Factors Which Prolong Civil Conflict in Africa: The Case of Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone

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Factors Which Prolong Civil Conflict in Africa: The Case of Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone

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God remains great.
Abstract

To understand civil conflict and ways to resolve it in Africa, it is worthwhile to make an assessment of the factors which prolong conflicts. In line with theories of civil conflict, this thesis proceeds from the point of view that it is not a single factor but rather a multiplicity of factor, domestic as well as external, economic as well as political, which explain why civil conflict is prolonged. This thesis first surveys the causes of civil conflict in the region, and then proceeds to identify the multiplicity of factors which often prolong such civil conflict by detailing the reasons for the protracted civil wars in Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Among the explanatory factors are: internal and external economic interests in the natural resources of these countries, lack of democracy, poor governance, and excessive corruption that often leads to the neglect of the masses. In doing so, it expands the prevailing literature which tends to focus only on the causes of conflict. Finally, a look at Botswana, Africa’s most successful democracy, shows that civil conflict can be avoided through the implementation of policies of structural prevention. These include poverty eradication policies, equal access to education and health, careful management of resources, support for economic development, and participation in political processes and decision making across the country.
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CHAPTER 1
RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY

Armed conflict within and between nations has had disastrous humanitarian consequences not only in Africa, but throughout the globe. A series of works on civil conflict reveal that Africa is ensnared in civil strife and has experienced more conflicts than any other continent in the world. In fact, “more than two-thirds of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have experienced civil conflict since 1960, resulting in millions of deaths and monumental human suffering.”¹ Yash Tandon adds that there have actually been more than thirty wars fought in Africa since the 1970s, mostly internal rather than interstate wars.²

United Nations peace keeping forces have spent more time in Africa than anywhere else in the world. Protracted civil conflict in African countries has for a long time been on the agenda of the international community. Scholars, conflict management practitioners, diplomats and politicians of every persuasion have for some time been preoccupied with the issue of conflicts in Africa with the overarching goal of finding solutions to the conflicts.

These conflicts have devastated the African populations, destroyed political institutions and economies and undermined development. The complex nature of such conflicts which emanate from a multiplicity of factors have made them extremely difficult to resolve and in some cases states that had emerged from conflict have relapsed.

into war. The same complexities have forced the international community to rethink the methods of conflict prevention and resolution.

Eghosa Osaghae states that “Africa has the reputation of being the world's leading theatre of conflict, war, poverty, disease and instability, with many scholars of conflict regarding the continent as a major laboratory for experimentation and theory building.”

The end of colonialism and demise of the cold war did not help in minimizing civil strife in many African countries. The brutal civil wars and their vicious circle of violence experienced in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mozambique, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Somalia, Liberia and Sudan and many others, including the horrific genocide in Rwanda are among the chilling reminders of the terrible situation on the continent. These brutal conflicts have undermined any potential for socio-economic development and progress in Africa.

During the course of such conflicts, innocent people, women and children lose their lives. The 1998 Report of the UN Secretary General confirms that the consequences of conflict on the African continent have seriously undermined Africa's efforts to prosper. Importantly, the issue today is not about just protecting states and allies as in the past, it is now an issue of defending humanity. Even for those countries believed to be at peace, there are no assurances for peace and stability. As observed by Porter, countries such as Ghana, Zambia and Benin which have for long periods of time been regarded as stable, have shown some symptoms of instability. The case of Zimbabwe, a country which was

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5Eghosa Osaghae and Gillian Robinson, Researching Conflict in Africa, p. 2.
among those most respected for its political and economic stability and considered the bread-basket of Southern Africa, is another example of disappointment for Africa. President Mugabe who became the Head of State since independence from Britain in 1980 is today the longest serving President and has done everything at his disposal to cling to power, including of election rigging, and suppression of those with dissenting voices, within and outside his ZANU-PF political party. A nation that was once known for success with an educated and self-sufficient population, is now experiencing record unemployment rates, with many educated Zimbabweans crossing into neighboring states such as Botswana, Namibia and South Africa for greener pastures. Similarly, the 2007 upheaval in Kenya, during which violent ethnic killings occurred following that country's general elections, also raised the concerns of many political analysts and researchers. The situation of Kenya alarmed the international community because the country had always been considered among the African emerging democracies with a growing market economy. Even though order was restored before the violence escalated into a war, the episode which occurred in Kenya sent shivers up the spines of world leaders as such a situation was never expected in that peaceful country. The country is also deeply divided along tribal lines and political parties are based on ethnicity.

Paul Collier observes that while civil war declined over the years in other regions of the world, this was not the case in Africa, where the incidents of civil conflicts have increased. Since the 1970s, over thirty wars, mostly civil intra-state in origin, have taken

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place in Africa and at least 14 out of 53 countries on the Continent have been afflicted by armed conflicts, accounting for more than half of all war related deaths worldwide.  

In this thesis I will define civil conflict as a disequilibrium among socio-economic, political, cultural, military and legal factors which often leads individuals or groups to clash over interests, values and goals within a state. I will use Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone as points for analysis of the factors contributing to civil conflict. In this regard, I will attempt to establish whether there are any commonalities regarding the factors which prolonged civil conflicts in these countries. If there are common factors that prolong conflict in these three countries, then it would mean that there are specific factors that we ought to effectively deal with in order to minimize civil conflict and bring long-lasting peace to African countries.

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8UN Secretary General, “The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa” (Report presented to the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly, New York, New York, September 2004).
CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH DESIGN AND LITERATURE

Research Design

A multiplicity of factors have contributed to the outbreak of hostilities in many African countries. However, there are some factors which have played a significant role in prolonging conflict and making conflict resolution in the region extremely difficult. I hypothesize that the factors that prolong conflict in Africa need to be dealt with as a matter of prerequisite for conflict prevention and resolution in Africa and that in order to avoid the prolongation of civil conflict, underlying key economic, political, social and cultural problems need to be resolved. This is based on the assumption that the disequilibrium among these factors is fundamentally responsible for the outbreak of hostilities in the first place, as individuals and groups fight over the control of resources, inequalities, differential treatment of communities, and political power, among other things.

In this thesis, I will first discuss the impact of civil conflict on countries that go through it. This will then be followed by an analysis of internal and external factors which are purported in the literature to be sources of civil conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. By selecting Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone as my case studies I wish to establish whether or not there are consistencies in the factors that prolonged conflict in those countries. I selected these countries for both their similarities and differences. One important common factor among the three countries is the level of brutal atrocities broadly committed by both governments and opposition and the nature and complexity of the conflicts. The countries are also rich in minerals with potential for wealth. In addition,
Liberia provides an important perspective because it was never colonized compared to the two other countries, while Sierra Leone is a country that comparatively started very well as a democracy, with strong institutions with good investment in provision of good education of its people. Angola is above all the most resourced country compared to the two, with not only diamonds but also oil and with potential to be one of the richest countries in Africa, if resources are well managed. To repeat, the aim here is to determine if there are any common factors which prolonged wars in these states and how best conflict prevention and resolution can be effective on the continent.

**Definition of civil conflict**

It is important at this juncture to define civil conflict. Paraphrasing Quincy Wright, Richard Barringer posits that peace is a condition of equilibrium among numerous factors which include military, legal, social, political, economic, technological, and psychic factors. Conversely, Barringer argues that war is then the result of serious disturbances in this equilibrium.\(^1\) Ida Mukenge in *Zones of Conflict in Africa*, defines civil conflict as “disagreement between domestic actors-government and private groups-over issues that may be economic, political, social, cultural, or any combinations of these.”\(^2\) Rasheed Draman adds that conflict is an interaction between interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and who expect interference from the other party if they attempt to attain their goal.\(^3\) When the achievement of their goal is threatened, then conflict emerges.

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2. Ida R. Mukenge, *Introduction to Zones of Conflict in Africa*, p. 3.
Theory and Literature:

In their excellent work on *Zones of Conflict in Africa*, George Kieh and Idah Mukenge outline three theories of civil conflict.⁴ Although these are not specifically about the prolongation of conflict they are useful because we first need to understand factors that lead to civil conflicts before determining those that actually prolong it.

**Primordial Theory**

The Primordial Theory of conflict stems from the point of view that conflict usually arises in a situation where there is co-existence of people of different belief systems. As a result of the myths, beliefs, culture and customs of these groups, there develops some sort of hatred and resentment between the people of the different cultures. Some of those who have worked on Premordial Theory of conflict are of the view that primordial causes are innate and cannot be changed.

Kieh asserts that the basic tenet of the primordial theory of civil conflict is that conflict emanates from social existence.⁵ Adding to this Randall Hagardon states that “cultural differences between groups-sustained by powerful origin stories, historical narratives, religious symbols and imagined primordial ties to one’s own ancestral spirits are forever present, robust and resilient.”⁶ Kieh and Mukenge identify clan, ethnic group, and racial group as the main primordial groups. In investigating the root causes of civil conflict in Africa, and focusing on Liberia, DR Congo, Burundi and others, Abiero Mpondo confirms that indeed ethnicity, race, sovereignty, language and culture are

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⁵ George Kieh, Jr., *Theories of Conflict and Conflict Resolution*, p. 10.

primordial, involving similar practices, initiations, beliefs and linguistic features that pass from one generation to another and somehow are a biological organism and cannot be changed.\textsuperscript{7}

Quoting Beverly Crawford, Bojana Blagojevic also expresses the view that the primordialist approach is based on "ancient hatreds among ethnic and cultural groups: the urge to define and reject the other goes back to our remotest human ancestors and indeed beyond them to our animal predecessors."\textsuperscript{8} In this work, Blakojevic informs that these ancient hatreds which are based on ethnicity and cultural differences set the stage for a situation of 'us' and 'them' as also confirmed by Opondo, who says that primordials are declarations of exclusive zones for "us" and "them." They pose a danger because they are "exclusivist and isolationist," becoming tragic once they are invoked for political and economic objectives.\textsuperscript{9}

What is important however is that some of the writers who have scrutinized the primordial theory are not convinced that the co-existence of people of different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups should bring conflict. While the theory of constructivism is explored at length elsewhere in the thesis, it is important to note here that the shortcomings of primordial theory are exposed largely by constructivism which challenges the assumption that such concepts are a given. Constructivists believe that socially constructed conceptualizations can be changed and that rapid and radical change is possible. According to constructivists, concepts are what we human beings


make of them by attaching meanings to them through the use of language and through our values. As such ethnicity and religion are socially constructed. Blagojevic adds, “while ethnic emotions appear to be primordial, they are socially and politically constructed reality drawn from the historical memories of past injuries and grievances and they are created through teaching, repetition and daily reproduction until they become common sense.”

For the constructivists, ethnicity should not be seen as a matter of nature because common ancestry and myths are socially and culturally constructed and not given. Therefore ethnicity, religion, customs, and culture are not fixed and cannot be a cause of conflict per se. To this extent, conflict and competition within a society and between societies can be avoided and customs and cultures can be realigned with the view to accommodate each other and ensure communities live side by side in peace and harmony.

Be that as it may, understanding the primordialist approach, as stated by Blagojevic, helps the researcher of conflict to understand the role of emotions in conflict.

**Class Theory:**

The class theory of civil conflict has its basis in Marxism. Marxists view class relations as the main factor affecting the economic and political order and state that class struggle occurs because of capitalism. Marxists argue that private ownership of the means of production and the distribution of goods, reflected in a free competitive market motivated by profit making are the pillars of capitalism which cause competition within a

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11 Pamela Paglia, *Ethnicity and Tribalism*, p. 11.
society. In this private ownership of means of production those that own production employ those who do not own, hence the owners become richer and richer, while those that do not own become servants of the owners of production, therefore, causing friction between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots.’ This form of relationship leads to conflict between the rich and those that are poor. In a nutshell, the capitalist mode of production, is exploitative in nature and ushers in hierarchically organized societies where the dominant class (those with private ownership) determines the direction of society at the expense of the weaker. 13

Marxists maintain that capitalism maximizes class interests and does not produce welfare for all. The distribution of wealth is based on social class and the powerful classes accumulate more wealth at the expense of the poor, making conflict within a society inevitable. Conflict then occurs when “the deprived group, nation or individuals attempt to increase their share of power and wealth or to modify the dominant values, norms, beliefs or ideology.”14 Theodore Cohn asserts that Marxists and/or structuralists view economic relations as basically conflictual and that common to this conflict is the exploitation of the weaker “out group” by the dominant “in-group”: “private owners (the haves) extract surplus value from wage laborers (the have-nots).”15 In this system of class divisions, political conflict becomes acute. Both the “haves” and the “have-nots” are aware of their status and while the former attempts to continue the status quo, the latter fights to overcome the oppression by the dominant class. Kieh and Mukenge observe that, “within African states, there are pockets of opulence, amidst a

15 Ajibogun Olatubosun, Ibid.
growing poverty and mass misery.”

The primordial and class theories are relevant to the study of civil conflict and provide very useful insights on the set up of societies and reveal some factors such as ethnicity, culture, religion, and unbalanced distribution of wealth that can cause friction and escalate into conflict when disadvantages brought by them are not addressed in good time.

