genocide that made majoritarian democracy possible]. This construction perpetuates international prejudice regarding African 'savagery,' leads to ethnic conflict because of the cultural complexity of African states, and allows the West to escape responsibility for the severe *structural* damage imposed by colonialism: (1) irrational boundaries that contribute to endemic instability; (2) export-orientated infrastructure that marginalises Africa within the world economic system; (3) western cultural hegemony that has weakened African tradition; and (4) bureaucratic systems of governance that concentrated political power and favoured certain ethnic groups over others [Griggs 1995].

During the 1990s, Western countries used formidable pressure to encourage African states to 'democratise' [Purvis 1996]. The result has been rigged elections [e.g., Kenya], military coups [e.g., Nigeria], and the conspicuous hypocrisy of extra-regional actors [e.g., dropping pressure for Zaïre to democratise when bases were needed for Western humanitarian agencies in 1994; or ignoring Uganda's rigged elections in 1996 because of economic and strategic cooperation with Museveni].

Rwanda and Burundi both introduced variant forms of multiparty democracy owing to internationally-sponsored negotiations [Arusha 1992-1993] and because 'democratisation' was one of the key terms of international aid. This stimulated extremist Hutus and Tutsis in both countries to form organisations resistant to sharing power. From October 1993 Burundi's attempt at democracy unraveled with the assassinations of its First Hutu President, members of cabinet and parliament and an ensuing series of violent reprisals against the Tutsis. It all ended in a 1996 coup that brought a Tutsi president to power and suspended 'democracy' to restore order. Rwanda's attempt at democracy ended similarly: a genocide of the Tutsis in 1994 followed by a military coup.

4. Factors in any solution

The foregoing analysis of the agents, structural conditions, and discourse furnish seven key factors required for an effective resolution to the conflict. These will be listed and then tabled in a matrix to rate the extant peace proposals.

4.1 Transparency and Consensus

Any solution must be transparent, and appeal directly to affected populations or it lacks legitimacy. Secret negotiations among elite actors is unlikely to eliminate the structural factors and discursive practices that foment conflict. Delegations to Arusha in 1992-3 were only a political elite and their efforts ended in genocide, ethnic massacres, and coups--not entirely surprising since it included only the groups with a history and interest in exploiting ethnicity. Thus, negotiations must recognise all concerned actors including Hutu and Tutsi intellectuals, civil servants, businessmen and other members of civil society, many of whom have been united against violence but consistently ignored because they lack a militia.

4.2 A Regional Approach

Several countries in the Great Lakes region are being used as bases, sources of rebel funds and arms, or for diplomatic and other kinds of initiatives that affect the conflict. This delicate web of alliances demands inclusive negotiations based on the needs of the entire region. Instability within Zaïre, refugees in the borderlands, the landlocked status of Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda, and cross-boundary social, economic, and physical linkages require regional consideration.

4.3 Decentralised Political Structures

Extra-regional actors and conflict resolution practitioners along with all major actors must deal with the problem of the extreme centralisation of power that characterises government in the region. Rummel [1995] has found empirical and statistical evidence to indicate that the distribution of power [ranging from democracies to dictatorships] is a better predictor of genocide than ethnic antipathies. Furthermore genocide is often a product of state-directed violence [e.g., Rwanda, 1994] because of the high level of organisation required.

More emphasis must be placed on dismantling the corrupt and inefficient system of bureaucratic power and dictatorships in the region while expanding participation at a grassroots level. The multiplicity of cultures, ethnic groups and nations makes this difficult but extra-regional actors can help by channeling funds and attention to the second and third tiers of government and promoting inter-cultural understanding. Otherwise history has shown that attempts to democratise along majoritarian lines falter because ruling ethnic groups oppress and oppressed ethnic groups seek power by extra-judicial means.

4.4 Reduce Export Dependency

Solutions should not reinforce dependency on the export of one or two major products to outside countries. Dependency leads to weak civil societies, debt, environmental degradation, food shortages and governments more concerned with outside relations than these problems.

