CONFLICT INTERVENTION BY THE UNITED NATIONS STABILIZATION MISSION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO'S PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Peace and Conflict Studies of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

December, 2024

DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated sources support, and has not been presented elsewhere for a degree or any other award.

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my Mum Joyce Gakii Kimathi, my children Celine Nkatha Koome and Ryanne Muthomi Koome, my sisters Ann Karimi Kimathi, Leah Nkatha Kimani, Lucy Kinaitore Thuo, and my brother Peter Murithi Kimathi.

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ABSTRACT

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been marred by protracted conflict, instability, and human suffering for decades. This study examines chronology and nature of external interventions, including peacekeeping missions, diplomatic initiatives, and economic engagement. Studies on or and around United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo with respect to conflict, peace and security, portray shortcomings bordering on ineffectiveness. This presents a serious paradox and a question on conflict intervention by United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo's peace and security processes. The study general objective was to investigate the effects of conflict intervention by United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo's peace and security processes. The specific objectives were to examine the effectiveness of the institutional frameworks of United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo in peace and security processes; assess the capabilities of United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo in enhancing peace and security processes; interrogate peace and security dynamics in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a result of the conflict intervention by United Nations Stabilization Mission and evaluate challenges and opportunities faced by United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes. The study explored Liberal Theory, Cooperative Security Theory, Power Theory and Theory of Functionalism from which a conceptual model was drawn. The study was conducted in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. A descriptive survey and an evaluative research design were adopted. The target population was 49,871 with a unit of analysis of 21,105 civilians comprising 5052 refugees, 4053 internally displaced persons and 12,000 local traders, 16,161 United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo staff, 7,895 from major none governmental organizations, and 4,710 from the political class, the rebel groups, and immigration.The sample size was 384 which was determined using Dillman formula. The primary data was collected using questionnaires, focus group discussions, observation guides and key informant interviews while secondary data from books, journals and other relevant sources. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis while statistical data using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study indicate that, 58.08% disagreed that conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo requires external intervention, 55.81% agreed that Rwanda and Uganda are an obstacle to United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 53.9% agreed that United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo is reactive and not proactive and 60.32% agreed that United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo is occupational and not an interventional force. The overall conclusion of this study is that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo had a significant yet mixed impact on the country's peace and security processes. While the mission has played a crucial role in stabilizing certain conflict-affected areas, reducing violence, and facilitating peace agreements, its long-term effectiveness has been limited by several challenges. These include the persistence of armed groups, the complexity of local and regional geopolitical dynamics, and the limited capacity of the Congolese government to maintain security independently. The study recommends on enhancing Democratic Republic of Congo's governance structures and security reforms, boosting operational capacity for United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, adoption of a multifaceted approach to solutions, and strengthen the rule of law.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APSA – African Peace and Security Architecture

ASEAN – Association of Southern Asian Nations

AU – African Union

CADA – Charity for All and Development for Africa

CEWARNC - Conflict Early Warning System

CEWERUs - Country Early Warning and Response Units

CPMR Mechanism - Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism

DPA - Department of Political Affairs

DRC – Democratic Republic of Congo

EAC – East Africa Community

EACRF – East Africa Community Regional Force

EACWARN – East Africa Community Regional Early Warning Centre

EASF – East Africa Standby Force

ECOWAS – Economic Community of West Africa States

GIZ - Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

ICGLR - International Conference on Great Lake Region

ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross

IGAD – Intergovernmental Authority on Development

JBSC – Joint Border Security Committee

LPCs – Local Peace Committees

MILOBS – Military Observers

MONUSCO – United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo

MOU - Memoranda of Understanding

MSF – Médecins Sans Frontières/ Doctors Without Borders

M23 – March 23 Movement

NGOs – None Governmental Organizations

OSCE – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PSO – Peace Support Operations

RECs - Regional Economic Communities

RECSA - Regional Centre on Small Arms

SADC - Southern Africa Development Community

SALW – Small Arms and Light Weapons

UN – United Nations

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WFP – World Food Programme

WWII – World War Two

SPSS –Statistical Package for Social Sciences

OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Capabilities – Has been used in the study to mean the military capability in terms of combat readiness, sustainable capability and force structure resident with MONUSCO and its ability for a successful conflict intervention including the expertise, financial wherewithal and other aspects of soft power available with it for conflict management.

Conflict dynamics – Indicates the attendant patterns, processes, determinants and drivers in the course of the conflict and MONUSCO conflict intervention in the DRC including divergent and vector factors such as interests of states involved.

Conflict intervention – the involvements that are undertaken by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) being international involvement to influence the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo with the view to its management and eventual resolution.

Dynamics of conflict intervention – the nature and direction of MONUSCO conflict intervention in the DRC, the changing nature and direction of the conflict that requires adaptive strategies employed by MONUSCO conflict intervention in the DRC.

Effectiveness – the extent to which the international actors are capable of a successful conflict intervention, restoration of peace and security in a conflict-ridden zone, in this case DRC.

Hegemony - Leadership role in command and control of affairs affecting the East Africa Community Countries including DRC.

Insurgencies – In reference to active revolt or uprisings which require peacekeeping and peace reinforcement in the DRC.

International Governments – Referring to the international community of nations. International governments representing the global community of nations collaborate to address global challenges through diplomacy, treaties, and joint initiatives. They work together to promote peace, security, and development, often through organizations like the UN, and provide humanitarian aid, enforce sanctions, and support conflict resolution efforts in the DRC.

International Militaries – Refers to United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). These are the global troop-contributing countries. International militaries, comprising global troop-contributing countries, play a pivotal role in addressing the DRC conflict. These forces, often under UN mandates, engage in peacekeeping, stabilization, and humanitarian efforts to curb violence, protect civilians, and support local governance. Their operations aim to restore peace and foster long-term security in the region.

Peace and Security process – It has been used to mean a series of steps that aim to establish peace and security in DRC by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

Political elites – Referring to very rich and powerful people who influence politics within EAC Countries including DRC.

Strategy – In this case, Researcher has used to denote a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim in solving conflicts within the international arena. A strategy in the context of the DRC involves crafting a comprehensive plan to address and resolve conflicts. This includes setting clear objectives, deploying diplomatic, economic, and military resources, engaging in multilateral negotiations, and fostering alliances. The aim is to achieve sustainable peace and stability in the DRC, ensuring long-term solutions to complex global conflicts.

Structures – Conflict Prevention Mechanisms put in place within international organizations in the DRC. Structures in conflict prevention in the DRC include early warning systems, mediation processes, peacekeeping missions, and diplomatic interventions. These mechanisms are designed to identify, address, and de-escalate DRC tensions before they escalate into violence. They involve coordinated efforts among member states, fostering dialogue, implementing sanctions, and deploying resources to maintain global stability.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter delineates the foundational context of the study, articulates the problem statement, outlines the study's objectives, and presents the research questions. The chapter also discusses academic, policy, and philosophical grounds, as well as the scope of the investigation, and concludes with a chapter summary.

1.1 Background to the study

According to the Global Peace Index 2022, sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are globally categorized as regions experiencing political instability and further termed as low-resilience regions (Institute of Economics and Peace, 2022). As part of the sub-Saharan Africa, East Africa to which the Democratic Republic of Congo belongs has been characterized by a number of internal wars over the past five decades, leaving a legacy of unresolved animosities and militarization (Mulata, 2017). The regional arrangement covering East Africa is the East African Community.

The international conflict intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo, known as the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or its French designation, Mission de l'Organization des Nations Unies pour la Stabilization en République Démocratique du Congo (MONUSCO), represents a UN peacekeeping force established by the UN Security Council through resolutions 1279 (1999) and 1291 (2000). Their mandate involved overseeing the peace process associated with the Second Congo War, often referred to as the Great War of Africa, which began in

1998. Nevertheless, a significant portion of its attention shifted towards the Ituri conflict, the Kivu conflict, and the Congo conflict. The MONUSCO succeeded the prior UN peacekeeping initiative – the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), on 1 July 2010, in alignment with Security Council resolution 1925 of 28 May 2010, to signify the new phase attained in the nation. The recently sanctioned UN mission is empowered to employ all requisite measures to fulfill its mandate, which includes, among other objectives, safeguarding civilians, humanitarian workers, and human rights advocates facing immediate threats of physical harm, as well as assisting the Government of the DRC in its endeavours toward stabilization and the consolidation of peace. Initially comprising approximately 19,815 troops, the MONUSCO uniformed personnel has now diminished to roughly 16,161 individuals. This total includes a maximum authorized strength of 13,500 military personnel, which encompasses contingent troops and staff officers, alongside 660 military observers and staff officers, 591 police personnel, and 1,410 members of uniformed police units. The personnel hail from over 50 nations across the globe. MONUSCO receives its funding from a distinct account that is sanctioned annually by the General Assembly. Approved budget: $1,123,346,000 (A/RES/75/300) (United Nations, 2023) (07/2021–06/2022).

More than fifty nations including, Algeria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, China, Ivory Coast, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, France, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland,

Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe have contributed military and police personnel for peacekeeping effort (United Nations, 2023; United Nations, 2010). India was the single largest contributor (Pop, 2008).

Despite the interventions by MONUSCO from July 2010 to-date and later East Africa Community Regional Force (EACRF) from November 2022 to December 2023, the conflict in eastern DRC has continued to spike up (Ntanyoma, 2022). This resuscitation of the conflict has been a great concern not only to DRC but also to the neighbouring states because of conflict spillover. However, due to the absence of DRC government security forces protection to the civilians, communities have taken the initiative of defending themselves. According to Okoth *et al*., (2018) on peace, security, and development in 21st century Africa, there is a shift from state safety to individual and communities' safety.

The East African Community (EAC) is a regional intergovernmental organization with its historical antecedents in 1967 the first East African Community (EAC I) which was dissolved in 1977 and it comprises of eight (8) Partner States (East Africa Community, 2023). These are: The Republic of Burundi, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, The Republic of Kenya, The Republic of Rwanda, The Republic of South Sudan, The Republic of Uganda, The United Republic of Tanzania and the Federal Republic of Somalia. With an estimated population of 300.9 million citizens, of which over 30% is urban population, its headquarters is in Arusha, Tanzania (East African Community, 2023). It consists of a land area of 5.4 million square kilometers with a combined Gross Domestic Product of US$ 313.67 billion, and it is of great strategic and geopolitical significance prospecting renewed and reinvigorated region.

The work of the EAC is guided by its Treaty which established the Community signed on 30 November 1999 and entered into force on 7 July 2000 following its ratification by the original three Partner States - Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi acceded to the EAC Treaty on 18 June 2007 and became full Members of the Community with effect from 1 July 2007, while the Republic of South Sudan acceded to the Treaty on 15 April 2016 and become a full Member on 15 August 2016. The Democratic Republic of the Congo followed later and acceded to the EAC Treaty on 8 April 2022 and became a full member on 11 July 2022. The newest member state is the Federal Republic of Somalia which acceded to the EAC on 24 November, 2023 (East African Community, 2023).

Many of East African zones of conflict and instability are sites of long-running crises; some of its civil wars and insurgencies have lasted decades (Mulata, 2017). Long-running wars can create their own systems of adaptation, economies, and interests, which can reinforce instability. This includes the rise of war economies in which powerful interests seek to perpetuate conditions of lawlessness and violence. The initial causes of the wars in East Africa are thus not always the same as the factors that perpetuate them. On the other hand, the porous borders across East Africa countries are unmarked and usually contested. When incidents occur or valuable resources are discovered in these areas, tensions spike between neighbouring states, complicating peace-building efforts.

East Africa is replete with instances of local communities building systems of governance and security arrangements in the face of state failure. This is the case of Al-Shabab armed rebel group in Somalia. These emerging orders are usually little more than coping mechanisms, but in some locations can form the basis of a new political order (East Africa

Regional Conflict and Instability Assessment Report, 2012). These local systems of governance have variable relations with their central government, and variable legitimacy locally.

Central governments sometimes view informal local security and governance arrangements as unlawful, extra-constitutional, and a threat, but in other cases forge fruitful partnerships with local informal political orders. Local Peace Committees (LPCs) involved in regional conflict early warning and prevention are all lawful and recognized by state actors (Church, 2007). Governments in East Africa region vary widely in their attitudes and legislation toward non-state or civic actors in managing trans-border conflicts; some are highly restrictive while others are amenable to forging hybrid peace-building partnerships with civil society groups in border areas.

In the East African Community, the Global Peace Index identifies the Democratic Republic of Congo as a county which was less peaceful in the year 2022 than in the year 2021 at the score of 3.747 globally, and 4th from the bottom preceding Yemen, Venezuela and Afghanistan (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2022).