**Eclectic Theory:**

The basic tenet of eclectic theory is that the source of civil conflict emanates from a multiplicity of factors as opposed to a single cause or factor. All aspects, social, cultural, political or economic, are relevant in a civil conflict. Kieh and Mukenge observe that with the exception of Djibouti, a multiplicity of factors have caused wars in all countries which have experienced civil conflict in Africa. In-fact that it is these multiplicity of factors that have made conflict prevention and resolution even more complex. Among factors they consider are the colonial legacy in Africa and the impact of ideological war.

The work and findings of Richard Barringer appear to have influenced the findings of Kieh and Mukenge. In his book, *War, Patterns of Conflict,* Barringer argues for multiple causation of war, noting that “any explanation of armed conflict in terms of a single factor represents a gross oversimplification that is likely to lead to ill-conceived policy action.” In his analysis, Barringer asserts that there are patterns of factors which condition the origin, development and the termination of conflict and that these

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18 George Kieh, Jr, *Theories of Conflict and Conflict Resolution*, ibid.
conditions are at once, social, political, economic, technological, military and psychological.  

Ali and Matthews are among those authors who consider multiple factors. Their addition to this thesis is that in their book, *Civil Wars in Africa*, they absolve external actors of the blame for civil conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. Although they do concede that colonialism has negatively impacted African societies and has fostered war-torn states, the writers focus mainly on internal factors such as ethnicity, ideological and political differences, and intra-elite rivalries as the main sources of conflict on the continent, without putting emphasis on external factors. This work is therefore helpful as it presses the African leadership to find solutions to the problems that besiege their continent.

**Policy Literature**

A 1998 UN report on the *Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*, is useful for this thesis. The report emanated from the concern of the international community about the intensity of armed conflict in Africa. Although the report does not focus exclusively on civil conflict, it provides an analysis of sources of conflict in Africa and assesses the two dimensions of conflict on the continent-- internal and external factors. The report apportions the blame to both exogenous and the internal factors that cause conflict in Africa.

The report describes three ways in which conflict is necessitated and sustained. First, there are the *root causes* such as “extreme poverty, gross inequalities and weak

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20Richard E. Barringer, ibid., p. 7.
state capacities.”21 The root causes have the potential to lead to conflict when they generate deep political, social, economic and cultural differences. Second, there are enabling factors which include “exclusionary government policies, external support for repressive regimes, and small arms proliferation”22 The enabling factors thus do not cause conflict per se, but “exacerbate the root causes or contribute to an environment that facilitates armed conflict. Third, there are mobilizing factors such as ethnicity, religion and economic conditions which are utilized by individuals or groups of individuals to induce violent actions.”23 Thus, the causes, enabling factors and mobilizing factors are all necessary to interrogate when analyzing conflict in Africa.

The 2009 Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa provides testimony that African leaders have now shifted to a more balanced approach on matters related to peace and security in Africa and do not blame foreigners or companies for the civil strife that has bedeviled the continent. The declaration, adopted at Heads of State and Government level, acknowledges that factors such as poor governance, unconstitutional changes of government, an emerging trend of election violence and conflicts over natural resources contribute in a major way to civil conflict in Africa and the leaders further renounce unconstitutional changes of government which has become practice in some parts of Africa. As a result of these factors, the Heads of State and Government also acknowledge that it is no longer


23 The Report of the Secretary General, ibid.
feasible to address the root causes of conflict effectively without consideration for human rights, rule of law, democracy and good governance.  

**International Relations theories**

There are some theories /frameworks of international relations that may shed light on civil conflict in Africa. Ozan Ormeci asserts that there are two dominant approaches to security studies, Realism and Liberalism. Constructivism is another IR theory which is of great importance in this thesis particularly as it sensitizes one to the extent to which human beings may manufacture conflict.

**Realism**

Realism is the oldest school of thought in international relations. It is also the main school of thought in security studies. Power, self-help and survival are among the cornerstones of Realism. Accordingly, maximization of power, especially military power is of great importance to those who subscribe to realism. Realists assume that there is always a threat of war and one needs to always be prepared for a fight, hence it is always important to militarily prepare for war. It is important here to mention two particular subsets of realism, namely, offensive and defensive realism. Although these two hold the same set of bedrock assumptions, the conclusions of the proponents are divergent.

Defensive realists acknowledge that the nature of international politics is conflictual by nature and has been like that for most time in history and because of this

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27Ormerci, The Concept of Security and Security Studies, p. 3.
conflictual nature in international relations, there will always be war. However, to the
defensive realists the presence of conflict in international politics should not always lead
to actual war. Defensive realists argue that war can be prevented through cooperation and
compromise, even in a state of anarchy.\textsuperscript{29} Defensive realists believe that to avoid actual
war, states should pursue “moderate strategies as the best route to security, including,
military, diplomatic and foreign economic policies that communicate restraint.”\textsuperscript{30} In his
account, Danielle Costa buttresses this by establishing that defensive realism is
particularly evident in a state that feels threatened or is in a state of decline. The leaders
of a state in decline and therefore insecure will increase national security by pursuing
ambiguous military, economic and diplomatic policies. However, the policies pursued in
this scenario are not for expansion of power or influence as that particular state is not
secure enough to pursue policies that are riskier for their internal security.\textsuperscript{31} In essence,
defensive realists policies pursued are aimed at protecting a state, but not to provoke
other states. It is only when they feel secure, that leaders would more provocative
policies, to realize offensive realism.

On the other hand, offensive realists’ approach appears provocative in nature.
Danielle Costa establishes that, when states feel more secure militarily and economic
wise, they tend adopt and pursue policies that are geared towards imposing influence in
the international arena.\textsuperscript{32} These could be seen in the case of powerful countries such as
the United States, Russia, among others, that have the appetite to influence international

\textsuperscript{29} Tang Shipping, \textit{A Theory of Security Strategy for Our Time: Defensive Realism} (New York: Palgrave-McMillan,
2010), pp. 150-151.


\textsuperscript{31} Danielle Costa, “The End of Cold War: Defensive or Offensive Realism?” paper presented at Tufts University,

\textsuperscript{32} Danielle Costa, \textit{The End of Cold War: Defensive or Offensive Realism}, ibid.
policies. Accordingly, a powerful state will project its power on other states with a view to expanding its influence in the international arena, whether that brings fear to others is not an issue because the powerful state is in a better position and advantage to go to war.

Realists such as Hans Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr base their conceptualization of state realism on human nature which they consider to be self-regarding and hence conflictual. Niebuhr is known for his argument that human beings are by nature selfish and always pursue policies that are in line with their personal interest.

When Thomas Hobbes presented his arguments on the social contract in “Leviathan,” he argued, along the lines of Niebuhr that “human beings are naturally selfish creatures”. This argument is particularly substantiated by the fact that self-interests continuously crop up as a factor in many civil conflicts in Africa, particularly when government officials and warlords alike fight over control of the mineral wealth of their countries and when governments use the state apparatus, and law enforcement institutions to pursue their personal interests. Self-interest is also a factor in the intervention of neighboring states in support of different factions in civil conflict. In most cases, both neighboring states and those beyond the neighborhood enter a civil-conflict not to help in resolution or prevention, but to seek access to minerals in countries at war.

Constructivism

As already stated under primordial theory of conflict, the constructivist perspective posits that religion, ethnicity, culture, customs and clans are socially constructed by individuals and that the way human beings perceive them can be changed. To the constructivist, ethnicity, culture, customs and religion, are not innate and should

not be force for war as they can be avoided.\textsuperscript{34} It is not that constructivists do not acknowledge that ethnicity and religion may have a role in conflict, but that these factors are not supposed to cause conflict. Constructivism is positive contributions that may help researchers make well informed assessments on the role of ethnicity and religion in civil conflict.

Indeed there are those such as Paglia who oppose the constructivist view and argue in the analysis of the Sudan war, that ethnic identities are complex and cannot be simplified by saying they are simply socially constructed.”\textsuperscript{35} In a sharp contrast with constructivism Paglia contends that ethnicity is innate because it is an identity of individuals and groups, and cannot be changed as the constructivists may have us believe.\textsuperscript{36} But, what is important is that Paglia’s finding concurs with constructivists that ethnicity and religion should not cause war. These factors therefore only find a place in the war equation when used by politicians and power seekers to create alliances. The findings of constructivists as well as those of Paglia generally show that ethnicity cannot be a root cause of conflict, but rather a mobilizing factor. This thesis will align with these findings.

**Frustration aggression and relative deprivation theory**

The relationship between poverty and conflict is often explained through *frustration aggression theory*. The assumption is that an individual or group of individuals will become aggressive when they realize that there are obstacles to their

\textsuperscript{36} Pamela Paglia, Ibid.
success in life. In addition, the relative deprivation theory assumes that conflict arises when people feel deprived compared to others. These theories link frustration and aggression in the sense that they make an assumption that frustration leads to aggressive behavior. This frustration may be caused by several factors such as inability of regimes to deliver what they promised the electorates, poor governance, lack of democracy and unequal distribution of wealth (as the Marxists would argue), unemployment, famine and poverty and so on.

Human needs theory

Ikeijauku and Dauda’s work on conflict in Africa surveys the human needs theory which provides an analysis that focuses on unmet human needs. According to this theory, when the basic human needs of individuals are unmet, aggressive behavior then will emerge. The human basic needs theory emphasizes that the government’s inability to meet the basic needs of the population is a source of conflict. Indeed, on the African continent, there is denial or neglect of human needs such as material needs; recognition of different ethnic groups, particularly minority groups; and neglect of certain identities, such as human cost of unemployment to the youths seeking identity in society. Basic needs are non-negotiable as asserted by Ikejiaku and Dauda and when they are unmet, struggle becomes inevitable. The ability or inability of governments to meet the basic needs of a society can be associated with the nature of the governance structures of a government and may therefore determine the future of a country.

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37 Rasheed Draman, Poverty and Conflict in Africa: Explaining a Complex Relationship, p. 9.
Although Ikejiaku and Dauda find the human basic needs theory useful in explaining the source of conflict, this thesis goes beyond to reveal that the unmet basic human needs are not only a source of conflict, but also that the continuation of deprivation of human basic needs prolongs conflict in Africa.

The human basic needs theory and the frustration/deprivation theory are very much interlinked and mutually reinforcing for the reason that the denial of basic needs is equivalent to deprivation and may lead to anger and frustration which may eventually lead to outbreak of hostilities.

In this chapter I have identified some literature that discusses several theories that attempt to explain the complex nature of civil conflict as well as factors that contribute to the outbreak of any form of war. Through the literature and theories discussed, it is evident that disequilibrium among cultural, psychological, political and economic factors often lead to the outbreak of wars. The next chapter focuses on factors which play a role in civil war specifically in Africa.
CHAPTER 3
SOURCES OF CIVIL CONFLICT IN AFRICA

The factors that often lead to the outbreak of civil conflict are social, cultural, psychological, political and economic in nature as indicated in the previous chapter. In this chapter the thesis seeks to identify the overall factors that actually contribute to civil conflict in Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa recognizing that such factors may be both internal (self inflicted) and external (encouraged by other countries) and in recognition that some other factors may be actual sources/causes, while others may enable war serve as the mobilizers for conflict. Distinguishing these factors will also contribute to simplifying the complex nature of war.