4.5 Land Reform

Competition for very scarce land can take any form including ethnic hatred. Land reform would: (1) facilitate 'democratisation' led by Africans as economic resources are decentralised and individuals gain a stake in the productive factors of the society; (2) free individuals from subservience to monopolies that have been historically privileged by the state; (3) replace dependence on international aid with self-sufficient food-production; and (4) reduce the high levels of export dependency by encouraging individual initiative and the growth of a small business sector.

4.6 Intervention into Conflict-Producing Discursive Practices

Radio stations, television, newspapers, and other media should be employed to explain the dangers of genocidal philosophies and how they have been perpetrated out of ignorance or demagoguery. Scholars and political analysts should also improve their understanding of the structural origins of African conflicts and show how the 'rogue and tribe' analysis of African political economy fails to offer a credible account of either past or existing conditions.

4.7 Softer Boundaries

Resolving conflict over boundaries in Africa may very well begin by perceiving boundaries as membranes across which resources and people flow rather than as rigid containers. The problem of a rigid boundary psychology was illustrated in September 1996 when Zaïre incited the Banyamulenge rebellion by declaring that all ethnic Tutsis were 'foreigners' without rights to property despite centuries of ancestry in the area. A more sophisticated view is to perceive boundaries as soft, flexible, and mobile. One then monitors, manages and adjusts boundaries according to refugee flows, commerce, the need for expanding communications, pollutants, newly-discovered resources and the needs of human cultures. Combined with more decentralised planning, softer boundaries might lead to a confederated Great Lakes Region composed of nations, tribes, city-states and other grassroots structures that give freer play to both local, regional, and global scales of human organisation.

5. Peace Proposals

Eight significant peace proposals are now assessed according to the factors that emerged from the analysis of structure, actors, and discourse. Figure Two lists the proposed solutions and utilises a scale of zero to five for to evaluate them according to each of the seven factors [listed by numeric headings]. A perfect score would be 35. Excluded from the proposals is the February 1997 release of the UN five-point peace-plan because it is only aimed at facilitating a regional conference to discuss *any* long-term solution following an immediate ceasefire, withdrawal of all foreign forces, and respect for the territorial integrity of Zaïre. As a diplomatic initiative it might be considered but it does not offer a specific solution to the agents, structures or discourse reproducing the conflict [i.e., unspecified 'talks' rate a zero in terms of resolving the seven itemised factors].

	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	Score
5.1 Peace-Keeping Forces	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
5.2 Peace-Building Forces	3	3	0	0	0	5	0	11
5.3 Council of Elders	1	0	0	2	2	4	0	9
5.4 Power Sharing	4	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
5.5 Protectorate	0	4	0	0	0	1	1	6
5.6 Partition	0	0	2	0	3	2	0	7
5.7 Berlin II Conference	2	5	3	4	3	2	2	21
5.8 Confederation	3	5	4	4	4	4	5	29

Figure Two: Grading Peace Proposals According to the Seven Factors

5.1 Peacekeeping Forces

This is an extra-regional solution promoted by the United Nations, Canada, the United States and France involving the use of armed forces to protect civilian populations, secure transport routes, protect aid workers, and create havens or corridors for refugees. It has four main problems. First, intervention has a poor record [e.g., Somalia where the UN was forced to withdraw]. Second, it cannot achieve consensus because Rwanda, Burundi, and the AFDL reject the plan while Zaïre will only accept it if awarded significant control over the location and activities of the forces. Third, increased destabilisation might result as: armed camps among the refugees are re-established, local armies break into factional warfare; or contact with Zaïrean ethnic Tutsis results in fighting [they would regard the forces as foreign invaders]. Fourth, the plan fails to address most--if not all--of the underlying causes of conflict and therefore is a temporary solution at best.