Conflict in DRC is not a recent phenomenon. For nearly three decades, DRC has been split by armed conflict resulting from the First and Second Congo Wars (1996–1997 and 1998–2003,) and the Kivu Conflicts in eastern DRC (2004–present). Following the Rwandan genocide in 1994, millions of Rwandan refugees flooded into the eastern DRC (CADA, 2021).

Rwanda and Uganda invaded eastern DRC in 1996 in pursuit of some of the suspected perpetrators of the genocide then believed to be hiding in camps in the country (then

Congo Zaire), and in a coalition Kabila then opposition leader, defeated Mobutu ending the Frist Congo War in 1997. The two neighbouring regional powers were ordered out in 1998 by Kabila, fearing they would invade the mineral-rich eastern Congo (CADA, 2021).

With the involvement of 9 African countries and more than 20 armed militia groups, the Second Congo War which ended in 2003 is often referred to as "Africa's World War" and is considered to be the deadliest global conflict since World War II. The region's stronger states have been much more assertive about projecting their authority into border areas and across borders into neighbouring states, resulting in a high level of regional armed interventionism and proxy wars. This has also helped to reinforce regional conflict complexes involving multiple states and non-state actors (Mulata, 2017).

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has become a matter of grave concern to the regional states with the re-emergence of M23 rebels in late 2021. M23 off-shot from the National Congress for the Defence of the People (NCDP) is popular in its French acronym CNDP. This was a rebel group which fought against the government of DRC from 2006 to 2009. M23's main claim is that the Congolese Tutsi and other ethnic communities in North and South Kivu provinces are discriminated against by the DRC Government considering them as "Rwandophones" since they are Rwandese by origin (Ntanyoma, 2022).

The rebels (CNDP), as they are termed by DRC Government, occupied Goma City in eastern DRC for 10 days in 2012. Its fame and heinousness took toll when it was linked to Rwanda escalating the conflict forcing the Southern African Development Community to broker a ceasefire ending the M23 rebellion in 2013. However, division arose within M23

soon after, leading one wing of 1700 soldiers to flee to Ugandan as the other smaller wing of 700 fighters fled to Rwanda. The little bunch that remained voluntarily surrendered as some absorbed themselves into the DRC military (Ntanyoma, 2022). It is quite evident that various rebel groups and rogue elements of the Congolese army continue to commit serious human rights abuses in eastern DRC. This is primarily in the provinces of Ituri, North and South Kivu, Orientale, Katanga and Goma and more specifically in the territories of Rutshuru, Bunagana, Beni and Kiwanja which are largely occupied by M23 and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) (CADA, 2021). The other key areas of conflict include; Rumangabo, Sake, Virunga, Rubavu districts on Rwandan side of eastern DRC border. It is noted that M23 live and operate from mountain Sabyinyo which is shared by DRC, Uganda and Rwanda (Ntanyoma, 2022).

As per Okoth *et al*., (2018:28), the concept of security emerged from human needs within the national and international systems. National security is the protection of state using military responses to maintain its sovereignty or preservation of territorial integrity. A notion accepted by states and international organizations, the UN Charter defines security in terms of the state thus advancing the whole security concept as state security. Described by the United Nations as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, the unrest in DRC continues to cause hundreds of thousands of displaced persons to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, including Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. This has occasioned internally displaced people (IDPs) and left behind many widowed women and orphaned children. Economically, this situation has impoverished the population (CADA, 2021; Ntanyoma, 2022). The impact of regional armed interventionism has been variable where in some cases it has worsened insecurity and armed violence, in other

cases it has reduced it. One of the most important trends in government interests is a much greater commitment to border conflict management and promotion of solutions to regional conflicts.

The push across much of East Africa for political decentralization is introducing new actors district or regional authorities within states into cross border conflict management. This has major implications for local resilience in East Africa border areas, especially where new governmental authorities are inclined to represent local ethnic group agendas over national interests (Oluoch, 2012; Mulata, 2017).

Apart from individual and bilateral state conflict interventions in DRC, instances of regional interventionism have been evident, although it can be contended that they might reflect state security interests or parochial economic interests. The East Africa Community Regional Force (EACRF) though short lived in the DRC, was constituted in the year 2022 and deployed in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to combat the M23 rebels (Aljazeera, 2022). The regional force was deployed to have an initial timeframe of six months, renewable, and was to combat, work on civilian programmes such as setting up social amenities and hold peace meetings with villagers in a new strategy meant to endear locals to the authorities (Holland, 2022; Nile Post, 2023).

The East African Community Regional Force deployed its troops around areas of Rutshuru and Masisi territories, making North Kivu a multinational sector (Nile Post, 2023). It must however be noted that in the mission of the regional economic community, peace, security and conflict in their conventional meanings and sense, are not explicit. In addition, among the seven organs, there is none conspicuously dealing with conflict unless implied that in

its functions, the East Africa Court of Justice would resolve conflicts referred to it, but essentially inter-state on legal bases.

On 09 May, 2023 the DR Congo President Félix Tshisekedi while on an official visit in Gaborone - Botswana noted with concern that EACRF was not performing as per their mandate and accused them of cohabiting with rebels after the regional troops declined to enter into combat. However, during the 21st extra ordinary meeting of Heads of State and governments summit held in Bujumbura on 31 May 2023, it was agreed to the extension of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) for six months from March to September 2023 (East African Community, 2023). This was in order to consolidate the gains made by EACRF. However, the EACRF mandate was later extended to 8 December 2023 in which the government of DRC maintained its none renewal. During extra ordinary meeting in Bujumbura, the summit reiterated its call to all parties to de-escalate tensions and use established regional, continental and international mechanisms to resolve any disputes in the implementation of peace in eastern DR Congo. On the other hand, MONUSCO has been observed by the region as an occupational force and has done little for the last few decades to achieve its mandate on peace and security. It is against this backdrop by the international conflict response in the DRC that a study assessing the effectiveness of MONUSCO in conflict intervention is warranted.

1.2 Statement of the problem

With the conflict intervention through MONUSCO, it was a common assumption that the UN peacekeeping mission was a panacea to the DRC problems more so, as an approach to conflict management. The initial soft mandate of MONUSCO of observation quickly

changed to offensive peacekeeping mission, prioritizing the protection of civilians and creating political space for dialogue on stability and institutional building. Illunga (2019) notes that the key elements and turning points in the change of the mission mandate were always motivated by the negative impact of political actions and/or behavior of armed groups on the population, rather than a perspective of incremental sustainable change based on successful functioning. Over time, this type of strategic response has placed MONUSCO in a reactive rather than proactive position and made it difficult to establish a sustainable framework for peace, let alone to contemplate an exit strategy (Illunga, 2019). In principle, such an international arrangement should promote growth and development within individual member states as it strengthens integration processes, enhances intergovernmental cooperation creating a global identity in the comity of nations, avers Cickecka (2018). This is said to be true of underdeveloped and dysfunctional counties as further contended by Cickecka (2018). Today's conflicts in the country are, to a large extent, a reincarnation of those of the past, ideological antagonism, constitutional orientation crisis, dispute control of natural resources and ethnic dimensions of the conflict. This indicates that the structural causes of the conflicts have not been adequately addressed. The DRC is the third largest country in Africa, with vast natural resources around 1,100 minerals and precious metals with an estimate of 77 million inhabitants, less than 40% live in urban areas (World Bank, 2019). According to Gebrekidan, DRC is an example of how colonial experience had a great negative impact (Charles & Blanton, 2012-2013 edition). Even after independence in 1960, positive peace and prosperity was elusive due to internal divisions (Charles & Blanton, 2012-2013). Despite a number of interventions including MONUSCO, the conflict in DRC, being the most violent after

WWII, has caused loss of millions of lives and is among those conflicts that are in serious need to get resolved. Since mainstream mechanisms to conflict resolution have been unsuccessful so far in finding a lasting solution to the DRC problem, there is need to find some alternative mechanisms and regionalism that can serve as a good solution to the problem. Although few studies have been found to recommend this approach for establishment of peace in Africa, a thorough analysis of a potential regional mechanism in case of African conflicts has not been conducted so far. Furthermore, the studies on regionalism are often found to focus on the role of regional organizations and states actors operating within that region (Ngendahimana, 2013).

On December 20, 2022, the United Nations Security Council enacted resolution 2666, extending the mandate of MONUSCO for an additional year, concluding on December 20, 2023, and, “on an exceptional basis,” the mandate of its force intervention brigade (FIB). The revitalized strategic priorities of MONUSCO encompass the safeguarding of civilians and the enhancement of State institutions in the DRC, alongside essential governance and security reforms. Nonetheless, in spite of the endeavours undertaken by the United Nations Stabilization Mission, the security landscape in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been increasingly precarious, characterized by rampant violence perpetrated by armed factions in the eastern part of the nation.

This raises a significant paradox and poses a profound inquiry regarding the implications of conflict intervention in the DRC by the United Nations via MONUSCO. This study aimed to examine the impact of conflict intervention by the United Nations Stabilization Mission on the peace and security processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to investigate the effects of conflict intervention by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo's peace and security processes. The specific objectives of this study were to:

i. Examine the effectiveness of the institutional frameworks of MONUSCO in the management of conflict in the DRC.
ii. Assess the capabilities of MONUSCO in enhancing DRC's peace and security processes.
iii. Interrogate peace and security dynamics in the DRC as a result of conflict intervention by MONUSCO.
iv. Evaluate challenges and opportunities faced by MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the DRC.

1.4 Research Questions

The main question this study sought to answer is: what are the effects of conflict intervention by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo's peace and security processes? The specific questions this study sought to address are:

i. How effective are the guiding conflict intervention institutional frameworks for MONUSCO in DRC's peace and Security processes?
ii. How do MONUSCO's capabilities enhance DRC's peace and security processes?
iii. What are the dynamics in peace and security in the DRC as a result conflict intervention by MONUSCO?

iv. What are challenges and opportunities faced by MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the DRC?

1.5 Justification of the Study

There are three justifications for this study: academic, policy and philosophical justifications.

1.5.1 Academic Justification

There is little on academic research findings on the conflict intervention by MONUSCO and effects on peace and security in the DRC. The Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) (2022), prioritize the protection of civilians during peacekeeping operations by MONUSCO in the DRC. It argues that despite of improved security in some areas, civilians in the eastern DR Congo contend with hundreds of armed groups committing horrific abuses, including large-scale extrajudicial killing and sexual violence. There is little mention on the stabilization and strengthening of State institutions, key governance and security reforms in the DRC. The Congo Research Group (CRG) (2023), conducted a research study which showed that majority of Congolese people reject the East African Regional Force (EACRF) for its inability to combat M23 rebels as per their expectations. The DRC government has been under strong popular pressure to resolve this crisis while the EAC strategy to deploy EACRF remains deeply unpopular. Having been deployed in the DRC conflict theatre in November 2022, there is hardly little that can be said in terms of achievements for EACRF. Thus, many media reports, most of which are negative at the moment, warrant an academic research study. For this reason, when more focused and

thorough studies are done, more literature will be available for academicians to make a balanced and policy-oriented judgment on peace and security issues.

1.5.2 Policy Justification

The continued deployment of United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) without a definitive drawdown has given rise to different policy rationales and findings. These conclusions may differ by viewpoints and opinions, but they have several similar trends, which are important to take into consideration in order to analyze this process. The first major direction is the analysis and consolidation of MONUSCO's mandate. The new characteristics of the conflict require a mandate more extensive than the traditionally understood peacekeeping tasks. It should have a broader outlook that involves political, social, and even economic factors and not be limited to the security undertakings of the conflict. It is crucial in this way to meet the realities on the ground and achieve a sustainable and sustained goal as part of the UN Security Council's mission (UN Security Council, 2019; Autesserre, 2014). Other reasons for policy include increasing cooperation at the regional level. However, the conflict in the DRC is not limited to the country; it has spillover effects on neighbouring countries and systems. As a result, there is an existing policy need for increasing cooperation and collaboration among these countries. Therefore, by fighting cross-border threats and gaining regional cooperation concerning peace, the international system can build a favourable environment for sustainable peace (Tull, 2021; Prunier, 2009). Therefore, it is critical to note that MONUSCO has not managed to solve the conflict in the DRC due to the fact that the challenges that underpin the conflict are complex and structural in nature. Sustainable resolution of conflict, therefore, needs a strong and clear charter for the

peacekeeping mission as well as aggressive, coordinated, and holistic political and economic programs. Insightful conflict management to enhance and support sustainable peace requires a well-coordinated and well-defined mandate for the peacekeeping mission, together with the pursuit of other major political, economic and social goals. Finally, this research will provide suggestions for the enhanced international conflict intervention policy or identify if other arrangements are needed.