The Legacy of Colonialism

The colonial legacy has been a source of conflict in Africa. This is because many of the former colonies inherited the political, social and economic structures of the colonial administrations which were not compatible with African societies and which were never intended to promote good governance, democracy or equitable socio-economic and political development of societies but rather to protect the interest of the former colonialists. It does require a rocket scientist to determine that the African people were colonized against their will, therefore colonialism could not have planted a seed of democracy and good governance in Africa. No doubt, the structures of colonialism suppressed the right to self determination and human rights of the people of colonies, hence the liberation struggles throughout the African continent. Fonken Achankeng’s piece of work buttresses the argument that “former colonial masters were not in search of good leaders for the people. The concerns of the colonial masters at independence and
beyond, for the most part, were to hand over power to a group of cronies whose mission was always not to govern people well, but to protect the interests of the metropole.”¹ For Achankeng, the “crisis of internal governance and new institutions in Africa can both be traced to the colonization and the de-colonisation of Africa.”² Conflict prevention and resolution in Africa will therefore never be effective without using colonialism as a point of reference.

The inherent weaknesses of the structures created by colonial governments negatively impacted the newly independent states. It is also important to point out at this juncture that the arrival of the colonizers in Africa in the 19th century changed the simple social, political and economic discourse in an unprecedented manner.³ For example, culturally within the African societies, there were various ethnic groups, each with its own norms, customs, and values, with a communal mode of production.⁴ Accordingly, there were societal values which the communities complied with. Land was also used for planting crops and sharing the food within a community after harvest, but not for profit. The arrival of colonial rule therefore imposed an “alien structure complete with cultural, economic, educational, political and social systems.”⁵

In economic terms, the commercial relations instituted by colonial administrations

² Fonkem Anchenkeng, Conflict and Conflict Resolution in Africa: Engaging the Colonial Factor, ibid.
were deliberately designed to reflect the needs and interests of metropolitan societies.\(^6\)

The infrastructure such as railways and roads built during the colonial era were meant to transport commodities from Africa to the West. Colonialism introduced the capitalist mode of production to Africa, in an arrangement in which African countries exported raw materials to feed the industries of metropolitan states.

In addition, as the colonial powers explored ways to entrench their rule in the colonies, they chose to exploit the local divisions which already existed in the communities. Thus, ethnic divisions exploited by the colonial powers were bitterly felt throughout many newly independent African states. The case of Angola for example, clearly reveals ways in which the Portuguese exploited divisions among the Angolan people. Today even a peaceful country like Botswana is struggling with tribal issues because, through a Native Delimitation Commission in 1899 and 1933 the British demarcated some tribes as the *principal tribes*. The Commission established native reserves in Bechuanaland (now Botswana) that consolidated the subordination of non-Batswana ethnic groups.\(^7\) The Constitution of Botswana has inherited this as law and to date the country as whole is grappling with this unfair capture in its constitution.

The overall impact of colonialism on Africa has generally been negative for the continent and should be considered as one of the sources of civil conflict in Africa. It is however important to note that many African leaders have come to accept the need to

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look beyond the colonial past in order to resolve conflicts.\textsuperscript{8} Despite these challenges, Botswana and others such as Namibia and South Africa have been able to move forward as much as practicable, embracing prudent economic policies, strengthening institutions that promote good governance, and democracy for their populations. By and large, there are many countries in other parts of the world such as those in Asia, Caribbean and Latin America which have moved forward and embrace policies that bring hope to their populations.

**Cold War and Civil Conflict in Africa**

The cold war was an important enabling factor in fueling civil war in Africa, first because the super powers extended their influence and inhibited each other in far flung battlefields, and second, because local leaders mobilized external support for their own interests.\textsuperscript{9} The cold war also introduced a high level arms competition in Africa and fed the rebel movements and repressive governments alike, promoting poor governance. Jackie Cilliers argues that, although this (cold war) brought a degree of stability to the continent, it happened at the cost of tolerating oppressive and exploitative governments.\textsuperscript{10} Support provided to these governments by the cold war superpowers and their supporters therefore left rebels and leaders comfortable with undemocratic and poor governance structures in their countries.

Africa was also strategically important for the superpowers. Margaret Vogt affirms that “during the Cold War, the position of Africa was rated as central to the

\textsuperscript{8} Report of the Secretary General, *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa,*” p.4.


\textsuperscript{10} Jackie Cilliers, Resource Wars, A New Type of Insurgency: The Role of Oil and Diamonds, ibid. p. 10.
spheres of influence of the great powers."\(^{11}\) As a result of excessive super power competition in Africa, some civil conflicts in Africa, such as in Angola and Mozambique, were seen as the manifestation of proxy wars.

The behavior of the super powers also limited the ability of the UN Security Council to act or even detect conflict. Most interventions by the UN peace keeping missions in Africa came after the demise of the cold war. For example, in the case of Angola, a weak UN Verification Mission (UNAVEM) was only created in 1991, fifteen years after the eruption of the civil war. In essence the cold war played a significant role in ensuring the inability of the international community to act on time.

**Ethnicity and Civil Conflict in Africa**

The multiethnic character of many African countries “makes conflict more likely, often leading to politicization of ethnicity.”\(^{12}\) For their security and survival, communities and politicians may resort to capturing political power using ethnic alliances, making war inevitable.\(^{13}\) In many instances liberation movements in Africa “grew out of an ethno-linguistic basis.”\(^{14}\)

On the other hand, as also noted earlier, Paglia affirms that ethnicity is not a cause of civil conflict in Africa, but rather an instrument of political mobilization through which civil wars are fought in Africa.\(^{15}\) It is an instrument used to divide and rule the population.


by pitting them against one another for political gains. Accordingly, Paglia notes that ethnicity is not conflictual in itself and the view that ethnicity is a primary source of conflict in Africa, is misleading in that it prevents the actual causes from being recognized and dealt with.

Paglia further posits that multiethnic groups often struggle over control of scarce resources as well as for political power but these groups are used by those with selfish interests.\(^\text{16}\) The causes of the struggle are therefore the scanty resources which in some situations may not be allocated equitably. Thus, mismanagement or the inability to manage such scarce resources leads to competition for them and as such provides the basis for conflict. Abiero Mpondo agrees that ethnic groups do not have genetic codes for violence and conflict and that those opportunists who seek political power use ethnicity for political gains.

Ethnicity therefore should be seen as a mobilizing factor in civil conflict in Africa. While it is not necessarily a source for conflict, it plays a role in perpetuating civil strife in many parts of Africa.

**Economic sources of conflict**

Studies, most notably by the Post Conflict Unit at the World Bank, portray wars as driven essentially by economic agendas, particularly those conflicts in the developing world. Among the Bank’s analytical tools is a data set of conflicts over the period 1960 to 1999 that seeks to examine the risk of civil war.\(^\text{17}\) Two lines of thought underpin this analysis of the relationship between war and economics: that easily exploitable natural

\(^\text{16}\) Pamela Paglia. Pamela Paglia, *Ethnicity and Tribalism: are these the Root Causes of the Sudanese Civil Conflict?*, ibid. p.15.

resources are used to finance civil wars; and that the perpetuation of war in certain African countries serves as an alternative way of gaining income.\textsuperscript{18}

Kieh and Mukenge buttress the argument that the economic crisis that has beset Africa is the result of the interests of individuals and foreign-based multinational corporations and business interests seeking to gain more income. They further attach these economic interests to a capitalist system that is exploitative in nature, lacking the component of equal distribution of wealth.\textsuperscript{19}

**Natural resource factor**

Africa is blessed with huge deposits of natural resources. As a result of these natural resources, the continent is attractive to business. These resources both enable and mobilize conflict on the African Continent. Competition for natural resources such as oil in Africa has attracted foreign interests and such external interests play a gigantic and at times decisive role in perpetuating or containing conflict on the continent.\textsuperscript{19} Many businesses and multinational corporations profit from chaos and the lack of accountability and as such, may have no interest in stopping conflict and rather, much interest in prolonging it.\textsuperscript{20} In the current efforts to resolve conflict in Africa, the international community and the UN have called on multinational corporations to be involved in conflict resolution efforts in Africa.

In a statement to the UN the former Under Secretary General for the Office of Special Advisor on Africa asserted that “Africa is well known as home of the largest

\textsuperscript{18} Jakkie Cilliers, *Angola’s War of Economy*, ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Kieh, Jr and Mukenge, *Theories of Conflict and Conflict Resolution*, p. 29.
deposits of natural resources in the world.”\textsuperscript{21} The natural resources include substantial portions of oil in countries such as Nigeria, Angola, Algeria, and Libya, and diamonds in Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone as well as other strategic minerals such as chrome, coltan, bauxite and manganese which are major export products for many African countries. The illegal exploitation of these natural resources and the lack of equitable distribution of wealth accrued thereof, has been a source of violence and instability in many of the countries which have experienced civil conflict.\textsuperscript{22}

The greatest challenge however, is that some African governments, leaders and rebels alike also act in cahoots with external powers and multinational companies and other business in trading conflict minerals. Material and financial gains are in fact central to many of the conflicts in Africa. In 2000, some UN officials accused presidents Taylor of Liberia and Blaise Compaore for their personal roles in trading arms for Sierra Leone diamonds, thereby fueling Sierra Leone conflict.

In 2002, a peace treaty, Pretoria Accord Peace Treaty, which was supposed to have ended one of deadliest and most expensive wars the world over, was profusely undermined by rebel movements and some officials who did not want to cede power to government for fear of losing control over natural resources and land. The Pretoria Accord Peace Treaty stipulated that all signatory rebel movements should cede power to the national army, the FRDC.

Natural resources in Cote d’Ivoire’s were also key to that country’s war as both rebels and government failed to agree to return the country to democracy, as leaders and

\textsuperscript{21} Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, “Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa: Transforming A Peace Liability into a Peace Asset”, (Paper presented in Egypt, Cairo, 17-19 June 2006).

\textsuperscript{22} Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa: Transforming A Peace Liability into a Peace Asset, ibid.
rebels had the desire to exploit the natural resources – diamond, cocoa and cotton, for funding the war and for personal gains.

**Poverty**

Many scholars have examined the role of poverty in civil conflict in Africa. While some writers believe that poverty is a cause of conflict, others have argued that it is conflict that causes poverty. Notwithstanding this debate, it is generally agreed that poverty is one of the principal factors, in civil conflict in Africa. Before emphasizing the role of poverty in civil conflict in Africa, it is important to reflect borrow Draman’s five classification of poverty:

First, *absolute poverty*, occurs when human beings live in a state of deprivation due to meager income or lack of access to basic human needs which include food, safe water, sanitation, health, shelter, education, and information. Second, *relative poverty* defines poverty from a comparative point of view. Here poverty is not absolute but relative (a situation in which, say, a given group of people compare themselves with another in the same society. Third, *administrative poverty* includes all those who are eligible for state welfare because they are either temporarily unemployed and/or unable to earn an income. Fourth, *consensual poverty* depends on the perceptions of what the public deems to be below basic sustenance. Finally, *contextual poverty* is based on a comparison of poverty to the socio-cultural and economic levels of a particular society.\(^{23}\)

Absolute poverty and to a certain extent relative poverty, can be considered as the two main factors in civil conflict in Africa. This is because most countries which have had civil wars in sub-Saharan Africa, were or are at the time of going to war classified as Least Developed countries, with large numbers of people living under the poverty line of $1/ $1.25 per day, representing absolute poverty. Of a total 38 Least Developed countries

in the world, 34 are in Africa. Many of these countries, though some have experienced solid economic growth after the end of civil war, have been to war or are still going through civil strife. These include Angola, Cote i’voire, DRC, Liberia, Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Mozambique, Mauritania, Chad, South Sudan and Sudan.

Nancy Annan maintains that poverty is one of the main factors that afflict the African continent and contribute to violent conflicts in the region, especially sub Saharan Africa. In West Africa for example, Annan states that, over 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, which certainly leads to civil unrest and grievances. In particular, she states poverty as one of the root causes of the Liberian civil war.

The point is that, those who feel neglected and deprived of the necessary needs and believe that poverty is being deliberately inflicted upon them by undemocratic and dictatorial regimes will often rebel. This form of rebellion is well articulated by the Marxist perspective.

The issue of poverty in the context of civil conflict in Africa is very much linked to deprivation, poor governance, and corruption because deprivation of basic needs results in poverty and poverty usually emanates from “inequalities in the distribution of economic resources in a state.”

**Political sources of conflict**

State failure is a foundation and source of civil strife. State failure stems from factors such as skewed political power, corruption, poor governance, different forms of discrimination, lack of accountability, and the lack of respect for the rule of law, human

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25 Nancy Annan, Ibid.
27 Kieh, Jr and Mukenge, *Theories of Conflict and Conflict Resolution*, p. 12.
rights abuses, greed and so on. Under such circumstances, the patience of the masses – be it private citizens, women or youth - becomes limited and an uprising against regimes becomes inevitable. This thesis aligns with those who believe that fragmented and weak institutions in many African countries enable conflict to brew and escalate.