5.2 Peace-Building Force

This idea, initially suggested by Maina Kiai of the Kenya Human Rights Commission, aims at a mixed intervention of lawyers, clergymen, soldiers, and conflict resolution practitioners organised by the OAU. Many factors are not addressed here [e.g., export dependency] but such an intervention might offer an opportunity to reshape the discursive practices leading to conflict. Consensus on who becomes involved might be difficult since most local actors, including Kenya, are not perceived as neutral.

5.3 Council of Elders

This proposal, initiated by Bizimana, a Tutsi from Burundi is based on a traditional form of democracy- *bashingantahe*. Mixed groups of mature, respected Hutus and Tutsis adjudicated disputes. It would be difficult to obtain or maintain consensus on reviving such a political structure particularly at a regional scale. It could be implemented at local levels to address certain problems of land reform and reduce the conflict producing discursive practices.

5.4 Power Sharing Formula

Coalition governments are tried and failed plans that in the past have ended in coups, massacres, and destabilisation [see section 3.2 above]. This is probably because it achieves a compromise between the actors but does little to address underlying structural problems--export dependency, land reform, lack of regional cooperation. It is also addressed to existing state structures and therefore reinforces rather than softens the boundaries between Central African states.

5.5 UN-sanctioned Transitional Protectorate

This idea suggested by Professor Ali Mazrui [Binghamton University, New York] and in a different form by Francis Kornegay, Director of the Africa-America Institute in South Africa, aims for international administration of Rwanda and Burundi through trusteeship authority. Variations on the theme include issuing a mandate for a U.N. body, a group of African countries, the SADC, an African Security Council, or even a Franco-African joint management team to manage these two countries if not a substantial number of African states in the Mazrui plan. Since the plan is largely a form of benevolent colonialism, it lacks transparency and is not a product of consensus. It might help foster some degree of regional problem-solving but it stands to address very few of the underlying structural problems.

5.6 Partition into Tutsiland and Hutuland

The idea of partitioning Rwanda and Burundi into Hutu and Tutsi zones was suggested by Herman J. Cohen, Senior Associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former U.S. ambassador in a 1996 interview on the Cable News Network [CNN]. Certainly breaking the cycle of ethnically-based

massacres and revenge by spatially separating the antagonists appeals to many outside analysts. Its chief problem is that it would be nearly impossible to operationalise. First, segregation within Rwanda and Burundi is a very local matter: either by rural hillside community or rural/urban [more Tutsis in the cities]. Second, there is widespread intermarriage [usually Hutu men who marry Tutsi women] and an overwhelming 85% Hutu majority. Thus, who would move where would be as deep of a political crisis as the current one. Third, the mass movement of people could be destabilising [e.g. India/Pakistan 1948]. Partition might offer some manner of land reform but little or no change in productivity because there would be no increase in land. The chances of increased decentralisation owing to the removal of ethnic tensions or increased centralisation as tensions heighten on a state-to-state level [e.g. India/Pakistan since 1948] are even.

5.7 Berlin Two Conference

This idea, suggested by a number of international scholars and African intellectuals suggests a conference to re-negotiate Central--and some say all--African boundaries. An effort could be made to rationalise the size of states, distribute resources more intelligibly, further align cultural and political boundaries, and eliminate the landlocked status of states. Any geostrategic designs could be openly discussed such as the proposed annexation of Burundi to Tanzania or annexing Kivu to Rwanda. It offers a regional approach but the result might be a perpetuation of the existing pattern of failed African states. Such an option has been gaining support in recent years but is still a highly contentious matter.

5.8 Confederation in a Central African Regional Organisation

A confederation of autonomous provinces that included at least Zaïre, Rwanda and Burundi if not Uganda and Tanzania could allow for decentralisation, softer boundaries, and 'automatic' land reform as people and goods would be free to move. This could be accomplished *without* the contentious problem of redrawing state boundaries. The internal regions of a former Zaïre could be delimited without significant resistance since the post-colonial collapse of Zaïre's infrastructure has left many areas operating with de facto autonomy. Tanzania's problem with Zanzibar could be sorted out with autonomy in a confederation. The end result might be a geography of loosely aligned states, regions and city-states. This idea seems to meet most of the criteria for a good solution but the main obstacle would be finding consensus because of entrenched power relations. Based on recent conferences and reports support for a confederation of some kind is building rapidly.