1.5.3 Philosophical Justification

According to Dudovskiy (2022), research philosophy is related to assumption, knowledge and nature of the study. It uses a specific way of nurturing knowledge given that researchers may have different assumptions about the nature of truth and knowledge. Philosophy, therefore, assist in understanding these assumptions. Research philosophy is a term that refer to the set of beliefs, assumptions, and principles that underlie the way a researcher approaches a study. The research philosophy encapsulates the nature of the knowledge that one seeks to obtain by undertaking a study. In other words, a philosophy reflects what sort of knowledge and insight one believe and can realistically gain by undertaking a research project.

The philosophical position that was used in this research study is pragmatism. In adopting the pragmatism philosophy on international conflict intervention in the peace and security processes of the Democratic Republic of Congo and particularly in exploring the role of MONUSCO, the focus is on the practical effective way of understanding and possibly solve most existential issues that need resolution. Among the philosophical schools, pragmatism, which claims that the value of an idea or a theory should be assessed by its implications and real-life use, should be mentioned. When assessing geopolitical realities

in determining conflict management in the DRC through the efficiency of MONUSCO, pragmatism dismisses the adaptability of meso-level institutional frameworks in favor of a results-oriented approach. This means measuring the impact that MONUSCO's operations have had in the enhancement of peace and security, as opposed to the measures that used in the testing of theories. The study would thus focus on exploring the feasibility of the strategies that have a proven track record bearing in mind the conditions in the DRC. When it comes to the effectiveness of MONUSCO in contributing to DRC's peace and security processes, it is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of the different strategies and practices at hand. This comprises awareness of the situation in the field, including the physical infrastructure in a country, legal framework, political environment, and the nature of institutions towards subsequent activities. Challenging the conceptual narrative of peace and security as a consequence of international conflict interventions through MONUSCO implies an analysis of the impact of these interventions on the people of DRC and the stability of the wider region. It emphasizes the need for systems that are readily capable of adapting to the needs and contingencies on the ground. Thus, the assessment of the challenges and opportunities in the context of MONUSCO's implementation of its mandate includes a rational-legal approach that strives to search for outcomes within certain conditions or limitations imposed on a specific organization. This involves pinpointing realistic strategies to overcome challenges, like increasing cooperation with local and regional players or better-managing resources. Therefore, the rationale of using philosophy of pragmatism was because of the following reasons: The positive assertion of pragmatism on the actual consequences; flexibility, and integration of interpretations from practice and experience; the application of pragmatism for this research is acceptable since it focuses on

identifying and understanding how conflict intervention by MONUSCO could be effectively exploited within the complexity and dynamism of the context of the DRC.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was limited to investigating the effects of international conflict intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo on peace and security. In terms of periodization, the study covered the period between 2010 to 2023. In July 2010, the United Nations Security Council renamed MONUC to MONUSCO as a reflection of a new phase reached in the DR Congo. To-date (2023), MONUSCO operates in the DR Congo with no clear exit strategy though on gradual drawdown. The study was conducted in Eastern DRC - Ituri, North and South Kivu provinces. The researcher visited MONUSCO headquarters in Goma North Kivu, Bukavu town of South Kivu and Bunia in Ituri province for data collection. The field data collection took 4 months i.e. from December 2023 to March 2024, data analysis and interpretation was between May and July 2024.

1.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter has introduced the problem of the study bringing out the background within which the problem of the study is contextualized, and has highlighted the critical gap and the key variables to be studied with academic, policy, philosophy justifications and scope of the study clearly indicating the need for insightful study in the local context. The next chapter provides a detailed analysis of literature related to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents critical review of literature the core subject matter. The review is intended to generate the foundations for the analytical framework and methodology to be applied in this study. The literatures have been reviewed thematically, and in accordance with the objectives of the study and systematically identifies the likely research gaps to inform the specific objectives of this study. Past studies done on the MONUSCO and any other regional conflict interventions will be reviewed. It examines past peace support operations, the mission scenarios, humanitarian and military interventions, and the principle of responsibility to protect. It also assesses and evaluates previous studies alongside each specific objectives and explores on the challenges and opportunities faced by MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes. It then summarizes the theoretical framework. Finally, the chapter summary has been made.

2.1 Institutional frameworks for conflict intervention by international and regional organizations

A number of international organizations and regional blocs have involved themselves in conflict management either within one of their members or between their members or such cases beyond their jurisdiction. The European Union (Amirkhanov, 2021; Barrinha, 2008), the African Union (Ogbu, 2017; (Ngwube, 2013), the Organization of American States (Soto, 2016) are good examples. Ogbu (2017) notes that the African Union has been instrumental in identification, resolution and management of intrastate and cross-national conflicts in Africa and has provided framework for cooperation among partners promoting integration between governments and multi-track actors in the continent. Conflict

intervention by continental/regional, and sub-regional blocs requires that the entities have institutional frameworks (Haba, 2019). Adhere (2012) asserts that in the DRC's most vulnerable hotspots, extremely few NGOs have carried out bottom-up peacebuilding. No efforts have been made to address land disputes, to rebuild grassroots institutions aimed at peacefully resolving conflicts, or to foster reconciliation within fractured villages or communities, despite the fact that both international and Congolese actors possessed the means to undertake such initiatives or to provide support with the resources available. The United Nations Missions in Congo (MONUC) experienced numerous failures in protection, attributable in part to the intricate nature of its mandate, in part to insufficient resources, and in part to the ineffective utilization of those resources. The mission faced notable challenges in reconciling the political dimensions with the imperative of civilian protection inherent in its mandate, occasionally demonstrating a deficiency in comprehending the interplay between these two facets (Holt, Taylor, & Kelly, 2009). Ngwube (2013) notes that the African Union (AU), with its historical roots in the Organization of African Unity (OAU), has dedicated efforts to the establishment of a peace and security council (PSC). This council serves as its decision-making body, holding the exclusive authority to deploy, manage, and conclude AU-led peace operations. This framework signifies a notable decrease, if not a cessation, of the ongoing prevalence of armed conflicts in Africa, highlighting that no singular internal factor has played a more significant role in the socio-economic decline of the continent and the resultant suffering of the civilian populace than the affliction of conflicts both within and among states (African Union, 2002; Abebe, 2010). Building strong democratic institutions, respecting human rights, and adhering to the rule of law are all outcomes of this framework. Post-conflict

recovery programs have also been successful in promoting collective security, lasting peace and stability, and conflict prevention (Ngwube, 2013).

The Constitutive Act of the AU (2001) establishes, in contrast to the 1963 OAU Charter, a framework for a unified defense policy and regional intervention aimed at addressing war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. The establishment of the African Peace and Security Council (PSC) confers upon it the authority to authorize missions undertaken by the African Union. The African Union aims, in its sixth objective, “To promote peace, security and stability on the continent” (African Union, 2023). The Policy Framework for the establishment of the ASF was formally adopted in May 2003. In this regard, the African Union has mobilized troops under the auspices of the African Standby Force in areas afflicted by conflict, including Burundi in 2003 and Sudan during the Darfur Conflict (African Union, 2023; Ngwube, 2013).

Abebe (2010) states that the African Standby Force was established through this protocol in accordance with Chapter III of the UN Charter. The protocol also envisions the creation of a military staff committee, a peace fund, an early warning system, and a "panel of the wise" (Art. 2(2)). According to Article 7 (j) of the Constitution, one of the PSC's duties is to encourage regional mechanisms to work together in harmony. Additionally, it grants the ASF the authority to collaborate with regional groups (Article 13(4)). But as Abebe points out, the protocol "does not clearly define these regional mechanisms" (2010).

According to Ngwube (2013), the PSC is the basis for the AU structures and mechanisms for peace and security. However, it failed to establish the structure for achieving this objective besides facing difficulty in the area of decision making due to the unclear rules of procedure within the AU system resulting in delayed action and inaction. This is arising

from the fact that the Rules of procedures of the Assembly does not stipulate on how the PSC should make decisions on intervention under Article 4 (j) and 4(h).

Abebe (2010) notes that institutions lack precise definitions and that no regional grouping includes all prospective members of the Eastern African Standby Force (EASF). Moreover, in the Eastern Africa region, the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and IGAD all assert the capability to fulfill the same function. The irony lies in the fact that while merely three nations are members of the EAC, a multitude of others, including members of the South African Development Community (SADC), are part of COMESA. Nevertheless, Abebe (2010) asserts that "the AU's security 'road map' does not provide any insight into the matter." These factors elucidate its difficulties in conflict intervention in several instances, such as the Darfur crisis, which compelled it to transfer responsibility to the United Nations, and its lackluster performance in AMISOM, among others (Ngwube, 2013).

The Eastern African Standby Force (EASF) has been prominent in conflict intervention initiatives in eastern Africa. The policy organs comprise the Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff, the Council of Ministers, and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. These policy bodies will be distinct from the policy bodies of IGAD. It is concerning that these data are over five years old; hence, a contemporary study is necessary. The rationale behind the East Africa Community's (EAC) decision to deploy a transient regional force to the DRC, despite evident contradictions, warrants investigation and comprehension, particularly concerning the institutional frameworks that underpin its conflict intervention decisions in the DRC. It is of interest to evaluate its institutional frameworks that insured its decision and actions, given that right from the African Union,

the institutional frameworks for regional bodies in Africa's conflict intervention have been faulted, and, conflicts continue to riddle the continent.

2.2 Capabilities of economic blocs in conflict management

Under the AU, Ngwube (2013) observes, the AU experiences inadequate capacity to implement the peace and security agenda; its PSC Directorate was yet developing this ineffective and inefficient; and lacked the capacity to organize the financing or deployment of peace keepers in the field and had no institutional expertise and appropriate civilian support system.It is noted that member countries seconding officers to EASF, bear the burden of paying the salaries of their officers. The EASF only covers allowances (Abebe, 2010; Ngwube, 2013). This perhaps has been one of the factors impairing the capabilities of the regional force in conflict intervention since some countries may be unable to properly meet their financial obligations.

In terms of military expertise and capabilities, it is noted that under EASF, Uganda has dedicated a center of excellence for the training of troops (Ngwube, 2013; Abebe, 2010). This is clearer than under the African Union which is undefined and also constrained by the fact that it has to be seeking authorizations from the UN and that it is a little detached from its members. However, it is observed that African militaries are not well trained otherwise they could not be frustrated by rebels and insurgents. How well trained are African military remains unanswered, given that whenever conflicts break in Africa, "…within a few weeks of any major insurgency in the continent, the rebels are close to the capital and government forces found scampering for safety in different directions", notes Ngwube (2013).

The African continent has limited capacity to deal with humanitarian crisis once conflict has erupted in certain regions. For instance, a study by African Health Organization, (2020) observes that 13.1 million Congolese, out of an estimated total population of 94 million individuals, will require humanitarian assistance and protection as a result of the heightened violence in hotspots across the country and the already precarious food security situation. The capacities of African regional bodies in conflict prevention and providing humanitarian assistance seem to be limited. What therefore begs answers is, what measures did the East African Community put in place to guarantee the success of its conflict intervention in the DRC?

2.3 Dynamics of conflict intervention by international and regional blocs

On July 1, 2010, the UN Security Council (UNSC) gave the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) a new mandate. It said that MONUSCO could use any means necessary to carry out its duties, which included protecting civilians, humanitarian workers, and human rights activists who were in immediate danger of being hurt and helping the DRC government with its efforts to stabilize the country and keep the peace. However, with the current spike of violence in the DRC it demonstrates unfulfilled deep rooted grievances of people that haven't been addressed through MONUSCO structures.

According to Cook and Lounsbery (2020), exploring conflict dynamics entail a detailed study of the evolving nature of violence especially for intrastate conflicts. This should focus governments capability and capacity vis-à-vis the rebel groups involved in the conflict as for the case in the DRC. It also requires focusing on the relationships of various categories of rebel groups either local or foreign, their interests and end goals. National

interests of states and interests of the states are matters that have characterized conflict intervention by international and regionals blocs. Operationalized, conflict dynamics entail power imbalances both within the conflict zones and between the powers constituting the international and regional forces intervening in a conflict, identity issues, emotions, and communication breakdowns (Kumar, 2023).

Unlike studies which have focused on the conflict dynamics, this study focused on the dynamics of conflict intervention due to the prevailing circumstances with respect to the MONUSCO intervention in the DRC, and with a view to understanding the presumed situation and the empirical situation of conflict and the changing approaches towards a successful conflict intervention (Cook and Lounsbery, 2020). The regional rivalry among sub-Saharan countries and the lack of a dominant economic and military force impede successful conflict involvement in Africa. For instance, the trust deficit between the DRC and some of its neighbours is at the heart of the current crisis. Some observers note that the trigger for escalating tensions between Rwanda and the DRC was the latter's rapprochement with Uganda and Burundi to fight their respective rebel enemies inside the DRC (Handy, 2023). Moreover, the DRC has been and continues to be used as a staging ground by rebel movements opposed to the regimes in Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and Sudan (Prunier, 2004). These neighbouring countries therefore have a direct interest in ending the conflicts in the DRC for their own internal stability. Experience indicates that the dominant positions of South Africa and Nigeria were crucial for the successful implementation of sub-regional efforts aimed at maintaining peace and security in SADC and ECOWAS. IGASOM's exclusion of what it termed front-line states, including Kenya

and Ethiopia in Somalia, was a decision rooted in apprehension and distrust (Ngwube, 2013; Abebe, 2010).