William Zartman perceives governance as a conflict management tool which does not only prevent violence but also handles ordinary conflicts and demands of a society.\textsuperscript{28} Good governance is however effective only if supported by strong institutions and is also only possible when the policies are implemented by a legitimate democratic government. Insufficient weak institutions mean lack of capacity to respond to the simplest demands made by society, which eventually leads to rebellion when the people get frustrated. Mansoob Murshed also maintains that civil conflict can emanate from demands for civil rights in states where democracy is absent.\textsuperscript{29}

African leaders themselves have come to acknowledge that stability cannot be attained without good governance, rule of law, and prudent economic and political management. In the 2009 \textit{Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa}, African leaders officially acknowledged that poor governance, unconstitutional changes of government, and an emerging trend of election violence significantly contribute to civil conflict in Africa and that it is no longer feasible to address the root causes of conflict effectively without consideration for human rights, rule of law, democracy and good governance.\textsuperscript{30} Between 2008 and 2010, the African Union suspended Mauritania,

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Guinea Bissau and Madagascar from the Union, following unconstitutional changes of
government on those countries. This is one of the efforts made by the Union in an attempt
to promote democracy and peace in African states. However, the endorsement of Mugabe
of Zimbabwe as the Union’s President for 2015 brings to question the commitment of
Africa’s leadership towards democracy and good governance, in view of human rights
abuses by the President.

In this chapter, I have attempted to establish factors that often lead to outbreak of
hostilities in Africa. The chapter further identified factors that cause conflict, those that
enable it as well as those factors that mobilize conflict. The chapter has shown that there
is a multiplicity of factors that contribute one way or the other, to civil conflict in Africa.
CHAPTER 4
ANGOLA

Angola is a former Portuguese colony which gained independence on 11 November 1975. The 4th of February 1961 is a date presently associated with the beginning of armed struggle in Angola, when a brutal war against the Portuguese erupted in Luanda, the capital. Upon the Portuguese withdrawal in 1974, the question of who was to inherit power came to the fore. Proposals to forge a Government of National Unity (GNU) failed. Instead, the movements which had fought the Portuguese during the liberation struggle opted to wage a war among themselves. A brutal civil war became one of the worst in Africa lasting until 2002.

At the beginning three nationalist movements were at the forefront of both the liberation struggle and civil war, Movement for the Popular Liberation of Angola (MPLA) formed in 1956 and headed by Augusto Neto and later by Jose Eduardo Dose Santos; the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) formed in 1962, led by Holden Roberto; and the Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) founded in 1966 and led by Dr. Jonas Malheiro Savimbi.

With Soviet and Cuban assistance, MPLA achieved a military victory against the other nationalist movements. Thus, when Angola gained independence on 11 November 1975, the country came under the control of a Marxist-Leninist MPLA government led by Augusto Neto who was succeeded by Dos Eduardo Dose Santos after his death in 1979. At independence Angola was set up as a one party state under MPLA.

Savimbi continued to fight a 'guerrilla' war against the MPLA government until his death in February 2002. The civil conflict lasted for 27 years, despite many

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interventions by the international community. The Angolan civil war degenerated into one of the most brutal and longest civil wars on the continent of Africa.

**Ideological Cold War factor**

At independence in 1975 the MPLA government was guided by a Marxist-Leninist ideology. UNITA had on the other hand resisted the MPLA government and portrayed itself as anti-Marxist and pro-Western. In Angola, "MPLA was supported by 50,000 Cuban troops and advisors, from the Soviet Union while UNITA was supported by South African troops and money and equipment from the United States." The continued support from the United States and the Soviet Union helped maintain the Angolan civil war leading experts to term the war as, “a classic cold war proxy war.”

The Cold War prolonged the Angolan civil war in three related ways; first, support provided to UNITA by the United States provided the confidence and financial resources for the former to continue its resistance against the government. Secondly, the support of the two superpowers ensured that the two warring parties had access to ammunition and arms.

Thirdly, the differences between the United States and the Soviet Union prevented the Security Council from acting effectively in the civil war. The United States and the Soviet (now Russia) have veto powers in the United Nations Security Council and no resolution can be effective when the two are in sharp disagreement. It was therefore only in 1989, fourteen years after the outbreak of the civil war, that the Security Council decisively agreed to establish a UN Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM I). It was not by coincidence that this occurred. It correlated with the weakening and the

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2 Alex Vines, Angola: Forty Years of War, p. 74 – 104.
eventual collapse of the Soviet Union and end of cold war, the result of which was the relaxation of diplomatic corridors, especially in the United Nations.

There is no evidence reflecting that either of the two superpowers ever vetoed a UN Mission to Angola. However, it is clear that during the cold war, the two superpowers were mostly interested in advancing their ideologies and not necessarily committed to peace, security or development of the countries that they divided. The resolutions that were also adopted during that time were too weak to end the civil conflict in many countries. Manuel Paulo, paraphrasing the UN Mission head in Angola, Margaret Anstee, maintains that the superpowers’ differences often led to quick fixes which often resulted in flawed and ineffective agreements – referring particularly to the weak resolution 696 of Security Council which established UNAVEM II. Furthermore, the number of UN troops and the civilian staff initially sent to Angola was inadequate to contain the conflict.

Potential for the UN Security Council to gain more prominence in peace keeping efforts was enhanced with the end of cold war as evidenced by the Security Council approval of stronger peace keeping operations, not only in Angola, but also other countries such as Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Cote d’Ivoire and Chad. The demise of the Soviet Union and its disintegration meant that the United States was left as the world’s superpower. It also meant that the disintegrated Soviet Union had become weak and could no longer support the MPLA. Consequently, the United States decided to withdraw its aid from UNITA, a move which eventually led to the weakening of UNITA and subsequently, the death of Savimbi.

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Arguably, had the United States and the Soviet Union cooperated from the time of the outbreak of hostilities in Angola and agreed on a stronger resolution to deploy the UN troops to settle the problem before it escalated, the situation would have probably been different. Unfortunately, the involvement of the two superpowers deliberately deepened the divisions which already existed in Angola. Although the cold war has ended there are still disagreements between the US and Russia which continue to undermine the work of the Security Council to maintain peace and stability as evidenced by the ongoing situation in Syria.

**Ethnicity**

The Angolan nationalist movements were created on the basis of ethnicity as affirmed by Lawrence Henderson who notes that the Angolan movements “grew out of ethnolinguistic soils.”\(^5\) While FNLA drew its support from the Bakongo ethnic group based in northern Angola, UNITA and MPLA drew support from Ovimbindu of the South and East Mbundu of central Angola respectively.\(^6\) Ovimbindu was at the time Angola’s largest tribe.

The Portuguese colonists had also played their role in exploiting ethnic divisions to suppress the Angolan people. Henderson indicates that the Portuguese referred to the Mbindu people as “assimilados” because they were educated and of bourgeois status and based in Luanda and other urban areas, hence more assimilated with the Portuguese than other groups.\(^7\) By contrast, the Ovimbindu were referred to as the “indegenas” with little

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7 Lawrence W. Henderson, Angola: Five Centuries of Conflict, p. 259.
or no education. This perception of “assimilados” and “indegenas” deepened hostilities between the MPLA and UNITA supporters.

In the late 1980s UNITA began to weaken and Savimbi appointed his relatives to control UNITA's security. Its intelligence units were dominated by the Ovimbundu people. This was done in an attempt to hold the movement together. In recognition of the magnitude of the role of ethnicity in the civil war, dos Santos attempted to neutralize UNITA by setting aside some posts in the MPLA and Government for Ovimbundu people. During the peace processes of early 1990s and after the demise of the Soviet, dos Santos made an attempt to minimize the influence of the ethnic factor in Angolan politics and reserved some senior posts within government and his political party, MPLA. As a result, there were mixed ethnicities within MPLA.

Against this background, ethnic rivalry in Angola was a factor well exploited by the political leaders for party formations and for mobilizing allies. While ethnicity is very much pronounced in this war, it does not appear to have prolonged the war particularly in view of the fact dos Santos was successful in neutralizing ethnicity in the politics of Angola, at least ten years before the end of civil war.

**Natural Resources**

Angola is a country blessed with abundant natural resources. In particular, the abundance of high quality oil and diamonds drew the world’s most powerful foreign corporations to its shores, during the war and after. Angola is the second largest producer of oil in sub-Saharan Africa, after Nigeria and the country became a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 2007.8

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The mineral wealth of Angola meant that the country was important to governments and business companies alike. Victor Luvhengo states that, large oil multinational corporations (MNCs) such as EXXOMobil, Royal Dutch, Sell, Chevron and the British Petroleum, among others operated in Angola from 1955 when oil was discovered. In addition Luvhengo’s research shows that the South African based Debeers diamond mining company also operated in Angola and in support of the UNITA. A Report of EFF indicates that UNITA was supported specifically by the United States, United Kingdom and France while the government was supported by Cuba and the USSR/Russia. Belgium, South Africa and Germany are also cited among countries that intervened in the war in support of UNITA. According to the report, access to diamond territories and the sales thereof, helped the rebel movement to attract foreign governments and business companies as well. In-fact what had appeared as clash of capitalism and communism ended as a clash for minerals in Angola.

It is clear that during the cold war, in addition to the interest of preventing communism from spreading, the countries involved were attracted to Angola because of the country’s potential minerals. With the help of multinational corporations, Western powers and other international allies, including some African countries, such as apartheid South Africa took advantage of the Angolan conflict and encouraged the smuggling of diamonds through illicit trade, thus making conflict resolution in that country close to impossible.

11 EEF Annual Report, Angola, Ibid.
However, in 1993 the United Nations Security Council through its resolution 864 approved an arms embargo against Angola. The resolution prohibited all sale and supply of arms to UNITA, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment and spare parts for the aforementioned. This was in reaction to the deteriorating political, military and humanitarian situation in Angola and the continued suspension of peace talks. The resolution further barred external forces from supporting both the Angolan Government and UNITA. This embargo however did not speak to the issue of the illegal sales of diamonds and this is why it took another decade for Savimbi to be eventually defeated in 2002. He was still able to continue war for a decade because he was still in possession of diamonds which he was still able to sell and use the residues to pay his militants.

**Poor governance and lack of democracy**

Governance institutions and other institutions of a state under civil conflict are usually far too weak to produce effective policies and laws or even to implement and monitor those that existed prior to conflict. Under such conditions, human rights are systematically violated and corruption and nepotism are rampant leading to chaos that only result in a disorganized society.

Angola was no different during its 27 year civil conflict. To start with the MPLA government from the onset rejected democracy by establishing a one party state system at independence. Thus Angola did not have a democratic foundation. There was no equality between the people of Angola. It was only in 1992, after seventeen years of conflict, that Angola held its first ever democratic elections, which in some views were flawed. Jonas Savimbi actually rejected the outcome of the elections because he believed

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that they had not been fair. The international observers accepted the result, but, also pointed to irregularities.

Tore Nyhamar argues that the end of war in Zimbabwe in the 80s was because the leaders of those countries transitioned into democracy, while attempts to do so in Angola failed dismally.\(^\text{13}\) There was rampant corruption during the war and the wealth of the country rested in the hands of a few. Even after the war Angola is a country that is still struggling with transitioning into good governance and the wealth of the country still rests in the hands of a few.

Both UNITA and the government violated human rights. Richard Dietrich states that the MPLA Government committed widespread and systematic human rights violations through the military and national police, squandering large amounts of the state’s wealth.\(^\text{14}\) As also observed in The Economist, the war gave MPLA an excuse to jail and harass civilians who opposed undemocratic government policies and practices and that when the population asked about oil revenues, MPLA leaders would often cite issues of national security and “keep mum.”\(^\text{15}\)

\(^\text{14}\) Richard Dietrich, “Ethical Considerations for Multinationals in Angola.” p. 237-238
Poverty

Poor governance, the absence of democracy and greed left the majority of the Angolan people under abject poverty in a land of plenty. By the time war ended in Angola, at least 68 percent of the people lived under the poverty line. The *assimilados* who were mostly associated with MPLA had access to better education and the wealth of Angola, while the *indegenas* associated with UNITA and who also outnumbered the *assimilados* were concentrated in rural areas with little access to education, health facilities and the general wealth of Angola. This contributed to the exacerbation of civil conflict in Angola, as the *indegenas* people who were mostly poor continued the struggle against the *assimilados* dominated government. Thus during the war, the majority of people lacked basic needs and were unemployed which no doubt angered them for the government could not fulfill their needs. In fact, while Angola appears to be improving in the area governance and while the economy has significantly grown since the war, the country is still struggling to show commitment to its people. Angola is still among the least developed country and poverty is still widespread to date.