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Armed Forces and Militias operating within the Great Lakes Conflict Area

The number of acronyms associated with the militias and armies operating in the conflict area is so vast that most news accounts and even seasoned political analysts confuse these groupings. At least a score of militias are operating in Eastern Zaïre alone. This is just a partial listing but includes the major groups mentioned in the text and media reports:

Pro-Tutsi forces	DESCRIPTION
AFDL: Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Kinshasa.	In media reports this umbrella organisation of militias comes under many anglicised acronyms such as the ADFL [Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Zaïre]. Headed by Laurent Kabila, its chief aim is to destroy the Mobutu regime in Zaïre.
RPF: Rwandan Patriotic Front	Also known also as the FPR [Front Patriotique Rwandais] or simply Armée Rwandese. This is Rwanda's Tutsi led army of 45,000 troops, some of Africa's best trained and most battle-hardened.
ADP: Alliance Démocratique des Peuples	The People's Democratic Alliance is composed mainly of Zaïrean ethnic Tutsis from North and South Kivu. Numerous troops from the RPF also 'deserted' to join these forces. The ADP, also known as the DPA in anglicised news stories, is led by Déogratias Bugera, is a member of the AFDL.
Burundi's Army	This army includes about 25,000 troops. There are many reports of direct involvement in the fighting but no hard evidence.
FAP: Forces Armées Populaires	This is the armed wing of Laurent Kabila's Parti de la Révolution Populaire formed in 1967. The FAP is largely dominated by the Babwari ethnic group but includes many Banyamulenge. It has been involved in cross-border smuggling of diamonds, precious metals, and other contraband.
CNR: Conseil National de Résistance	A member militia of both the AFDL and ADP. It is dominated by the Maluba ethnic group but led by the Kasaian military commander Mr Andre Kisase.
MRL: Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre	The Bashi ethnic group dominate this AFDL-member militia led by Mr Masasu

	Nindanga.
Mai Mai	A tribal witchcraft group allied with the AFDL. Often naked, painted, and frightening in appearance, they have been used to terrorise FAZ soldiers.
Muléliste	The Zaïrean rebel group also known as 'Simba' was defeated by Mobutu in 1964 but remains a viable force and has assisted the Banyamulenge.
SPLA: Sudan People's Liberation Army	The SPLA operates from bases in Northern Zaïre and Uganda in its efforts to overthrow Khartoum. It is assisted by Uganda, Ethiopia, and the United States while Zaïre assists Khartoum.
Pro-Hutu	DESCRIPTION
FDD: Forces for the Defense of Democracy	The armed wing of the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie [CNDD], the Burundian-based political party.
ex-FAR: Forces Armées Rwandaise	This is the former Hutu-dominated Rwandan Army
Interahamwé	This is the militia credited with organising the 1994 genocide of the Rwandan Tutsis.
FAZ: Forces Armées Zaïroises	Zaïre's main army (@30,000 soldiers)
ADF: Allied Democratic Forces	The ADF, also known as the Ugandan Allied Democratic Army, includes anti-Museveni forces fighting from bases inside Zaïre. Museveni's support for a pro-Tutsi buffer zone along Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda is partially aimed at controlling these rebels.
Palipehutu: Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu	The Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People operates mainly from the Tanzanian border area from which it launches raids into Burundi.
FNL: Forces Nationales de Libération	Two years ago the FNL, led by Kabora Khossan, split from Palipehutu to form an independent militia.
Frolina: Front de Libération Nationale	A Hutu militia led by Joseph Karumba who operates from Tanzania. In anglicised versions it is referred to as the National Liberation Front [NLF].