2.4 Challenges and opportunities faced by peace Peacekeeping Missions during conflict interventions

The United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) stands as one of the largest and most complex peacekeeping operations globally. Tasked with fostering stability and security in a nation marred by decades of conflict, MONUSCO faces a myriad of challenges in fulfilling its mandate. Since its inception in 1999, MONUSCO has grappled with the daunting task of navigating the intricate socio-political landscape of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to mitigate conflict, protect civilians, and support the country's transition to peace and stability. However, the mission encounters a plethora of challenges and constraints that impede its effectiveness and hinder progress towards sustainable peace. The challenges resonate with those experienced by other similar peacekeeping missions around the world and on different contexts. For instance, in the case of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), armed groups and inter-communal violence pose significant challenges to peace and stability (Reeves, 2016).

Johnson (2016), provides insights into the complexities of the South Sudan conflict and the challenges faced by UNMISS in addressing security threats. According to Johnson (2016), South Sudan require to be saved not only from tribal infighting but also from failing. While structural factors are important, leadership remain the most critical to peace and security. One of the most significant challenges for MONUSCO is the persistent security threats in the DRC. The presence of numerous armed groups, both domestic and foreign,

contributes to a volatile security environment. These groups engage in activities such as attacks on civilians, peacekeepers, and humanitarian workers, as well as illegal exploitation of natural resources. Ensuring the safety and security of MONUSCO personnel and civilian populations while conducting peacekeeping operations in such an environment is a constant challenge.

Weak governance structures and institutional capacity in the DRC undermine the government's ability to exert control over its territory and provide basic services to its citizens. This lack of state authority hampers MONUSCO's efforts to support state-building initiatives, security sector reform, and the rule of law. Moreover, political instability and corruption further exacerbate these challenges. Akin to the challenges faced by MONUSCO in the DRC, it is also observed that other conflict-affected regions like in Haiti have fragile governance structures and lack institutional capacity. According to Lanteigne (2013), in Haiti, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) encountered challenges related to weak governance structures, political instability, corruption and their implications for peacebuilding efforts.

Humanitarian crises occur in various parts of the world, presenting significant challenges to peacekeeping missions and humanitarian organizations. Two notable examples are the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and Syria, where ongoing conflict and violence have led to death, destruction of infrastructure, immense suffering and displacement of civilians. In Syria, the protracted civil war, which began in 2011, has resulted in widespread devastation, displacement, and loss of life. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), more than 13 million people in Syria are in need of humanitarian assistance, including food, shelter, and medical care (OCHA,

2021). The conflict has caused significant damage to infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and water supply systems, exacerbating the humanitarian situation (OCHA, 2021). In Somalia, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) faces challenges in delivering humanitarian assistance and protecting civilians amidst ongoing conflict and displacement (Bradbury, 2011).

The ramifications and implications of armed conflicts and humanitarian disasters in Africa present a profound opportunity for analysis, inviting a deeper exploration into the underlying reasons for the continent's enduring and dramatic history of violence and crisis. It is enlightening to observe that numerous strategic analyses regarding the fundamental origins of conflicts in Africa highlight the significant concentration and/or abundance of unique natural and human resources distributed throughout the continent. Secondly, the continent's challenges in identifying and managing the proliferation of subversive and illegitimate armed enterprises are notable. Thirdly, there exists a somewhat systematic and relentless cycle of production, trade, and recycling of illicit activities related to viral diseases within Africa. Lastly, there is a persistent struggle to transcend ethnic nationalism, narrow-mindedness, and the influence of externally driven yet dubious interests concerning Africa's natural resources. The pursuit of foreign interests manifests through a complex array of strategies, encompassing strategic deceptions, colonial endeavours, collaborations, and the sponsorship of insurgencies and acts of terrorism throughout the region. Additionally, it involves political subversions, inequitable trade practices concerning Africa's predominantly non-renewable resources, manipulations within capital markets, and the imposition of perilous, repressive, and unstable international fiscal regimes and austerity measures across the continent. At its core, this approach often entails a form of

psycho-ideological warfare aimed at undermining the integrity of African culture and its peoples, all under the pretense of modernity.

This paper presents a reasoned analysis of these factors, among other significant clusters of issues facing Africa, as the primary catalysts for armed conflict on the continent. African leaders and citizens must undertake a deliberate and significant transition towards a knowledge-based economy, one that will reveal the invaluable and globally sought-after potential of these essential resources that are currently in high demand worldwide. The conscious reawakening to an African renaissance signals a shift towards innovative thinking and transformative approaches that aim to reshape African identity free from the burdens of disease, violence, ignorance, ethnic conflicts, ineffective political structures, and the resource curse, all while respecting the humanity of others and resisting exploitative tendencies. In what ways have critics analyzed the incidence of armed conflict in Africa as a significant factor in the discourse surrounding the African renaissance? Shekhawat (2009:4) notes that the expenses associated with armed conflicts in Africa are substantial. It encompasses, in addition to widespread mortality and the obliteration of livelihoods, extensive displacements of individuals, particularly women and children, as well as the immeasurable psychological trauma experienced by both combatants and survivors. Additional humanitarian costs encompass the adverse effects on women and other marginalized groups, as well as a rise in post-traumatic stress disorder and the subsequent psychiatric issues faced by the victims.

The economic ramifications of armed conflict extend beyond any singular sector of industry or investment opportunities. In addition to inflicting significant harm on

infrastructural investments, armed conflict has both direct and indirect repercussions on the livelihood capital of local populations, deterring private investments and ultimately leading to economic stagnation over time. Shekhawat skillfully highlighted the nuanced connection between armed conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as in many African nations, and the phenomenon of inadequate governance or the failure to deliver essential political goods to the underserved population (Shekhawat, 2009). Conversely, Collier characterizes conflict as one of four ‘traps’ that perpetuates the poverty of the world’s most disadvantaged nations, thereby relegating the ‘bottom billion’ individuals to a life of deprivation within stagnant or declining economies.

He posits that Africa is more distant from achieving the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) than any other region globally, primarily due to the impact of armed conflicts. Countries in Africa experiencing conflict tend to exhibit higher rates of infant mortality, diminished life expectancy, increased levels of undernourishment, greater adult illiteracy, and pervasive poverty and disease. Consequently, the Human Development Index (HDI) declines, resulting in a shift from medium to low development status for these nations, while per capita GDP experiences a significant reduction of 63 percent (Collier, 2007:5). Schauer articulates concern regarding the ramifications of armed conflict on civilian populations, noting that in 2004, political scientists identified over 42 wars and armed conflicts globally, the majority of which devastated developing nations. She asserts that those analyzing these 'New wars' or 'complex political emergencies' have observed that the primary focus of the involved parties is the civilian populace, with systematic atrocities, massacres, and bombings frequently employed as calculated strategies in contemporary warfare. The ratio of civilian casualties in armed conflicts has escalated

significantly, currently estimated to exceed 90 percent. Over the past decade, a significant proportion of these victims comprises children and women (Schauer, 2009). In her commentary on the international arms proliferation and the ramifications of conflicts in Africa, Johnson Sirleaf posits that the financial burden borne by Africa due to armed conflict and the spread of small arms could adequately fund initiatives to address the HIV and AIDS crisis, as well as provide essential resources for education, clean water, and the prevention and treatment of tuberculosis and malaria. She expressed deep concern that countless hospitals, schools, and roads could have been established, thereby benefiting millions; she noted that the people of Africa endure not only the tangible atrocities of violence but also the detrimental impact of armed conflict on their endeavours to overcome poverty (Sirleaf, 2007).

Messele contends that armed conflict has disrupted Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) and ensnared the region in a cycle of poverty, child trafficking, and inadequate socio-economic rights for women and children, who endure a lack of access to education and effective protection. He argues that the ten most impoverished nations globally are located in the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) region, where the GDP amounted to US$74 billion, representing 28% of China's GDP and 69% of Brazil's GDP. He argues that armed conflict in Africa has initiated a multitude of challenges, such as diminished life expectancy, elevated mortality rates, widespread youth illiteracy, and significant child malnutrition, positioning these nations among those with a low human development index (HDI). He asserts that the current economic landscape in Africa is not merely intolerable but significantly perilous, as the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa remain the residence of the globe's most impoverished populations (Messele, 2002). Meanwhile, Andres concurs with Collier’s examination of

‘development in reverse,’ noting that a typical civil war nearly doubles a nation’s military expenditure. He suggests that the ramifications of this rise in military expenditure for the advancement and safety of some of the most impoverished nations globally are best contemplated. Recognizing the fundamentally detrimental nature of war and its profound impact on society, he argues that it is imperative for the international community to engage proactively in averting circumstances that could lead to the resurgence of armed conflict (Andres, 2011). Erturk, in her examination of the repercussions of armed conflict on women in eastern Congo, depicted a dire scenario of violence against women in North and South Kivu as ‘unimaginable brutality’. He maintains that all military factions engaged in the conflict are culpable of sexual offenses, including the enslavement of women and other inhumane actions perpetrated by their captors. He asserts that “Most victims, as ever, are women and girls, some no more than toddlers, though men and boys have occasionally been targeted as well.” Reports from local aid workers and the United Nations have revealed harrowing instances of gang rapes, resulting in severe physical and psychological trauma for the victims. These atrocities were often perpetrated in the presence of families or entire communities, with male relatives coerced at gunpoint to assault their own daughters, mothers, or sisters. Furthermore, women subjected to sexual slavery endured unimaginable degradation, being compelled to consume excrement or the remains of slain relatives. Some female victims have been tragically killed by bullets discharged from a firearm inserted into their vagina” (Erturk, cited in Shekhawat, 2009).

Egeland asserts that there are few locations on the planet where the disparity between humanitarian requirements and the resources at hand is as significant or as deadly as in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is currently

navigating the aftermath of a prolonged period characterized by political turmoil and violent strife, which nearly precipitated an economic collapse, resulting in a significant decline in annual per capita income to $120 in 2005, a stark decrease from $380 in 1985. This phenomenon is termed ‘development in reverse’ (Egeland, cited in Shekhawat, 2009). Political interference in peacekeeping missions represents a prevalent challenge. MONUSCO faces obstacles stemming from political interference and manipulation by a range of actors, such as government officials, armed groups, and external stakeholders. These actors might endeavour to hinder or subvert the mission's mandate for their own purposes, thereby compromising MONUSCO's neutrality, efficacy, and capacity to fulfill its mandate. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) faced challenges stemming from political interference and manipulation by local elites (Hehir, 2007).

Resource constraints often hinder the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions worldwide. Despite international support, MONUSCO operates with limited resources, including personnel, equipment, and funding. The vastness of the DRC's territory and the complexity of the conflict require significant logistical and operational capabilities. Resource constraints hinder MONUSCO's ability to deploy personnel to remote and inaccessible areas, procure necessary equipment, and sustain long-term operations. In Mali, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) face challenges related to limited resources, including personnel, equipment, and funding (Gowlland-Debbas, 2015). The United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines manual (2008) outlines the impact of resource constraints on peacekeeping missions and provides guidance on addressing these challenges (United Nations, 2008).

Ensuring effective coordination and integration among the various components of MONUSCO, including military, police, civilian, and humanitarian actors, presents a significant challenge. Achieving coherence and synergy among these different elements is essential for maximizing the mission's impact and effectiveness in addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting sustainable peace and security in the DRC.

However, amidst these challenges, there are also opportunities that MONUSCO can leverage to enhance its effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC. MONUSCO has the opportunity to engage with local communities and empower them to take ownership of peace and security processes. By involving communities in decision-making and conflict resolution, MONUSCO can build trust and legitimacy (Dobbins, 2018). This will promote inclusive peacebuilding processes, empower marginalized groups, and address the root causes of conflict. The United Nations in Haiti (MINUSTAH) leveraged opportunities to collaborate with local stakeholders, including civil society organizations and grassroots movements, to promote democratic governance, human rights, and socioeconomic development (Meunier, 2017).

MONUSCO can invest in early warning systems and conflict prevention mechanisms to identify and address potential sources of conflict before they escalate. By working proactively to prevent violence, MONUSCO can contribute to long-term stability (Ghani & Lockhart, 2018). In information gathering and analysis, MONUSCO has the potential to collect and analyze information from various sources, including local communities, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, to identify emerging threats and conflict dynamics. This information serve as the basis for early warning alerts and to inform on MONUSCO's strategic planning and decision-making processes.