This chapter has established several factors that led to the outbreak of hostilities in Angola which include colonialism, ideological, poor governance and the lack of democracy, poverty and deprivation. However, the significant factors that appear to have prolonged the civil war in Angola are competition for control over minerals by both the MPLA government and UNITA rebel movement. The involvement of MNCs and direct involvement of some governments played a gigantic role in the prolongation of the war. The proceeds from diamonds and oil were used to purchase arms and pay militants which helped Savimbi to sustain his war against government. This is also in addition to the fact
that Angola’s political system was initially based on a one party state system which was as corrupt as the rebel movement, where the wealth of the country rested in the hands of a few leading to excessive poverty and famine across the country, despite the huge wealth.
CHAPTER 5
LIBERIA

The first settlers of Monrovia, known as Americo-Liberians, who were freed slaves from the United States arrived in Monrovia between 1829 and 1835.1 When the settlers arrived in Liberia there were already indigenous populations such as the Mel speakers (Gola and Kis); Kwa speakers (Basa, Belle, Dei, Grebo, Krahn and Kru); and Mende speakers (Bandi, Dahn, Kpelle, Loma, Mandingo, Mano and Mande).2 Upon arrival of the Americo-Liberians, the American Colonization Society (ACS) took over the governing of the territory and used the American Constitution to run area. The Americo-Liberians successfully negotiated their way out of the American dominion. Thus, in 1847, Liberia was established as a Republic under the flagship of the True Whig Party (TWP) led by President J.J. Roberts, an Americo-Liberman. A new Constitution which was based on the American law was adopted. TWP as a political party of the America-Liberians would dominate Liberian politics until 1980. The era in which the TWP dominated, 1847 to 1980, was a period during which the indigenous people of Liberia were oppressed and discriminated. Americo-Liberians ran Liberia like a colony. The newly adopted constitution which was a replica of the American constitution prohibited indigenous groups from participating in the economic and political affairs of the country.3 Although the indigenous people made 98 per cent of the population, they were not involved in the national decision-making.4

4 Major IA. Nass, A Study in Internal Conflicts, p. 9.
Political and economic change emerged when William V.S. Tubman ascended to power in 1944. Tubman was the first Liberian President who pursued a policy of integrating the indigenous population into national society. The cornerstone policies of his regime, the National Unification Policy and the Open Door Policy, were amalgamated to integrate the indigenous into the society and to open Liberia to foreign investors respectively. During his administration Liberia grew economically and the country became the second fastest growing in the world with iron ore bringing wealth to the country. Tubman was succeeded by Tolbert when he died in 1971.

Having organized themselves, indigenous people of Liberia began their offensive against the Americo-Liberian and turned against each other. The 14 year civil war left between 150 000 - 200 000 people, mostly civilians, dead and at least 1 million refugees in neighboring countries. A breakaway movement from NPLF, the Independent Patriotic Front for Liberia (INPLF), led by Prince Johnson emerged in 1990 and eventually assassinated Samuel Doe in September 1990. An Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) led by Dr. Amos Sawyer was established through negotiations by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). A Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was also established to keep peace after the death of Doe.

Despite efforts made by ECOWAS and the international community, including an arms embargo imposed by the Security Council in 1992 and the appointment of a Special

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7 Damien Fruchart and Paul Holton , UN Embargoes, p. 3,
Representative of the Secretary General, violence in Liberia escalated. Charles Taylor eventually won 75 percent of the votes in the 1997 general elections in which 13 parties participated. Taylor’s regime, however, became the most brutal in Liberia’s history. Unable to tolerate Taylor’s regime, the people of Liberia led by Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), later the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), escorted to armed resistance.

**The Ethnic**

Samuel Doe became the first indigenous Liberian President in 1989 after overthrowing Tolbert in a coup. Samuel Doe’s operations ended the era the Americo-Liberian dominion in the Liberian political and economic affairs. His political movement, the People’s Redemption Council (PRC) was formed by the Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups. However, after defeating the Americo-Liberian regime, the army which was also dominated by the Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups began a “bloody campaign mainly targeting the Gios and Manos” ethnic groups. The Krahn and Mandingo replaced the Americano-Liberians in the political and economic arena of Liberia. Samuel Doe’s actions brew ethnic tensions in Liberia. From 1985, a series of ethnic-based political formations rose as other suppressed ethnic groups came to resent Doe’s Krahn-Mandingo ethnic groups leadership. In particular, Charles Taylor assembled the Gio and Mano ethnic groups who had been angered by Doe’s government and formed the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The Gio and Mano groups were thus eager to revenge.

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against the Krahns and Mandingos.\textsuperscript{11}

The Liberian civil war broke out on Christmas of 1989 when Charles Taylor and his ethnic Gio/Mano dominated National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) began an offensive against Doe and his Krahn and Mandigo ethnic group.\textsuperscript{12} The continued struggle would thus rely on ethnic alliances for a while.

**Poor Governance, lack of democracy**

Poor governance and misappropriation of funds were evident in the successive governments, even prior to the assumption of power by the indigenous people. Revenues from Liberia’s natural resources – gold, diamonds, rubber and timber were at beginning in the hands of Americo-Liberians. This led to the prosperity of Americo-Liberians who became the core of the society while on the other hand, the majority of the people, indigenous, were left on the periphery. Despite political and economic changes, Konneh highlights that the indigenous remained disadvantaged because they were still not well represented at the core of decision making and also because the Americo-Liberians had for a long time accumulated much wealth at the expense of the indigenous Africans who were usually providing labour to the much wealthier Americo-Liberians.\textsuperscript{13} This master-servant kind of relationship extended to the military as well, where the Americo-Liberian officers (core) served as senior officials, while on the other hand indigenous people (the periphery) often served as regular officers.

Nass observes that the master-servant relationship between the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous prepared a solid ground for discontentment. During his

\textsuperscript{11} Ezinne C. Oji, *Child Soldiers in Liberia*, ibid.

administration, there was a deterioration of economic conditions with high inflation and lack of food self-sufficiency. Corruption, nepotism and excessive violation of human rights became the order of the day and led to uprisings in Liberia as students and labour unions called on Tolbert to step down.\textsuperscript{14} Added to this, indigenous people for the first time began to organize themselves into political groups.

According to Nass, Samuel Doe orchestrated the coup to counter the rampant corruption, government inefficiencies and ineffectiveness, violations of human, civil and constitutional rights, the concentration of power in the hands of the few and the erosion of the participatory system.\textsuperscript{15} However, Nass, Ali and Matthews; and Konneh all note that Doe's regime was characterized by incompetence and extremely poor democratic norms in which a single ethnic group- the Krahn- replaced the Am
erico-Liberians. With no clue about economic management or any form of management, Doe, who led the country for 10 years, Liberia to a state of near collapse as the economy plummeted to the lowest levels. Essentially, Doe failed to deliver. Student and labour union strikes and protests became regular emboldening the arrogant regime to commit further atrocities against the Liberian people, including the innocent.

It was after the election of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as Liberia’s first post conflict democratically-elected president and Africa’s first democratically-elected president, that Liberia for the first time in its history tasted democracy and good governance. Liberians had for decades been forced to live under various forms of oligarchic, autocratic, militaristic and authoritarian governments.\textsuperscript{16} The Truth and Reconciliation describe corruption in Liberia as ‘scandal of the 21st Century’ and

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maintained that poverty, greed, corruption, and limited access to education, social, civil, political inequalities were major causes for conflict in Liberia.\textsuperscript{17} While this corruption is evident from the formation of the Liberian state, there is no evidence showing determination of Samuel Doe and Charles Taylor to establish democracy in the country or to create institutions that would truly lead to democracy and good governance. The extra-judicial executions of opponents and some former cabinet ministers by Doe’s regime, and the confiscation of property of Americano-Liberians does not in any way reflect dedication to create good governance, but rather, a demonstration of greed and undemocratic brutal rule on his part, which forced the Americano- Liberians to actually support Charles Taylor’s uprising. Indeed Doe failed to create the means to protect the human rights of Liberians, and failed to promote socio-economic equalities, the result of which deepened the crisis in his country.

Equally, the last dictator, Charles Taylor continued the corruption and exploitation of the already existing ethnic divisions, which ensure consistent abject poverty in Liberia.

\textbf{Poverty}

According to Report on the Poverty Eradication Strategy for Liberia, the political power, infrastructure and basic services were concentrated in Monrovia, and there was marginalization of youth and women. Mismanagement of national resources was widespread and this situation contributed to stark inequalities in the distribution of the country’s wealth.\textsuperscript{18} The over-concentration of power in the hands of a few bred corruption and decision making was restricted to the few. Civil society participation was

extremely limited which no doubt undermined good governance. Successive governments however failed to correct the ills of society and magnified the problems.  

Throughout the history of Liberia and up to the end of the civil war, evidence adequately shows the unbalanced distribution of the country’s diamond wealth. The very poor governance and undemocratic state of Liberia, greed, and unemployment meant basic needs of the majority remained unmet by the political leadership. Americano-Africanos were wealthy and dominating decision-making while the majority of the people of Liberia remained under abject poverty leading to their struggle against the regime of Americano-Afrocanos. As indicated before, the Doe and Taylor regimes maintained the status quo and continued to deprive the people of Liberia. The war in Liberia was also a struggle by those who were under abject poverty. Those desperate for change and those who felt deprived, would find no reason to preserve the regimes that oppressed them.

**Natural resources as a factor in prolonging civil conflict in Liberia**

The Liberian war demonstrates clear linkages between natural resources and foreign economic interests. The interests of several countries and nationalities from within and without Africa are conspicuous in every front. In particular, the United States, Sweden and Lebanese traders were largely motivated by economic and business interests in rubber and oil ore. According to Ali and Matthews, “at the height of the war, when Taylor controlled the bulk of the country there was a thriving export trade in diamond, timber, gold and agricultural products, made possible through a network of foreign firms.” They add that, Canadian, British, Japanese and French companies continued
business with Liberia at the height of the civil war. It is important to mention also that Monrovia served as the centre where diamond smugglers met or waited for the “blood diamond” emanating from Sierra Leone’s Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

The international trade centre in Antwerp, Belgium readily accepted RUF diamonds which were being shipped from Monrovia. These were blood diamonds emanating from Liberia’s war-torn neighbor, Sierra Leone. As a result of availability of markets for blood diamonds, which provided much finance for Taylor to maintain a luxurious and opulent life, it became crucial for him to cling to power and to control the diamond industry both in Liberia and in Sierra Leone. It was against this backdrop that Taylor had to maintain ties with and support the RUF’s brutality in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone’s RUF no doubt fed Taylor’s appetite for diamonds for more than a decade.

Following international pressure to end impunity in Liberia, Charles Taylor eventually gave in and resigned from his presidential seat in August 2003. At the time of his resignation, Taylor had also been indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone which had been set up by the Government of Sierra Leone in conjunction with the United Nations. The Special Court was mandated to bring to trial, the perpetrators of atrocities committed against the people of Sierra Leone between 1996 and 1999. Taylor’s resignation gave way to a successful cease fire agreement. Thus a Peace Agreement between the Government of Liberia (GOL), The Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), The Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and the Political Parties was concluded in August 2003. The agreement was negotiated in Ghana, as an initiative of the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS). The agreement aimed to amicably settle the crisis which had plundered
Liberia for many years. Specifically the parties agreed to create a stable political environment and to promote democracy, good governance and the rule of law for sustainable development of the people of Liberia and most importantly to establish an interim government which will lead in the creation of conducive environment for elections. Subsequent to the ceasefire agreement, in September 2003, the United Nations Security Council established a United Nations Peace Keeping Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in order to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire agreement. The agreement and the establishment of UNMIL paved the way for democratic elections that left current President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf at the helm of power in 2005.

In 2012, Taylor was slapped with a 50 year jail sentence specifically for aiding the RUF rebels and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council in Sierra Leone. This chapter has fully investigated the several factors that require attention by those interested in conflict analysis in Liberia and Africa in general. Indeed, while many factors successfully contributed to protraction of the conflict, it is evident from the chapter that the diamond trade between Liberia and the international businesses and the desire of Liberia’s leaders to control resources, was of paramount importance in stretching the Liberian civil war. The source of diamonds for Liberia however, during Taylor’s era was Sierra Leone, which makes the analysis of Liberia’s civil war and natural resources a bit more complicated than that of Angola.

This chapter provided an analysis of the Liberian civil war and established poor governance, lack of democracy and inequalities as well as poverty and famine as among the factors that prolonged the civil war in Liberia. In fact unlike in Angola where the

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regime was always under the same political party, Liberia’s political and socio-economic inequalities and unbalanced distribution of wealth remained the same under various opposing regimes. The swearing in of a true democrat, Sirleaf-Johnson and the positive changes she has brought into Liberia now appear to be bearing fruit for the country. Liberia is now focusing on peace-keeping building efforts.
CHAPTER 6
Sierra Leone Civil War

Sierra Leone was first established as a settlement for freed slaves in 1787 and became Africa’s first model state. In 1896 the country was declared a British protectorate. With a population of slightly below six million inhabitants dominated by the Temne in the north and the Mende in the South, Sierra Leone has huge deposits of valuable diamonds and other natural resources such as gold and timber. The country became independent in April 1961 under its first President Milton Margia of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLLP). Various authors on the subject of the Sierra Leone civil war provide a picture of a successful Sierra Leone in the 1960s. According to Shola Omotola Sierra Leone had an independent and progressive civil service, judiciary and the military.\(^1\)

Prior to and after independence, roads, clinics and hospitals and new schools were built. The first ever university in the sub-Saharan region was Forrah Bay located in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone. Ndumbe supports this by stating that until 1970, Sierra Leone had one of the best public sector structures with professionally trained public sector employees.\(^2\)

The direct involvement of the military in the political affairs of Sierra Leone in 1967 was a pivotal moment in the history of Sierra Leone. A coup prevented an elected Siaka Stevens of All People's Congress (APC) from claiming his position as President of

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Sierra Leone. Thus in 1968, a counter coup restored Stevens but unfortunately, the President declared a one-party state system under authoritarian leadership.\(^3\)

By the time Major General Saidu Momoh ascended to power in 1985, Stevens’ corruption and mismanagement of the economy had dragged the country to a state of collapse- with no linkages between industry and the country's economy. Momoh’s attempt to restore economic growth by putting measures in place to curtail diamond smuggling in Sierra Leone “provoked a dangerous opposition” as the measures he adopted encroached on the business interests of those involved in the diamond industry, including foreign business people and former President Siaka Stevens himself.\(^4\) Momoh's regime therefore could not contain the ungovernable situation in the country.

In 1991 the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Corporal Foray Sankoh and with the support of Dictator Charles Taylor’s National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL), forcefully gained control of the hinterlands in Eastern and Southern parts of Sierra Leone and imposed a new regime, the National Ruling Council (NPRC).\(^5\) The ensuing civil war endured for a period of 11 years leaving 50,000 dead and 700,000 displaced.

The prolonged war in Sierra Leone can be attributed to a combination of different factors which include poor governance and the absence of democracy which ushered in an unbalanced distribution of wealth. Local and foreign business interest alike in the diamond industry of Sierra Leone also exacerbated and prolonged the civil war in that country.

\(^3\) Shola Omotola, *The Sierra Leone Lome Peace Accord*, p. 38.
Corruption, poor governance, lack of democracy

Corruption and poor governance in Sierra Leone cannot escape the mind of any researcher who attempts to examine the civil war in that country. The report of Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) in Sierra Leone is very elaborate on the impact of poor governance and lack of democracy on the people of Sierra Leone. Those who provided evidence to the TRC are reported to have expressed the view that the civil war in Sierra Leone was largely a result of failures in governance and institutional processes. The conclusion of the Steering Committee of the TRC stresses that this unsound governance provided a conducive environment for interplay of poverty, marginalization, greed and grievances that both caused and sustained the conflict and that in order to effectively deal with the problems of Sierra Leone, ensuring good governance is of paramount importance.

Examples of poor governance in Sierra Leone include the lack of political tolerance which eventually led to the abolition of opposition parties during the era of Dr. Siaka Stephens in 1978. Although Stephens took the responsibility of abolishing opposition, his predecessors, Sir Milton Margai and Sir Albert Margai, were not any better. They had created duality of the administration and judicial structures which made the system vulnerable to manipulation and as such took advantage of the weak structure and manipulated the system for their own selfish benefits. The Judiciary was not independent as it was subordinated to the Executive, which essentially diminished the power of the courts. Non-state actors such as the media were also suppressed and did not have the liberty to ensure accountability of both officials and private persons or even

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question business dealings in the country. Certainly the lack of democracy, excessive corruption and poor governance perpetuated the unequal distribution of Sierra Leone's mineral wealth and economic disempowerment of the majority including the youth. Ndumbe maintains that financial management, favoritism and nepotism, gross inefficiencies and excessive corruption limited the ability of government to deal with problems that beset the country. As a result of this, frustrations felt by the population eventually led to a series of strikes and coups.

The weak statehood and weak institutions of the successive regimes and the involvement of the military in the political system exacerbated the multifaceted challenges in Sierra Leone of accountability and transparency in the economic affairs of the country surely brought Sierra Leone to its knees. Such lack of accountability which is evident in any corrupt country is a good recipe for the continued struggle of those that feel alienated by those in power. This eventually played a major role in fueling the civil war and perpetuated the persistent radical and brutal opposition across in Sierra Leone. Poor governance and corruption meant that most of the people in Sierra Leone were deliberately deprived of the rights to benefit from their country’s wealth. It therefore became impossible for the population, including civil servants and the military, to trust the leadership and government of their country. David Keen asserts that this lack of trust led to the disenchanted people defecting from bad governance to join rebel movements. The RUF rebel movement at that point in time offered the population an alternative as it vowed to fight corruption and promote equality and free education. As a result RUF attracted much of the disgruntled population.

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8 J. Anyo Ndumbe, Diamonds, Ethnicity and Power: The Case of Sierra Leone, p. 91.
Poverty

The excessive inequalities in Sierra Leone were a recipe for civil unrest and grievances. The peasantry class who were most affected by the state of affairs in Sierra Leone found it fit to join the RUF. And, indeed, the brutality displayed by RUF militants was hugely supported by the frustrated masses who were poverty stricken and resented successive corrupt regimes. Greg Campbell, for example, argues that RUF began as a movement of peasants who were obviously distressed about the inequalities that existed in Sierra Leone at the time.\(^\text{10}\) The assertion by Campbell correlates with the findings of David Keen who argues that social exclusion of citizens has the potential to negatively impact the values and emotions of populations.\(^\text{11}\) Indeed, Ibrahim Abdullah confirms that RUF recruited from the vulnerable “lumpens and juveniles to whom their bush paths to destruction appeared more appealing.”\(^\text{12}\)

Furthermore, when Stephens decided to bring the mining industry under one organization and required the cleanup of smuggling in the mining fields, the miners who in most cases were the youth lost their wages and began to feel deprived of basic needs – poverty.\(^\text{13}\) The economy also plummeted resulting in lower salaries which led the educated, including teachers across the country to leave the work place and become idle. Quoting Fouke Mpoyo, Conteh-Morgan highlights that “many Sierra Leoneans believe that unemployment caused many hardships that later produced rebellion and exacerbated

11 David Keen, *Conflict and Collusion*, ibid.
it as well, as there was no creation of jobs or economic improvements during the course of the war; further, there was no food and there was massive unemployment such that even the educated had no jobs. 14 This situation resulted in many young and educated people joining the RUF probably because they had given up on the leadership and government. This anger, generated by the economic hardship and poverty which had formed over the years certainly offers an explanation for the heartless killings of those who had wealth.

**Resources / diamond industry**

Diamonds were discovered in Sierra Leone in 1930 in the Eastern Kono district and by 1970s, half of the output was exported illegally. The alluvial diamonds of Sierra Leone are on the surface and not entrenched in kimberlite. As such, they are easily accessible without requiring sophisticated and expensive technology to mine them.

It is evident that Stephens had a desire to control the diamond mining for personal gains and this brought Sierra Leone to its knees. His creation of a National Diamond Company under his office as Prime Minister and his entrusting of the company to his trusted friend, Lebanese businessman Jamil Mohammed complicated matters for the country as the duo pushed for their personal business interests. Steven’s successor Joseph Momoh worsened the situation further as he gave Mohammed even more powers over the mining sector, a move which indeed undermined the Sierra Leone people.

It was during this period of excessive corruption and mismanagement in the diamond mining in Sierra Leone that the people of Sierra Leone ended up in what came to be viewed in many quarters as the diamond war. The accounts of Davies show that

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14 Earl Conteh-Morgan, “Globalization, State Failure and Collective Violence: The Case of Sierra Leone,” p.100. 61
Sierra Leone produced 2 million carats between 1960 and 1970 and that during that time at least half of the diamond output was exported illegally. Ndumbe’s work correlates with the findings of Davies, indicating that by the 1970s, legal trade in diamonds dropped from 2 million carats to 595,000 in 1980 and further dropped to 48,000 carats in 1988.15 Davies further postulates that the exploitation policies by the successive regimes encouraged crime – the illicit mining and smuggling which resulted in the emergence of desperate miners known as the san-san boys. Ndumbe expresses similar sentiments to Davies’ statement that poor policies led to mismanagement of diamond exploration activities. This no doubt precipitated the acrimony in the country as a race for access to diamonds by officials, rebel groups and business people with malice became evident through the 1970s to the early 2000s when the war ended.

There are allegations that the RUF field commander General Mosquito joined the rebellion expecting to access diamonds.16 To buttress the extent of diamond influence in the country’s civil war Richards alleges that following the ECOMOG intervention in the civil war in 1998 the three main factions, CDF, AFRC and RUF fought using between 60,000 and 80,000 combatants, which according to Richards represented a comparatively large number in view of the small population of about 4.5 million at the time.17 While Richards is not explicitly convinced by assertions of some writers about the tremendous influence of the diamonds in the civil war in Sierra Leone, his findings are useful as they provide much information on the role of diamonds in the Sierra Leone civil war. For example he asserts that diamond mining helped to fund a rapid expansion of the CDF

15 J. Anyu Ndumbe, Diamonds, Ethnicity and Power, p. 92.
rebel movement which accordingly grew from “a few hundred combatants in 1996 to about 25 000 in 1998.”

Both writers provide an indication that RUF illegally exported diamonds worth between $20 – 60 million per annum, although Richards suggests that the amount is insignificant. It is necessary to point out that the assessment of whether or not this amount is significant is relative and depends on where one stands. For an African movement where there is lack and famine and deprivation, this no doubt is a significant amount. And, for a rebel who did not have a salary or was underpaid, being paid for smuggling diamonds would become a necessity. Davies further confirms that diamonds produced a war prolonging congruence of interests among the belligerents such that they at times mined peaceably side by side and attacked civilians with the intent of keeping them away from the lucrative industry.

During the civil war diamonds sold in the black market emanating from RUF made up approximately ten percent of legitimate diamonds. Though illegitimate, they entered the market disguised as Liberian and Guinean. To state the obvious, illicit diamonds are cheaper and for both local and foreign businesses this cheaper and lucrative market becomes necessary for large profits. The corrupt officials, rebels and ordinary business people were all interested in having a share of the cheaper product which frustrated any hope for peace. Richards informs of a memo by the first General of the UN Peace Keeping operation in Sierra Leone who wrote complaining about the conduct of

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18 Paul Rechards, The Political Economy of Internal Conflict in Sierra Leone, Ibid.
19 Victor Davies, War, Poverty and Growth in Africa: Lessons from Sierra Leone, p. 9.
some ECOMOG generals who also had a hand in the illicit diamond trading and were as such bribed by Sankoh to support his interest in standing for presidential elections. The fact that the Memo did not reach the UN and ended only as a draft may not necessarily mean that it was not true. In the practice of diplomacy the general could have been constrained by the political consequences of his statements. What is important is that such allegations reveal the possibilities that peace keepers may at times be not as honest as one may wish, therefore requiring much scrutiny if indeed civil strife is to be truly ended. We have seen other forms of abuses by some members of peace-keeping forces in some parts of Africa including in the DRC.