One way MONUSCO can promote gender mainstreaming is by incorporating gender considerations into its policies, programs, and activities. This includes conducting gender analyses to understand the specific needs, priorities, and experiences of women and men in conflict-affected communities (Bastos, 2020). By integrating gender considerations into its planning and implementation processes, MONUSCO can ensure that its interventions are responsive to the diverse needs of women, men, girls, and boys. Additionally, MONUSCO can actively support women's participation and leadership in peace and security processes by creating opportunities for women to engage in decision-making forums, such as peace negotiations, conflict resolution mechanisms, and community dialogues. This can involve providing training and capacity-building support to women leaders and civil society organizations, as well as advocating for the inclusion of women in formal peace processes (Bastos, 2020). For example, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) established gender focal points and conducted training workshops to raise awareness about gender issues and promote women's participation in decision-making (UN Women, 2018). Similarly, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) supported women's peace dialogues and provided funding for women-led initiatives aimed at promoting reconciliation and social cohesion (UN Women, 2017).

By drawing on lessons learned from these experiences, MONUSCO can enhance its efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the DRC. This includes adopting a gender-responsive approach to peacekeeping operations, supporting women's leadership and participation, and fostering partnerships with local women's organizations and grassroots movements (Bastos, 2020). Through these initiatives, MONUSCO can contribute to more inclusive and sustainable peace and security outcomes in the DRC.

International support and regional cooperation play crucial roles in promoting opportunities for MONUSCO to fulfil its mandate on peace and security processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). By collaborating with international partners and regional organizations, MONUSCO can enhance its effectiveness and address the root causes of conflict more comprehensively (Luckham & Kirk, 2018).

One-way international support can promote opportunities for MONUSCO is through financial and logistical assistance. International donors and organizations can provide funding and resources to strengthen MONUSCO's capacity to implement its mandate, including supporting peacebuilding activities, providing training and equipment to security forces, and delivering humanitarian assistance to affected populations (Luckham & Kirk, 2018).Additionally, international support can facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity building initiatives, enabling MONUSCO to benefit from the expertise and experience of other peacekeeping missions and international organizations. This can involve organizing workshops, conferences, and training programs on topics such as conflict resolution, human rights protection, and gender mainstreaming (Luckham & Kirk, 2018).

Regional cooperation also plays a critical role in promoting opportunities for MONUSCO. The DRC's neighbours and regional organizations such as the African Union can provide political support and diplomatic engagement to facilitate peace negotiations and mediation efforts. By working together with regional actors, MONUSCO can leverage their influence and resources to address cross-border security threats and promote stability in the region (Ghani & Lockhart, 2018). Furthermore, regional cooperation can enhance MONUSCO's efforts to address the root causes of conflict, such as the illicit trafficking of natural resources and the proliferation of armed groups. By collaborating with regional partners on

initiatives to promote economic development, strengthen governance, and combat transnational crime, MONUSCO can contribute to long-term peace and stability in the DRC (Ghani & Lockhart, 2018).

Addressing these challenges and opportunities requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach, including strengthening state institutions, enhancing security sector, good governance, promoting political dialogue and reconciliation, addressing humanitarian needs, and fostering greater regional and international cooperation. By enhancing MONUSCO's operational capacity, improving coordination mechanisms, and securing adequate resources are crucial for overcoming the current challenges. Additionally, leveraging available opportunities like international support and regional cooperation MONUSCO can contribute to sustainable peace and security in the DRC.

2.5 Research gap

Despite the extensive body of literature on various aspects of conflict intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a significant research gap exists in the comprehensive examination of the effects of MONUSCO’s conflict intervention on peace and security processes in the DRC. While numerous scholars have explored different facets of the DRC conflict and intervention efforts, there has been a notable absence of studies that holistically address the overarching question of how these interventions impact the broader peace and security landscape. This research gap is underscored by the following examples of past studies: As per Adhere, (2012), the analysis of peace agreements in the DRC, primarily focuses on the content and negotiation processes of these agreements. While providing valuable insights into the diplomatic aspects of intervention, the study falls short in assessing the subsequent impact on peace and security dynamics in the

country. Holt *et al* (2009), in their research on UN peacekeeping missions, examine troop deployments and the role of protection of civilians (POC) in the DRC as key aspect during operations. However, the study does not extensively explore how the UN intervention has influenced the long-term stability and security situation in the DRC and the region. A well anchored mandate which spells out both medium and long term effects is of interest before any international force is launched for conflict intervention initiatives. Handy (2023), in his research study on the role of neighboring states in the DRC conflict, investigates their interests and motivations.

While shedding light on regional dynamics, the study lacks a comprehensive assessment of how these regional actors' actions have shaped the overall peace and security in the DRC and its environment. According to the study by Africa Health Organization (2020), review of humanitarian aid and conflict in the DRC, emphasizes on the provision of aid and immediate impacts on the population. The study does not delve into the broader security implications of humanitarian interventions and the role in the DRC's peace process. Prunier (2004), in his examination on of some the DRC rebel groups and their interactions with neighboring member states, offers insights into the complexities of the conflict in DRC and within the region. However, the study does not thoroughly explore how external interventions have influenced the overall trajectory of peace and security in the DRC. The research gap identified here points to the need for a more comprehensive analysis that connects the dots between conflict intervention efforts and their long-term effects on the peace and security landscape in the DRC. A holistic approach that considers the multi-dimensional consequences of international conflict interventions, including their type of mandate, impact on governance structures, local communities, and conflict dynamics, is

essential to fill this void in the literature and provide a more complete understanding of the subject matter.

2.5.1. Lack of analysis on Institutional Framework Adaptability to Changing Conflict Dynamics

In light of objective one, research often overlooks the extent to which MONUSCO's institutional frameworks are adaptable to the evolving nature of conflict in the DRC. The DRC presents a highly fluid conflict environment, with shifting alliances and changing security threats. There is limited knowledge on how MONUSCO's frameworks adapt to these changes or whether they remain rigid and thus less effective (Stearns, 2012). The effectiveness of MONUSCO's institutional frameworks can also be limited by resource allocation and capacity constraints. However, there is a lack of research that critically examines how these limitations impact its operations in the DRC. Most studies focus on mandate and policy, without a deeper analysis of how financial, logistical, and human resources are managed and utilized (Karlsrud, 2015).

2.5.2. Limited Understanding of MONUSCO's Impact on Local Security Dynamics

In light of specific objective two, assessing the capabilities of MONUSCO in enhancing DRC's peace and security processes. There is a gap in research on how MONUSCO's presence and activities impact local-level security dynamics, particularly in regions where conflict is decentralized and characterized by a multiplicity of armed groups. Many studies tend to focus on national or regional-level impacts, neglecting the nuanced effects on local security and community safety (Stearns & Vogel, 2015). Understanding these localized dynamics is critical for evaluating MONUSCO's effectiveness in enhancing peace and security. Research is yet to thoroughly explore the effectiveness of MONUSCO's

community engagement strategies, including community alert networks, dialogue forums, and local mediation efforts. While some studies acknowledge the importance of engaging local communities, there is limited empirical evidence on what specific strategies work best, under what conditions, and why (Autesserre, 2010). This gap is significant given the importance of local legitimacy and buy-in for peacekeeping success.

2.5.3. Limited research on the Long-Term Impact of MONUSCO's Interventions on Local Peace Dynamics

In light of specific objective three, there exists knowledge gap in understanding the long-term impact of MONUSCO's interventions on local peace dynamics. Much of the existing literature focuses on immediate or short-term outcomes, such as the cessation of hostilities or disarmament efforts (Stearns, 2012). However, there is insufficient research on how these interventions affect local governance structures, social cohesion, and community resilience over the long term. There exist gaps concerning the interaction between international peacebuilding efforts by MONUSCO and local peace initiatives. While MONUSCO engages in various peacebuilding activities, there is limited understanding of how these efforts align or conflict with local actors' approaches and initiatives. Studies suggest that peacekeeping missions may undermine or bypass local capacities, but more empirical research is needed to assess how international and local efforts interact and influence each other (Autesserre, 2014).

2.5.4. Underexplored Role of Local Governance and Informal Power Structures in Shaping MONUSCO's Activities

In light of specific objective four, research often overlooks the complex interplay between MONUSCO's operations and local governance structures, including traditional authorities

and informal power networks. There is a gap in understanding how these local actors influence or are influenced by MONUSCO's peace and security processes, and how the mission adapts to these realities on the ground (Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004). This gap is critical because local actors often play a significant role in shaping the mission's effectiveness. There is a gap in understanding how MONUSCO's strategic communication strategies affect its relationship with local communities. While the mission is mandated to engage with local populations to build trust and legitimacy, there is limited empirical research on the effectiveness of these efforts or their impact on community perceptions of the mission (Autesserre, 2014). Understanding this aspect is crucial, as local support is often key to mission success.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Grant and Osanloo, (2014) emphasize that a conceptual framework is adopted for lack of a single approach or theory that could be used to situate the study philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically. Furthermore, Ravitch and Carl (2016) contend that it guides the researcher to fix and contextualize the study through formal theories. This study therefore used a conceptual framework of four theoretical approaches to show relationships among ideas and how they relate to the research study because one theory cannot fully address the phenomena being studied. In this case liberal theory, cooperative security theory approach, power theory and Functional Theory have been used. According to Dune (2005), liberalism argues that through the creation of an international organization aimed at regulating international anarchy, peace can be achieved, and power lies within the organization, so collective security is assured. The

general assumptions of liberalism center on the notion that the rejection of power politics is the only possible outcome of international relations (Elman & Fendius,2003).

Thus, instead of perceiving the international system as inherently anarchic, liberalism assumes that there are plenty of opportunities for cooperation. Nevertheless, Mihalka (2005), explains that even states that do not share common values can still cooperate, but only if their ruling elites have confidence in their common future and believe that working together is better than proceeding alone. However, Mihalka (2005), warns that non-democratic countries are limited in their ability to pursue cooperation. The research study thus embraced a conceptual framework of three theoretical approaches with the assumption that nation states with power which lies within them, with the same believe, common future, differing values and interests will endeavour to forge forward for peace and security.

2.6.1 Liberal Peace Theory

The study was underpinned by Immanuel Kant's liberalism peace theory, which was first proposed in the 18th century. The theory explains that the peace of liberalism is inextricably linked to the stability of democracies, which is not well understood from a military standpoint (Burchill, 2005). According to Mark (2016), Kant liberal peace theory provides a foundation for comprehending and establishing long-term peace and security that is based on democratic values. Interdependence encourages mutual political contacts in this situation, which creates favourable conditions for economic development as a result of collaboration between people, communities, and governments.

Democracy, according to this notion, is a function of world peace. In this situation, democratic states foster the rule of law and respect for human rights, resulting in economic progress. This theory is appropriate because it emphasizes the need for long-term peace and security in East Africa Community, which is supported by democratic ideals, resulting in a system where conflicts are minimized and global peace and security are attained (Mark, 2016).

This idea helped determine whether DRC's enormous security challenges are indicative of the stabilization path. It should be noted that the region has adopted East Africa Community (EAC) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) as architectures to peace and security. There are strong interdependences between economic progress and political ideologies, according to liberalism's notion.

Respondent political ideologues encourage economic development in this setting, while economic resources define political ideology. Peace is built and sustained as a result of such interdependences, necessitating research into the extent to which political and democratic institutions are firmly linked to conflict, limiting East Africa Community's economic progress (In Search of Democratic Peace: Problems and Promise, 1997).

However, the general weakness with liberal theory is the lack of unified understanding of liberalism and democracy. Not all member state EAC countries have the same democratic values and interests. Thus, there is varying interdependence on mutual political contacts which in this case creates unfavorable conditions for economic development within the region. What democratic peace theory fails to take into account is human perception. That a common threat has to be eliminated even if it means going to war to fight the rebels as in

the case of DRC. Hence, with liberal democratic gaps, cooperative security for all member states is justifiable and in this sense it implies collective measures for dealing with threats to peace.

2.6.2 Cooperative Security Theory

According to Mihalka (2005), the analysis of Cooperative Security deepens its theoretical underpinnings by tracing the history of Cooperative Security organizations, and arguing that they date from the early 19th century and extending the concept beyond the Northern Hemisphere to include the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Organization for Security and Co–operation in Europe (OSCE). Different studies have found out that even states that do not share common values can still cooperate, but only if their ruling elites have confidence in their common future and believe that working together is better than proceeding alone. However, non-democratic countries are limited in their ability to pursue cooperation.