All these factors plus the instabilities in Sierra Leone made the diamond industry more lucrative and attracted corrupt officials and rebels as well as foreign firms alike to engage in the illicit trade. The assertions of both Davies and Richards suggest that without the booming illegal business in diamonds, the rebel movements would probably have been weaker without support from those interested in the illicit trafficking of diamonds. Thus the ferocious appetite for the alluvial diamonds knew no boundaries as those involved would prefer the status quo in order to benefit from the illicit trade.

The TRC report further asserts that there were unilateral interventions by the governments of Nigeria, Liberia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Libya, Ivory Coast and the United Kingdom – the former colony which had intervened for various reasons. There were also mercenaries and business foreign firms that became entangled in the Sierra Leone civil war. At the height of the war diamond customers in the form of foreign firms such as those from Australia, Switzerland, Tel Aviv, United States, and Ukraine kept the

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war going. The availability of foreign customers who also bought diamonds in foreign currency was an incentive for a continued war.

The involvement of Charles Taylor of Liberia in the civil war in Sierra Leone deserves mention when one considers the impact of external involvement in the civil war in Sierra Leone. Charles Taylor had two primary motives in Sierra Leone, which were to retaliate against the Momoh regime for supporting the 1990 ECOMOG intervention in Liberia and secondly, indeed, the desire to obtain diamond resources to finance his insurgency and pay off his supporters against Liberian President, Samuel Doe. It was actually with the help of Charles Taylor of Liberia that RUF invaded Sierra Leone and launched attacks against the government. It was through Taylor that RUF was able to sell its blood diamonds using Liberia as transit country. In turn the profits provided the RUF with the opportunity to purchase arms and ammunitions on the black market in Liberia and sustain years of war against Government.

During the Sierra Leone civil war, the controls and regulations for the diamond trade were lax. The “Diamond High Council in Antwerp used to record the origins of diamond imports as the last country to ship the goods meaning that the RUF diamonds shipped from Monrovia were falsely identified as originating from Liberia and as such were imported into the legitimate markets of Antwerp in Belgium, Israel and Ukraine among others. It was this loophole which ensured profits for Charles Taylor's Liberia and RUF and in this regard prolonged the war. Campbell argues that the loophole was deliberately crafted for business reasons. In 2000, a Canadian based NGO blamed the

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23 Rachel Stohl, “UN Imposes Diamond Ban on Sierra Leone, no page number.
Belgian industry for deliberately attracting organized crime and therefore for complicity in fueling the wars in Africa.\textsuperscript{25} This NGO initiative marked the beginning of an international campaign against \textit{blood diamonds}. The campaign led to the creation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme – a voluntary process in which rough diamonds are certified to distinguish legal ones from those that are illicit.

As a result of the continued demand for Sierra Leone’s illicit diamonds in Antwerp and other countries, in 2000 the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1306, instituting an 18 months embargo on the trading of Sierra Leone's rough diamonds and instructed Antwerp to identify legitimate diamonds by the place where they are mined.\textsuperscript{26} The resolution also requested the International Diamond Manufacturers Association, the World Federation of Diamond Bourses and the Diamond High Council to improve transparency of international diamond trade.

In this chapter I have attempted to prove that, the multiple effects of greed and grievances, denial of human basic needs to the majority of the people, poor governance and the inherent institutional weaknesses in Sierra Leone, external interference of Taylor’s regime and other governments and the mercenaries emanating from foreign countries mostly interested in accessing the diamond fields, all played a crucial role in prolonging the conflict in that country.

\textsuperscript{25}David Keen, \textit{Conflict and Collusion}, p. 269  
CHAPTER 7

CONFLICT PREVENTION

This thesis has from the onset provided an in-depth analysis of multiplicities of factors that prolong conflict on the continent of Africa. The cases of Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone show that the issues of poor governance, lack of democracy and poor
institutions that fail to respond to the needs of people played a role in prolonging civil conflict in the three countries. Under such poor circumstances, the basic needs of people were unmet – a situation which often exacerbated frustrations that precipitate civil strife.

It is also very clear in all the three cases that economic interests, greed and the desire to control natural resources especially diamonds for personal gains contributed to prolonging the civil conflicts in these countries. There is evidence of maladministration and mismanagement of national resources and corruption was rampant which led to inequalities throughout the three countries. As a result of the inequalities and unbalanced distribution of the countries’ national wealth the majority of the people were left deprived under poor living conditions. Those deprived indeed struggled against their oppressors.

The thesis also established that minerals, especially diamonds also attracted international businesses, MNCs and foreign governments which were solely interested in pushing their economic interests through the illegal trade in diamonds, without much interest in promoting peace and stability in those countries. Most of the interventions in the three civil conflicts were not based in good faith but greed and wealth.

It is not adequate to simply elaborate the multiple factors that prolong conflict without proposing some best mechanisms that can meaningfully help in either the prevention or resolution of conflict in Africa. This chapter therefore proposes that preventing civil conflict is better than curing it and attempts to offer the best possible ways in which civil conflict in Africa can meaningfully be prevented. The chapter surveys the two main categories of conflict prevention namely, operational and structural prevention, and posits that structural prevention of conflict is the best preventive measure against civil conflict. As such the chapter claims that governments that are accountable to
their citizenry and adopt a combination of models that promote democracy, good governance, social inclusiveness, and sound economic equity, and fairly provide for the basic needs of their peoples have a fairly good chance to sustain political stability and thereby diffuse any possible tensions that can otherwise escalate into civil unrest.

The Chapter uses the example of Botswana – where there has never been a civil war, as a model country where structural prevention has been effective, while acknowledging that prevention does not necessarily guarantee peace and stability and that erosion of the principles, where they exist, can lead to the outbreak of hostilities even in the most stable countries as we have seen in the cases of Kenya and Zimbabwe.

**Why conflict prevention**

The need to prevent conflict does not only arise for the sake of peace, stability and prosperity of nations, but also because the people have inalienable rights to dignity. They have the right to exist and fully exploit their potential. They have the right to good health, safe drinking water, and the right to freely express themselves. In addition, prevention is better than cure because the consequences of wars are unbearable where they have occurred. The loss of property, loss of life on an unimaginable scale, socio-economic and political disruptions are among the deadly cost and most immediate consequences of civil war.

The Carnegie Commission report on Preventing Deadly Conflict categorises strategies for preventing conflict into two: operational prevention, which refers to measures applicable in the face of immediate crisis, and structural prevention which consists of measures to ensure that crises do not arise in the first place or, if they do, that they do not recur.
**Structural prevention**

In this scenario the potential for deadly conflict is prevented by establishing states premised on democracy and the rule of law with widely available economic opportunity, social safety nets, protection of fundamental human rights, and robust civil societies.

The Carnegie report further maintains whatever form of self government, non-violent efforts which include security, well being and justice which improve the lives of people reduce the potential for deadly conflict.”¹ The structural prevention occurs at the formation of a state or at the peace building level and the overarching goal is an attempt to prevent war from happening in the first place or in the case of countries emerging from conflict and therefore at peace-building level, structural prevention mechanism attempts to prevent a recurrence of civil conflict.

**Operational Prevention**

Operational prevention applies when war appears imminent. In such a situation early engagement by an international organization, diplomatic intervention, and military intervention may be imperative to suppress insurgency. However, according to the Carnegie report, the proposed engagement can actually worsen the situation leading to the breakout of fully fledged civil conflict.² Against this background, structural prevention is therefore a better model that may be helpful.

**Expressions for conflict prevention by the United Nations**

The 21st century ushered in a new era in which countries began to put emphasis on prevention of conflict rather than cure. This was mainly because the international

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community had come to realize the cost of peace keeping operations of the United Nations. In addition, regardless of efforts by the United Nations and the international community at large, to end civil conflict, the absence of political commitment by parties involved made peace impossible regardless of the amount of troops deployed. Thus, at the dawn of the Millennium, the international community adopted three reports supporting prevention rather than cure. These reports came to reshape the world view on matters of international peace and security. The 2000 Millennium Report which was adopted by the General Assembly at the end of 2000 states that there is near-universal agreement that prevention is preferable to cure, and the strategies for prevention should foremost address the root causes of conflict. ³ The strategies alluded to in this ground breaking report point to issues of democracy, governance and equality - that the promotion of “human rights, to protect minority rights and to institute political arrangements in which all groups are represented. Every group needs to become convinced that the state belongs to all people.⁴

In yet another UN report former Secretary General Kofi Annan raises concern over the enormous human costs of not preventing violence. This cost goes “beyond the visible and immediate consequences which include death, injury, destruction, displacement, but also the distant and indirect repercussion for families, communities, local and national institutions and economies, and neighbouring countries.⁵ A glaring example is that of the Rwanda genocide which according to the report could have been prevented.

prevented. In arguing for the prevention of conflict, it is asserted here that effective conflict prevention is a prerequisite for achieving and maintaining sustainable peace, which in turn is a pre-requisite for sustainable development and not the other way round. Kofi Annan argues that the long-term structural prevention of conflict is the ultimate investment in sustainable development for the reason that sustainable development cannot take place in the midst of actual or potential conflict, and second, because armed conflict destroys the achievements of national development.\(^6\)

The findings of the Brahimi report of 2000 indicate that prevention is by far more preferable for those who would otherwise suffer the consequences of war, and that prevention is actually less costly for the international community than military action, emergency humanitarian relief or reconstruction after a war.\(^7\) The report puts emphasis on the rule of war, respect for human rights, and helping communities emerging from conflict to reconcile. This long term preventive measures proposed by Annan include the promotion of human rights, protection of minority rights and the institution of “political arrangements in which all groups are represented. Every group needs to become convinced that the state belongs to all people.”\(^8\)

**The Case of Botswana**

Admittedly, circumstances of countries differ and there is no particular equation for the prevention of conflict as the Secretary General points out in his report. The purpose of using Botswana here is not to claim that the country is perfect in any shape or form because in any case there is no country that should claim to be perfect. Indeed there is a lot of work that has been done pointing to the country’s imperfections. The fact

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however, remains: Botswana has been comparatively stable throughout its history, despite the country’s ethnically heterogeneous nature and despite the discovery of diamonds in 1967, which catapulted the country from one the poorest countries in the world at independence to an Upper Middle Income Country. Botswana’s solid record is not sheer luck; it is the result of committed and accountable leadership. And therefore the country’s track record demonstrates that choosing the route of structural prevention of conflict at the formation of a state stands a better chance in preventing the outbreak of hostilities that may potentially lead to outbreak of wars as has happened in many countries in Africa. This structural preventive method that Botswana deployed since its independence has held the nation together and played a huge role in sustaining peace and stability as well as sustainable development in the small nation.

**Political factors**

*Democracy, governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights*

Botswana gained its independence from Britain in 1966 and was founded under a multiparty state system and has held legitimate elections consistently since then. At the creation of the nation, the people of Botswana (then Bechuanaland) agreed on four basic pillars as the cornerstones of the new Republic, democracy, development, unity and self-reliance. These principles have served the country well over the years. To date Botswana

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is one of the few countries on the continent that has never experienced actual disruption of democracy and civil strife.

Research shows that Botswana has a good record in terms of respect for human rights, the rule of law, and government fairness and honesty and that the constitution guarantees an equal opportunity to petition the courts and the government for redress of wrongs.\textsuperscript{10} It is in this regard that Botswana is recognised as a long standing democracy in Africa and has for many years been tagged a shining example of democracy on the continent. This is also supported by Throup who, in surveying Botswana’s political environment, posits that the country has a unique record in Africa as a multiparty democracy and that the country has been judged by Transparency International as the least corrupt country on the continent. Throup further adds that the government has consistently respected the rule of law and individual liberties and that the media is high quality.\textsuperscript{11} Former President of Botswana and one of the founding fathers of the nation, Ketumile Masire explains in his memoires that he and the late Sir Seretse Khama, first president of Botswana, had the objective of building a unified nation and creating a society that was non-racial and non-tribal once the British granted the country its independence.\textsuperscript{12} It is because of this visionary leadership of Masire and the first president, Sir Seretse Khama and others that the laws and policies that were adopted promoted and protected the rights of all citizens regardless of “race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex” and as a result the people of the country have for

many years not had a reason to actually revolt against the leadership.\textsuperscript{13} Indeed out of the seven pillars of Botswana’s Vision 2016, three put emphasis on creating an open, democratic and accountable nation, a moral and tolerant nation and, united and proud nation.

\textit{Governance}

Governance is innate in the people of Botswana (Batswana) and was long exercised from time immemorial through a traditional system known as the \textit{kgotla}. The \textit{kgotla} is a traditional forum for consultations. Under this system of consultations, the elders of a community gather for announcements, to formulate a policy, decide on matters affecting society, “including political and economic developmental activities and litigations.”\textsuperscript{14}

According to Masire, \textit{kgotla} played various roles, including the court of law, Parliament and administrative body, where people also sought justice. The system of \textit{kgotla} was maintained in the modern Botswana and has served the country positively by deepening democracy.\textsuperscript{15} Practically each village has a \textit{kgotla}. The relevance of \textit{kgotla} is that politicians still use it as a way of the consulting communities on matters that affect the country. It is through \textit{kgotla} that the leaders of the country, including presidents also exchange views with communities on government programmes and developments in the country. Moumakwa concludes that the \textit{kgotla} system is a traditional institution has stabilized peace and social unity among the rural and urban communities in Botswana\textsuperscript{16}.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{13} The Botswana Constitution, Section 3. \\
\textsuperscript{14} Piwane C. Moumakwa “The Botswana Kgotla System: A mechanism for Traditional Conflict Resolution in modern Botswana,” \textit{Master’s Thesis in Philosophy of Peace and Conflict Transformation}, 2010, p. 3. \\
\textsuperscript{15} Q. k. J. Masire, \textit{Very Brave or Foolish}, p. 62. \\
\textsuperscript{16}Piwane C. Moumakwa, \textit{The Botswana Kgotla System}, p.80.
\end{flushleft}
This process therefore ensures transparency and inclusivity and ownership of programmes by locals, and its optimal utilisation can potentially deepen democracy. In addition to the kgotla system several institutions such the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crime, Ombudsman and so on were established in order to strengthen governance in the country. Indeed there has been criticism that the institutions are toothless particularly because they report to the Presidency. As such there are views that this was diminishing the independence of the institutions. Notwithstanding this criticism, it is important to take into consideration that the DCEC has played a significant role in exposing corruption in the country, including prosecuting high level officials. The strengthening of these institutions and their total independence are of great importance for further strengthening good governance in the country.

**Socio-economic factors**

Over the years Botswana developed from a least developed country at independence in 1966 to an upper middle income country. According to a UNICEF Report on Botswana this progress was due to “prudent use and management of mineral resources and a stable democratic governance system, with regular free and fair general elections.” Botswana is largest producer of diamonds by value. The prudent management of diamonds has led to the wealth that the country possesses today. Despite this wealth, Botswana has never had a civil war as evidenced in many countries in the region with diamonds. It is because of the diamond industry that Botswana became one of the most successful countries in Africa. Botswana was among the first countries to support the Kimberley Process and between 2006 and 2009 the country was among the countries that campaigned for *diamonds for development*, making it clear that not all diamonds of the
world were blood diamonds. This is so because of the prudent economic policies adopted by the country to embrace equal distribution of the country’s wealth. Sixty percent of government’s revenue is obtained from diamonds and this revenue has been used in the previous years to provide free education, free access to health facilities and so on. Although some reports point to high unemployment rates especially among the youth, inequalities and high levels of poverty, a complaint which has also been raised by opposition parties, the Government of Botswana has continued to put in place programmes that are aimed at alleviating the problems of unemployment and poverty.

Policy documents, such as the National Development Plans, the long-term Vision 2016 and the National Poverty Eradication Strategy are an expression of Botswana’s desire to reduce poverty in the country. A report of the Botswana Institute for Development and Policy Analysis (BIDPA) establishes a 3-pronged approach by government to reduce poverty, viz,

Promotion of broad-based economic growth through the introduction of economic incentives for employment creation, income generation, and citizen economic empowerment and entrepreneurial development; investment in public infrastructure and social services to enhance human capability outcomes; adoption of SSNs to target the poor and vulnerable groups.¹⁷

The Botswana Vision 2016 itself articulates the necessity to create an educated nation and a prosperous one in order to empower citizens. Social safety nets for elderly people, orphans and the destitute have played a significant role in alleviating poverty in Botswana. The aggressive response to poverty has ensured that the basic needs of people are generally met. For example, a UNDP Report on Botswana states that access to

potable water and sanitation respectively stood at 95.8% and 79.8% of the population in 2007 while an estimated 95% of the population having access to a health facility within a radius of 8km. The adult literacy ratio rose sharply since independence to 81% in 2003 whilst primary school age children are virtually assured access to 10 years of basic education. The introduction of Special Constables in the country, in which youth who have completed High School but did not succeed in their examination are trained to assist the police in law enforcement across the country has helped in taking youth that could otherwise be delinquent out of the streets. In addition, the government has reintroduced a national service programme, as Tirelo Sechaba. Through this programme, the youth that have completed their middle school and high school examination get involved in national service and are paid some fees for the job they do. In addition, the government introduced an Internship Program for graduates. Under this program graduates are employed for two years by both the civil service and private sector as trainees and the government itself is responsible for their pay.

These programs have played a significant role in keeping many youth from the streets and have decreased the number of people living under the poverty datum line therefore reducing the levels of frustration that could lead to a total outbreak of hostilities. These programmes no doubt demonstrate commitment of the successive governments of the country to uplifting the lives of the people of Botswana in general. As a result of these efforts the percentage of people living below the poverty datum line steadily declined from 47% in 1993 to 30% in 2002, 23% in 2009.19

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As already alluded to earlier in this thesis, civil strife and unrest start when the masses are dissatisfied with the leadership and by and large, when they feel deprived and do not have basic needs to sustain themselves. In many countries in Africa where there has been civil unrest, it was result of the absence of provision of basic needs, unbalanced policies, and lack of democracy, and excessive corruption which neglected the majority of the people. Examples include South Africa during apartheid era, Rwanda, Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, DRC and many other countries on the continent that have experienced prolonged civil wars. The Potential for civil war in Zimbabwe and Kenya can be attributed to excessive corruption by the regimes in these countries and feelings of deep frustration.

In a nutshell, this chapter has pointed out that African countries bear the primary responsibility of preventing civil conflict by adopting the legislation and laws that promote the aspirations of their people, promote democracy and good governance, accountability and respect for the rights of people in order to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. Establishment of these principles, particularly at the formation stages of a state and at the peace building level, in other words, the structural preventive methods, has the potential to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. Botswana is a good example, where structural preventive methods have been successful.
CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the civil conflicts in Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone with the overarching goal of establishing factors that prolonged those conflicts, and ways in which civil conflict can be prevented on the continent. The paper recognized that the civil conflicts in these three countries added to the numbers of countries undergoing brutal civil strife on the continent. The thesis has established those political and socio-
economic factors that have contributed to civil conflict in Africa, namely, the colonial factor, ideological war, ethnicity, lack of democracy and accountability, poor governance, neglect of the majority of the population, poverty and unmet human needs, greed and external interference in the continent’s mineral industry.

The analysis in this thesis is that there is not a single factor that causes or prolongs conflict, and that, multiplicity of factors interplay to prolong civil conflict. The thesis argues that of the factors outlined in the analysis, there are those that actually played a role in prolonging civil conflict while others were only short-lived. While colonialism, ethnicity and ideological wars played significant role in precipitating hostilities, the thesis elaborates that these factors could not have the prolonged civil conflict. Thus the thesis has argued that Latin America and Asia were colonized, however civil conflicts ended while many countries in Africa are actually still going through conflict. The ideological wars were also experienced across the globe, and despite the end of the cold war, many countries in Africa are still undergoing brutal civil conflict. In addition, the thesis also ruled out ethnicity as a factor that prolongs civil conflict in Africa. As stated by Gulshan Majeed, many countries even in the developed world are torn by ethnic strife, however that, as a result of their well organized systems, organized policies and proper planning the industrialized countries are able to effectively contain ethnic tensions.¹

The proposal in this thesis is therefore that factors that accounted for the protracted civil wars in Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone were: internal and external economic interests in the natural resources of these countries, lack of democracy, poor governance, and excessive corruption that often leads to the neglect of the masses. Thus,

common to these countries was the general neglect of the majority of people and their lack of basic human needs which played an explicit role in prolonging the civil conflicts in these countries. As elaborated, the people revolted because their governments could not achieve their aspirations. The majority of people were unemployed, poverty stricken and without basic needs.

With this in mind, the thesis argued for prevention of conflict rather than cure. Prevention of conflict is not necessarily easy or cheap. It requires unequivocal commitment, dedication and political will. It requires resources. But, the cost of war itself and its deadly consequences – the loss of lives, total destruction, and abuse of human rights have remained immeasurable. The thesis therefore surveyed two methods of prevention of conflicts – the structural and operation prevention, where the former is deployed at the formation of a state to ensure that the hostilities do not get out of hand, and the latter is deployed when there is actual crisis. The thesis agrees with the structural prevention mechanism as an effective preventive measure compared to the operational model that is only deployed when there is actual crisis. The operational measure could come too late and worsen the situation, particularly when third parties such as the United Nations or a powerful country is engaged

The case of Botswana was therefore used as a case to demonstrate the success of the structural prevention mechanism. Botswana began as a least developed country and has over the years developed to an Upper Middle Income Country as a result of the discovery of minerals, in particular diamonds. The discovery of diamonds did not lead to war as we have seen in the three cases in this thesis. Instead, the discovery of diamonds in Botswana and careful and wise management of the discovery brought wealth to the
country so that now it is arguably a model for democracy in Africa. Botswana is also a multi-ethnic nation but again, this diversity has not led the country into a misfortune for the reason that the policies of the country have always promoted equality and equal access regardless of race, sex, creed or colour.

The thesis concedes that Botswana is not a perfect country and acknowledges that there are challenges that the country is facing. The focus however, was not to interrogate the flaws of Botswana but rather, the practices that have held the country together and have ensured that the country remained politically and socio- economically stable in the face of the multifaceted challenges the country faces, for the past 47 years since independence. The stern poverty eradication policies that have been embraced by the successive regimes, including the current, have promoted equal access to education and to health facilities and have supported economic development, and participation in political processes and decision making across the country. As a result of the good policies that the successive governments of Botswana adopted, the basic needs of the people are fairly met and the people have not had a very good reason to revolt to the extent that we have seen in the case of Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone and many countries that that have undergone civil conflict.

The thesis establishes that peace and stability in Africa is the primary responsibility of the African people themselves. The international community can only meet the continent halfway. Interventions by third parties such as the United Nations or any organisation or country cannot be successful where there is an absence of commitment and dedication. What happened in Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone and what is currently happening in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and others can
only be attributed to the lack of commitment by the leadership, both governments and opposition. It is therefore important that African governments and politicians create a good socio-economic and political environment by building strong institutions that guard the interests of the aspirations of their populations as opposed to greed and self interest. This should include establishing laws and policies that promote good governance, rule of law, human rights, equality and the welfare of the people.

The lessons to be drawn from this thesis is that interventions by countries and intergovernmental organisations, aimed at peace keeping operations are usually not successful where there is little or no foundation for democracy, good governance and equality and when people are not empowered and involved in decision making of their countries. Stability in African countries is fragile where there is little or absence of democracy, good governance, equality and where negligence of the masses is rampant. In such scenario threat of sliding back to civil wars or new wars emerging.

It is however, important to point out that democracy, good governance, equality and so on do not necessarily guarantee peace and stability, neither does their absence necessarily lead to conflict. The cases of countries such as Zimbabwe and Kenya demonstrate that leaders can actually reverse key principles of democracy bringing them brink of civil strife. Democracy is therefore nurtured and should not be stagnant; it needs to be watered and to be fed. Botswana cannot therefore be complacent and rely on the glory of the past but should keep striving for better. The case of Zambia show that the absence of democratic principles may not necessarily lead to conflict. Zambia was established under a one-party state system, however, this never led to the outbreak of a
civil war, but of course one-party state system has been passed by time and the current
generations in sub-Saharan cannot accept it in today’s world.

In addition to other limitations, this thesis also does not offer concrete advice for
countries that may not have sufficient resources (as is the case with Botswana), for
example, in a country where the population at large including its leaders is generally poor
with no resources to harness. By and large, it was not possible to review all literature on
civil conflict in sub-Saharan Africa due to limited time and the program’s requirements.

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