They may succeed in averting war with each other as in the case of ASEAN - but they are unlikely to develop a common position on regional threats to stability. Thus Mihalka (2005), further argues that the future success of Cooperative Security depends not only on spreading liberal democracy, but also on intensifying economic ties with the non-democratic countries and fostering their sense of a "security community/collective security" that serves the interests of all its members. Accordingly, even among states that lack common values, Cooperative Security is possible.

The case for East Africa Community and the analysis of Cooperative Security are very similar where the EAC nation states have differing common values and interests, though

with common future and believe in their synergy for collective security than being alone. The recent accession to the EAC treaty by DRC as a member of EAC exemplifies expansion of the trading block with other regional countries expected to gain economically (The DRC Joins the East Africa Community Bloc, 2022). With EAC bloc integration, it is expected it will foster a sense of having a "secure community" that serves the interests of all the East Africa Community countries.

Collective security within the East African Community member states means a stable region where people can invest on goods and services with confidence. This in turn resulted to growth in development, with early warning systems that can monitor threats and report for a proactive action. The eastern DRC region, has seen decades of conflict sparked by the presence of local and foreign rebel groups like March 23 (M23) and Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) fighting over control of the mineral resources, which produce gold, diamonds, coltan, tin and other valuable elements. Sustainable peace in the DRC cannot be achieved without commitment from DRC's neighbours, and the fact that eastern Congo's security problems are complex is no reason to ignore them as they affect the whole region, thus a need for cooperative security arrangement (East Africa Community Regional Force, 2022).

The major limitation with cooperative theory in respect to the DRC is the assumption that all regional member states of EAC have the same objective for the concept of "collectivity". This is an idealistic concept since it ignores the fact that all nations are not active in international relations. Nor can all the nations be expected to join a collective security action. The case for Rwanda in the DRC conflict is an illustration for an EAC member state with differing interests. The DRC conflict has been witnessed by

intervention from big powers like the UN and other member states not because of selfish motives but because they perceived it as being in their strategic interests in terms of the world geopolitics, economic, security concerns, cultural and humanitarian aspects.

2.6.3 Power Theory

Power is an important ingredient in international politics especially when it comes to a sovereign state's national interest, goals and ambitions (economic, military, cultural, or otherwise), taken to be the aim of government. Realists have argued that whatever states pursue in the international arena, power is always a consideration in mind (Morgenthau 1954). Power being a fundamental concept in conflict studies, it has been able to impact on the management of conflicts and how peace making is processed in international arenas. Realism assumes that states are primarily motivated by self-interest. In the DRC, big powers like the UN and the African Union (AU) have intervened in the conflict not solely out of altruistic motives but because they perceived it as being in their strategic interests. These interests include economic interests (e.g., access to resources), geopolitical interests (e.g., regional stability), and even humanitarian interests (e.g., preventing mass atrocities) that align with their broader self-interests.

Morgenthau (1954) argued that power is a central factor in international relations and that states act primarily to pursue their national interests. This is a theoretical framework used in the study of conflicts that examines how the distribution and exercise of power among various actors, such as governments, rebel groups, international organizations, and neighboring states, impact the origins, development, and outcomes of conflicts. Power theory explores how disparities in political, economic, and military power can contribute to

the escalation or resolution of conflicts and how power struggles can shape the behaviour of parties involved in a conflict.

The conflict intervention in the DRC by the UN can be analyzed through the lens of power theory, particularly in the context of realist and structural realist perspectives. Realism emphasizes the central role of power and self-interest in international relations. The theory suggests that power imbalances among states can be a source of conflict. In the case of the DRC, the conflict is characterized by a complex web of domestic and international factors. The DRC is rich in natural resources, including minerals, which are of significant economic and strategic value. Various regional and international actors, including neighbouring states and multinational corporations, have interests in controlling or exploiting these resources. The UN intervened in the DRC conflict to restore stability and protect civilians. However, the effectiveness of MONUSCO has been influenced by the power dynamics at play. While the UN wields considerable soft power and legitimacy in the international system, it lacks a standing military force of its own.

Accordingly, its ability to project military power depends on contributions from member states. Therefore, realism suggests that power imbalances among states can be a source of conflict. In this case, power imbalances in the DRC exist on multiple levels; for instance, at the domestic level, the DRC's history is marked by weak central authority, armed rebel groups, and regional power struggles. Internationally, various neighboring states and international actors have differing levels of influence and interests in the region. Understanding these power dynamics is crucial to grasping the root causes of the conflict.

Realism introduces the concepts of balancing (states forming alliances to counter a perceived threat) and bandwagoning (states aligning with a powerful actor to benefit from

their strength). In the DRC, regional states and rebel groups sometimes engage in these behaviors, seeking to balance or bandwagon with big powers to advance their interests and security. This underscores the complexity of the conflict in the DRC due to the power struggle by states and non - states actors. By applying realism within the context of the DRC conflict intervention, we gain insights into the motivations, strategies, and behaviors of big powers like the UN and regional member states.

This perspective highlights the complex interplay of power dynamics, self-interest, and international politics that shape the dynamics of conflict intervention and peacekeeping efforts in the DRC.

2.6.4 The Theory of Functionalism

The Theory of Functionalism provides a framework for understanding the role of MONUSCO (the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) by emphasizing the importance of international organizations in maintaining stability, fostering cooperation, and addressing common problems among states. According to functionalism, organizations like the UN emerge because they serve essential functions necessary for the stability and well-being of the international community. Here's how various scholars have used the functionalist perspective to explain MONUSCO's role in the DRC:

Functionalist theory argues that international organizations arise to address common challenges that individual states cannot manage alone. MONUSCO's deployment in the DRC exemplifies this by providing security, humanitarian aid, and support for governance in a country grappling with persistent conflict and instability. According to Bellamy and

Williams (2015), MONUSCO serves a critical function by acting as a stabilizing force in a fragile state environment, thereby preventing the escalation of conflict that could have broader regional implications.

Functionalism suggests that international organizations facilitate cooperation among states to solve transnational problems. In the context of the DRC, MONUSCO plays a crucial role in coordinating international efforts to manage the conflict and its spill over effects on neighbouring countries. As noted by Weiss and Daws (2018), MONUSCO's mandate includes working with regional actors and organizations to address cross-border issues such as armed groups, refugee flows, and illicit trade, reflecting the functionalist idea that international cooperation is essential for peace and stability.

In his key work, *A Working Peace System*, Mitrany (1943) argued that international cooperation should be organized around specific functional areas - such as trade, health, and communication - where states have mutual interests. His idea was that international organizations should be created to handle these technical and non-political matters, fostering cooperation between countries. By incrementally building cooperation in functional areas, Mitrany believed that states would become more integrated and interdependent, reducing the likelihood of conflict.

Ernest Haas expanded on Mitrany's ideas with the development of neo-functionalism, particularly in the context of regional integration, notably the European Union. In his seminal work *The Uniting of Europe*, Haas (1958) introduced the concept of "spill-over," arguing that cooperation in one functional area (e.g., trade) would naturally lead to cooperation in other areas (for example in social policy, defence). This concept of spill-

over meant that integration would deepen over time, often in ways that were not initially anticipated by states. The EAC regional block, where the DRC is a member state aims at deepening cooperation through trade, social policy and defence. MONUSCO's strategies for enhancing DRC's peace and security could be more elaborate if the regional cooperation mechanisms are forthright.

Functionalism also emphasizes the importance of technical expertise and specialized resources that international organizations can bring to complex situations. MONUSCO, through its peacekeepers, civilian staff, and various technical experts, provides critical resources and knowledge to support peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts in the DRC. This is consistent with the view of Barnett and Finnemore (2004), who argue that international organizations like the UN operate as bureaucratic entities that deploy expertise to solve specific problems, such as restoring peace and stability in conflict zones.

Functionalism views international organizations as contributors to the development and strengthening of state institutions to achieve social order and stability. MONUSCO's efforts to support security sector reform, promote the rule of law, and assist in political and electoral processes are aligned with the functionalist goal of enhancing state capacity and governance. According to Paris (2004), peacekeeping missions like MONUSCO help build institutional frameworks and governance structures necessary for a stable political environment, which is a key function they serve in post-conflict societies.

Functionalism posits that international organizations help create and promote norms that reduce conflict and maintain order. MONUSCO's role in promoting international norms, such as human rights, democratic governance, and the rule of law, aligns with the

functionalist perspective that the UN and its missions are instruments for diffusing these norms globally. Barnett and Weiss (2008) argue that peacekeeping missions are essential in embedding international norms and standards within local practices, thereby fostering a predictable and peaceful international environment.

The functionalist theory also suggests that international organizations act as neutral mediators to manage disputes and facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties. MONUSCO's engagement in mediation, dialogue, and peace processes in the DRC demonstrates its role as a neutral actor that fosters negotiation and reduces tensions among conflicting parties. Fortna (2008) notes that peacekeeping missions like MONUSCO are effective because they provide a platform for negotiation and dialogue, which is crucial for conflict resolution in complex, multi-actor environments.

Functionalism also explains the role of MONUSCO in the broader context of the UN's mission to maintain international peace and security. MONUSCO's presence in the DRC is not an isolated effort but part of the UN's global strategy to prevent conflict, mitigate humanitarian crises, and promote stability worldwide. Doyle and Sambanis (2006) argue that peacekeeping missions serve the function of maintaining global peace by addressing local conflicts that have the potential to disrupt international stability, reflecting the functionalist view of global interdependence.

2.6.5 Rationale of theories used

Liberal Peace Theory, Cooperative Security Theory, Power Theory, and Functional Theory therefore, play a central role in the analysis of the international conflict intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in order to understand the processes of the

formation of peace and security. The Liberal Peace Theory identifies democratic governance, commitment to human rights, and political and economic institutions as key pillars towards maintaining peace. In the sphere of the investigated state, namely the DRC, this theory explained how MONUSCO and other international actors advance these liberal values to ensure stability, establish inclusive political cooperation, and support lasting peace. Cooperative Security Theory emphasizes the need for international security cooperation and regional approaches to security risks. As discussed in the analysis of the DRC's regional context, this theory implies that MONUSCO had to work with neighbouring countries and regional actors in order to avoid overlapping conflicts and to respond collectively to threats. The Power Theory is important because it deals with the aspect of power that operates in the process of international relations to explain the efforts of MONUSCO. This theory enables the study to assess the local internal structure and structure of regional powers in relation to international actors in an attempt to understand the character of power distribution over peace and security endeavours in the DRC and how this power can be harnessed or checked to promote conflict transformation.

The Theory of Functionalism explains the role of MONUSCO in the DRC by highlighting the essential functions it performs to maintain peace, stability, and cooperation. Through its activities, MONUSCO addresses common problems, facilitates cooperation among states, provides specialized expertise, enhances governance, promotes international norms, and serves as a neutral mediator - all of which align with the functionalist perspective that international organizations are necessary for managing global interdependence and fostering stability. This theoretical lens helps explain why the UN remains deeply involved

in the DRC and similar conflict settings. Combined, these theories present a holistic framework for studying and enhancing international intervention in conflict in the DRC.

2.6.6 The Conceptual Framework Model

A research conceptual framework model represents facts, the conceptual connection, interconnection between and among variables of the study and constructs around them. This is the research paradigm or philosophy (Okoth, 2022). Research models also enhance high level understanding throughout the study. However, a conceptual model requires deep understanding of the subject which the researcher paid keen attention to resulting in detailed examination and analysis of literature on the subject (Swaen, 2021). Conceptually, the study was guided by three theories: liberal theory, cooperative security approach and power theory which contextualized, exposed and expounded on the dependent variable. The independent variable, the predictor in the words of Flannelly *et al.* (2014) echoed by Okoth (2022) was international conflict intervention in the DR Congo. The dependent variables (response variable) were peace and security. The intervening variables (mediating variables) were; identity, interests and norms of actors. Figure 2.1 illustrates the complementary and interdependence between and among the independent, dependent and intervening variables under study.

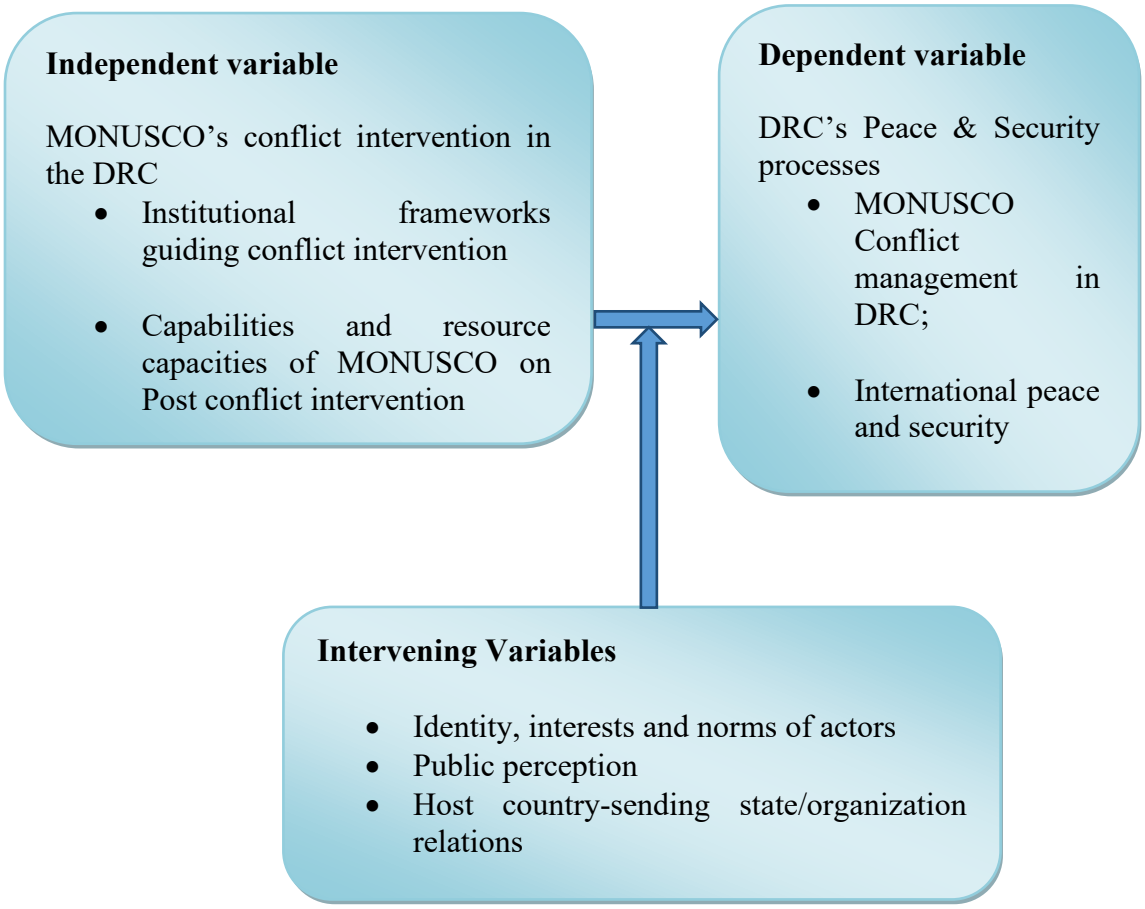

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework Model showing interaction of the variables

Source: Researcher, 2023.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter thematically critically reviews literature on conflict dynamics, based on specific objectives. Coherently and logically, the relevant theories have been discussed and critiqued resulting in the conceptual model which was applied in the understanding of the study findings. The next chapter discusses the research methodology for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains research methodology and highlights the methodological approaches that were employed in this study. It describes the research design, the area of the study, the target population, sampling strategy and sample size, data collection instruments, data analysis procedures, validity and reliability, limitations and delimitations and the ethical considerations observed. It ends with chapter summary.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It entails blueprint for collection, measurement and analysis of data. It has to do with a black and white version of planning and executing a research project from identifying the problem through to reporting and publishing the results (Kothari, 2004; Punch, 2012). It denotes plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Okoth, 2022). It is a roadmap that guides the conduct of research, describing the sequence the researcher would follow so that the attendant evidence addresses the key questions without ambiguity (Anjalo, 2018, p. 69).

The study used both a descriptive survey and an evaluative research design. The data collected was qualitative. Besides, descriptive survey design focuses on ways of formulating the objectives of data collection, data collection instruments, data analysis, and proper reporting of the findings (Anjalo, 2018; Okoth, 2022; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).Descriptive research design tends to identify characteristics, frequencies and categories and also its selection was based on the fact that the research topic is less

extensively tackled. Evaluation research design was used to assess objective three of the study. Also known as program evaluation, evaluation research is a common research design that entails carrying out a structured assessment of the value of resources committed to a project or specific goal. It often adopts social research methods to gather and analyze useful information about organizational processes and products basing on the success of the policy or program put in place and possible areas that need improvement.

3.2 Study Area

The area of study is in the Eastern DR Congo and borders the republics of South Sudan to the North East, Uganda to the East, Rwanda and Burundi to the South East, Tanzania to the South South East and Zambia to the South. It is characterized by plains, valleys and high grounds with thick tropical rain forest and water masses. In this region, changes in elevation bring marked changes in vegetation, which ranges from montane savanna to heavy montane forest. The Rwenzori Mountains, lakes Albert and Edward are prominent physical features shared between DRC and Uganda.. Lake Kivu is shared by Rwanda and DRC while Lake Tanganyika is shared by DRC and Tanzania. The Sabyinyo mountains is shared between DR Congo, Rwanda and Uganda and it is the headquarters of M23 rebels. Virunga National Park is Africa's most biodiverse protected area, home to over one thousand species of mammal, bird, reptile, and amphibian as well as 1/3 of the world's endangered mountain gorillas. Mount Nyiragongo is a volcanic mountain located in Virunga national park and its last eruption was reported in May 2021. The Eastern region of DR Congo is characterized by tropical high rainfall, high humidity and with average daily temperatures of about 25 degrees. The Eastern DR Congo is endowed with fertile volcanic soil and exceptional natural resources, including minerals such as cobalt,

copper, gold, coal, and iron-ore deposits, bauxite, offshore deposits of petroleum, diamonds, lithium, tin, tantalum, tungsten etc. The major human activity is subsistence farming and cattle rearing, however, a large number of people are traders and miners.

As per Punch (2012), qualitative studies, the location of the study is imperative to the design of the research. On the other hand, Okoth (2022) retorted that qualitative researchers happen to collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue and problem under study. The study was conducted in Eastern DRC specifically in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri provinces and at MONUSCO headquarters in Goma, DRC. The study covered border areas between DRC and Rwanda, DRC and Burundi, DRC and Uganda, DRC and South Sudan, and DRC with Tanzania border. The following territories operated by rebel groups were covered; Rutshuru, Bunagana, Beni, Gisenyi, Kiwanja, Masisi, Bunia, Goma, and Uvira. The other key areas of conflict the study focused on are Rumangabo, Sake, Virunga, Rubavu districts in Rwanda. An important area of focus was the Sabyinyo Mountains which is shared by DRC, Uganda and Rwanda. This is the headquarters of (M23) rebels and are believed to live and operate from (Ntanyoma, 2022).

The DRC presents one of the most complex and multifaceted conflict environments in the world, characterized by a combination of intra-state and inter-state conflicts, ethnic tensions, militia activities, and illicit exploitation of natural resources (Stearns, 2012). Unlike conflicts in some other EAC countries, the DRC's situation involves a multiplicity of actors, including numerous armed groups, local militias, state forces, foreign rebel factions, and international peacekeepers. This complexity offers a rich context for examining diverse conflict drivers, the interplay of local and international actors, and the

broader implications for peace and security. The following explain reasons for selecting the DRC:

3.3 Why DRC?

The DRC is a critical player in the East and Central African Region, both geographically and geopolitically. Its instability has significant spill over effects on neighbouring countries in the EAC and beyond, contributing to regional instability and cross-border conflicts. The country's vast natural resources, including minerals like coltan, cobalt, and gold, not only fuel internal conflict but also attract foreign interest, making it a key area of study for understanding the link between natural resources, conflict, and international relations (Nest, 2011). This regional and international relevance is less pronounced in some other EAC countries, making the DRC a more strategically significant case for research study.

The DRC's complex security landscape provides an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of various innovative peace and security interventions. For example, the deployment of UN peacekeeping "Force Intervention Brigades (FIB)" with an offensive mandate is a unique development that is not present in other EAC conflicts (Karlsrud, 2015). Studying such innovations in the DRC context allows for an evaluation of their efficacy, challenges, and potential applicability in other conflict situations globally.

The DRC hosts MONUSCO (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), which is one of the largest and most expensive UN peacekeeping missions in history. The mission provides a unique case study for evaluating the effectiveness of international peacekeeping efforts, exploring challenges such as

mandate implementation, protection of civilians, and coordination with local authorities (Tull, 2019). Unlike other EAC countries, where international interventions may be more limited or different in nature, the DRC offers an unparalleled opportunity to study the dynamics of large-scale international peace operations. Figure 3.1 illustrates conflict zones in eastern DR Congo.

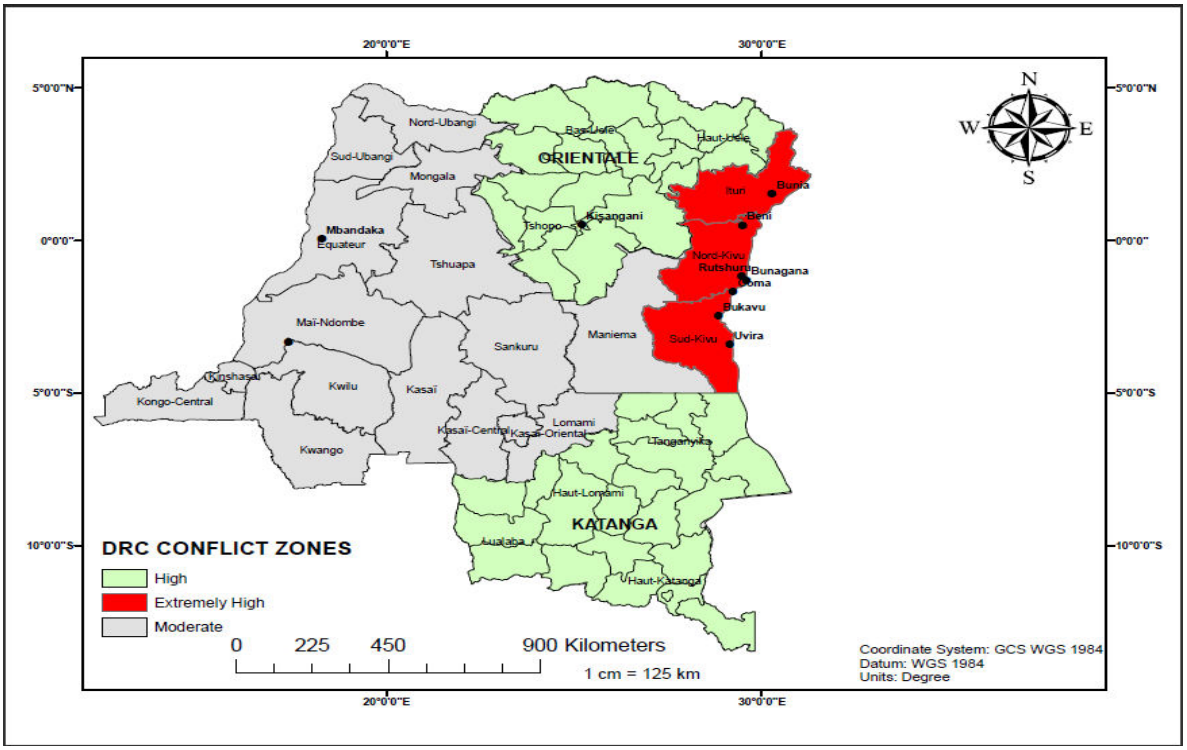

Figure 3.1: Map of DRC showing conflict zones

Source: GIS Expert, 2023.

3.4 Target Population

Target population can be defined as all people or items (unit of analysis) with the characteristics that one wishes to study (Okoth, 2022; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Bhattacherjee, 2012).

The target population is 49,871 and targeted the following unit groups: The unit of analysis in this study is the civilians, totaling 21,105. They include 5052 refugees, 4053 IDPs, and 12,000 local traders. The study reached out to 13,500 MONUSCO peacekeepers, 660 Military Observers (MILOBs) and staff officers, 591 Police personnel, and 1,410 personnel of uniformed police units, totaling 16,161. The study further incorporated 210 Immigration officers, 2500 Political class, and 2000 rebels, all totaling 4710, and 7,895 from major Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

3.5 Sampling strategy and sample size

Micah (2014) asserts that sampling entails the selection of a subset of individuals from within a population to estimate the characteristics of whole population. This study needed smaller sampling error. The sample must therefore be enough but not too big to be uneconomical. The sampling strategy and how the sample size was decided is explained hereinafter.

3.5.1 Sampling Strategy

This study adopted simple random stratified sampling, snowballing and purposive sampling strategies. Probability sampling specifically simple random stratified sampling was used to get civilians, the refugees and IDPs respondents. Purposive sampling strategy was used for the focus group discussions (FGDs) participants and key informant interviewees. The use of probability sampling generally, and in particular simple random stratified sampling was due to its ability to minimize sampling biases and enhance the quality of researcher's inferences. Stratified random sampling represents a methodological approach to sampling, characterized by the segmentation of a population into distinct

subgroups referred to as strata. In stratified random sampling, also known as stratification, the strata are established based on the common attributes or characteristics shared by members, such as experiences related to war or conflict. Stratified random sampling entails the division of the entire population into homogeneous groups referred to as strata, which is the plural form of stratum. Subsequent to this, random samples are meticulously chosen from each distinct stratum. The study comprised 130 respondents, organized into 10 strata, each containing 13 participants.

Snowballing sampling was used to reach out to rebels since the Researcher did not know who the rebels were in particular. Purposive sampling, scholars variously observe, is dependent on the judgment of the researcher in selecting the sample deemed to be the most useful to the study. Its application is of strength where the researcher seeks detailed knowledge about a phenomenon. This is also due to the nature of interpretive paradigm denoting the necessity of seeking respondents' opinions and corroborating them to examine insights and issues of significance to the objectives of the research (Okoth, 2022; Anjalo, 2018, p. 78; Okoth, 2016, pp. 25-26; Ajay & Micah, 2014, p. 3). To that effects, Research Assistant was trained on adopted sample strategies for data collection so as to help the Researcher in data collection in specified time in the scope of study.

3.5.2 Sample Size

Okoth (2022) posits that the sample size needs to be carefully arrived at. This is in order to make it adequate for drawing valid and generalized conclusions. This requires specific information about the problems under investigation in the population under study and, analysis, variation, precision, availability and cost of investigations (Ajay & Micah, 2014,

p. 6). It is also underlined that diminishing returns can quickly set in when samples get over a specific size which needs to be balanced against the researcher's resources (Gill *et al*., 2010). In this respect, sample size is significant because of its effects on statistical power: the chance that a statistical test indicated a significant difference should that be present-the sensitivity of a diagnostic test (Ajay & Micah, 2014, p. 7). According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), they recommend that for populations exceeding 10,000, a sample size of around **384** is typically adequate to ensure reliable and representative findings in research studies.

By using Dillman (2000) formula, the sample size is computed as illustrated and shown in table 3.1.

$$n = [(N)\ (p)\ (1 - p)] / [(N - 1)\ (B/C)^2 + (p)\ (1 - p)]$$

Where: **n** is the sample size to be computed.

N is the finite population of the study population 49, 871

P is the proportion of population expected to choose (Standard deviation = **0.5**).

B is the acceptable sampling error or precision [Margin of error = **+/-5% (0.05**)]

C is the confident level which is also **1.96** that corresponds to **95%** level.

In this case; **N = 49, 871, p = 0.5, B = 0.05, C = 1.96**

Therefore, using the formula, the sample size for this study was

$$n = [(49{,}871)\ (0.5)\ (1\text{-}0.5)] / [(49{,}871\text{-}1)\ (0.05/1.96)^2 + (0.5)\ (1\text{-}0.5)]$$

n = **384.16**

Table 3.1: Study Population and Sample Size

Category	Target Population	Sub - Sample size	Sample size	Sampling strategy/technique
Civilians				**Survey and Questionnaires**
Refugees	5,052	39 - (Svy Qtns)		
IDPs	4,053	31 - (Svy Qtns)	162	
Traders	12,000	92 - (Svy Qtns)		**(Simple stratified sampling)**
Total	**21,105**			
MONUSCO				
Peacekeepers	13,500	104 - (FGD)		**FGD**
Experts (MILOBS)	660	5 - (KII)		**KII**
Police personnel	1410	11 - (FGD)	125	
Police Units	591	5 - (KII)		**(Purposive sampling)**
Total	**16,161**			
NGOs				
UNHCR	3500	27- (Svy Qtns)		**FGD**
WFP	2000	15 - (1x FGD)		**Survey Questionnaires**
ICRC	2395	19 - (Svy Qtns)	61	**(Purposive sampling)**
Total	**7,895**			
Interest Parties				
Political class	2500	19 - (Svy Qtns)		**KII**
Rebel groups	2000	15 - (KII)		**Survey Questionnaires**
Immigration	210	2 - (KII)	36	
Total	**4710**			**(Purposive sampling)**
	49,871	**Svy Qtns = 227** **FGD = 130** **KII = 27**	**384**	

Source: Field Data, 2024

3.5.2.1 Stratified Sampling

The formula: ni = (Ni/N) n is commonly referred to as **proportional allocation** or **proportionate stratified sampling** is a standard formula used in statistics for allocating sample sizes across different strata when using stratified random sampling. In practice, this means you determine the sample size for each subgroup based on its proportion in the overall population.

Where:

- **ni** = Sample size for stratum i
- **Ni** = Population size of stratum i
- **N** = Total population size
- **n** = Total sample size

For instance, in the case of civilian strata the allocation of the sample size is as follows:

ni = (Ni/N) n

ni = (5052/49871) x 384

ni = 162

In order to accommodate respondents for FGDs and key informant interviews, to be purposively selected snowball sampling was used for rebel group respondents, while upon saturation, the sample size for key informant interviews and for survey were combined.

For focus group discussions, the researcher purposively chose four groups of at least 8 each. This enabled reaching 32. These were 16 participants from two natural groups (8

participants each) therefore achieving homogeneous sampling benefits such as the similarity of backgrounds and experiences reducing variation, simplifying analysis, and facilitating group interviewing 8 each as Okoth (2022) explains. The other 16 were from two expert groups, 8 each. This enabled achieving the essence of heterogeneous, criterion and maximum variation samplings to be able to manage the complex issues that would come with analyzing qualitative (Okoth, 2022; Vasilieou *et al.*, 2018).

For key informant interviews (KII), the study purposed to reach not less than 12 but upon attaining saturation is another key factor. In some studies, even as lower as a minimum of between 5 and 10 are considered sufficient with population integrity in recruiting (Okoth, 2022; Vasilieou *et al.*, 2018). For validity and reliability of the data and therefore the study, the researcher opted for the point of saturation and the limit.

3.6 Data Collection

According to Okoth (2022), data collection is a methodical approach to gathering and measuring information on relevant variables, designed to facilitate the answering of specific research questions or the testing of hypotheses, as well as the assessment of outcomes. Data collection aims at capturing quality evidence to yield in rich data analysis and which allows the building of a convincing and credible answer to questions that have been posed (Okoth, 2022; Okoth, 2016, p. 26).

Data on both the variables were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Data was collected through a multiplicity of methods since it entailed exploration of research question that is blended with both qualitative and quantitative data. Primary data was

obtained through field research: holding FGD sessions and having interviews with key informants, and observing the behaviour and expressions of the respondents.

3.6.1 Data collection instruments

This research study employed both qualitative and quantitative methodology approach. The qualitative research methodology is firmly rooted in the interpretative framework of the social sciences. Qualitative forms of investigation often emphasize the significance of individuals' subjective and experiential 'lifeworlds.' This contemplation falls within the realm of phenomenological studies (Babbie and Mouton, 1995). Again, qualitative or inductive research commences in real world settings, that are, in the empirical social world, where data about real phenomenon are gathered, then analyzed, and theoretical constructs are either generated or modified. Research that utilizes a qualitative methodology draws on data collection methods such as participant observation, in depth interviews and/or focus groups (Jennings, 2001). Thus, the common data collection instruments in research include interviews, questionnaires, documentary analysis, focus group discussion and observation.

3.6.1.1 Interview schedules

For Key Informant Interviews, the researcher used a questionnaire to elicit information from individuals courtesy of their offices such as Force Commander MONUSCO or assigned officer, available rebel group commanders or assigned representatives from the following insurgent groups; March 23 (M23), Democratic Forces for Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Mai Mai, National Liberation Forces (FNL), Cooperative for Development of Congo (CODECO), Patriotic Resistant Front in Ituri

(FRPI), and Patriotic and Integrationist Congo Forces (FPIC). The following political class were interviewed; members of parliament and local opposition political heads, women representatives, youth and local leadership representing conflict affected areas in the DRC. The planned interviews included the following; international NGOs like the UNHCR, WFP, ICRC, USAID, Doctors Without Borders, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children among others. Secondary data from books, journals and other relevant sources were obtained. The instruments comprised a blend of restricted and open questions designed to elicit specific responses, encompassing opinions, observations, and insights. To guarantee that all pertinent information was meticulously captured, audio and video recordings were employed extensively throughout the interviews and focus group discussions, in accordance with the recommendations put forth by Okoth (2022).

3.6.1.2 Questionnaires

This was a list of open ended questions with spaces left for the respondents to input information or for the researcher to feed in information from the respondents.

Questionnaires were administered among residents of the areas affected by the conflict, internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps, refugee camps, and MONUSCO troops. In total, the study purposed to reach 384 respondents. The questionnaires were issued to the soldiers through their ranks to be filled out by each individual and collected afterwards. For refugees and IDPs, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires with assistance of interpreters from English to French and to Congolese or local languages. It is notable that observation was used along with plates for detailed and all-encompassing data collection, analysis and presentation.

3.6.1.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus group is a structured discussion with the purpose of stimulating conversation around a specific topic. Focus group discussion is led by a facilitator who poses questions and the participants give their thoughts and opinions. It therefore provides the possibility to cross check one individual's opinion with other opinions gathered. A well organized and facilitated FGD is more than a question and answer session (Abawi, 2014). In a group discussion, members tend to be more open and the dynamics within the group and interaction can enrich the quality and quantity of information needed. Abawi (2014) explains that the ideal size of a Focus Group is normally from 8-10 participants with one Facilitator and note-taker. The preparation for the Focus Group included the following: identifying the purpose of the discussion, identifying the participants, and developing the questions. When it comes to moderating the Focus Group discussion, the facilitator observed the following; opening the topic of discussion, managing the discussion, closing the focus group discussion and follow-up after the focus group. Focus Group Discussion comprised respondents from international NGOs like the UNHCR, WFP and ICRC.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of this research study was moderated by the academic supervisors and security experts in the field as discussed hereinafter.

3.7.1 Validity

Validity is the measure to which results obtained from analysis of data is representative enough of the phenomenon under study. It is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research (Okoth, 2022; Bryman, 2008). A

survey instrument like a questionnaire is usually validated by experts from academics and the security field or industry. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), it has to do with how accurately the data obtained in the study represent the variables in the study. It also refers to the quality of data obtained, which governs the extent to which inferences, propositions, or conclusions are valid (Bilton *et al.*, 2002).

For this study, qualitative validity is a situation in which the researcher checked for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, as contended by Okoth (2022). The researcher adopted the scientific research process that led to the appropriate sample size. The data collection instruments were meticulously validated by the supervisors in order to confirm their affinity and adherence to principles that govern scientific research. In the application of the study by Eeuwijk and Angehrn (2017), the use of methodological triangulation ensured the validity of this study.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which study research results are stable and consistent to the extent they stand the test of time; the probability of replicating results using a similar methodology (Okoth, 2022; Petty *et al.*, 2009). For primary data, the tools must produce consistent results, Okoth (2022) notes that the researcher should present the tools to the supervisors for review and modification and to the panel where the proposal is presented. The researcher followed this process to the letter. Qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects. A reliability test for the key informant interview schedule, the focus group discussion guide, and the survey questionnaire were done. The tools were pre-tested using a few randomly selected respondents per category. A standardized interview, discussion guide and set of

questionnaires were developed for KII, FGD and Survey Questionnaires to ensure that the same set of questions were asked across different interviews, same topics were covered across different groups and same survey questionnaires were administered across different groups. This helped to maintain consistency in data collection. During the Test-Retest Reliability, the researcher administered the same questionnaires to the same group of respondents at two different points in time 7 days after the first pre-field data collection. The study also used multiple data sources and methods (combining KIIs, FGDs, and surveys) to cross-check findings. Consistency across different data collection methods added to the reliability of the overall research study, meant that the instruments used had a good test-retest reliability.

For secondary data, the reliability was tested by finding out such things about the said data: (a) Who collected the data? (b) What were the sources of data? (c) Were they collected by using proper methods (d) At what time were they collected? (e) Was there any bias of the compiler? (f) What level of accuracy was desired? (g) Was it achieved? Currency of data and authenticity of the source in terms of having been published in revered and refereed journals, government and quasi-government sources, theses from universities repositories, being prioritized. A pilot study was not incorporated in the research on opportunities for enhancing MONUSCO's conflict intervention for the promotion of DRC peace and security processes because of study characteristics. Issues studied pertain to high risk and include complex global endeavours, persistent conflict processes, and diverse institutional environments. These elements are already researched and described in numerous academic and policy-related sources, so the exploratory character of a pilot study can be considered less essential. As evident from the literature search and direct experience with the existing

processes, employing a pilot study would not add much value to this investigation because key information and data sources are already widely available, established, and accessible.

3.8 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Through a process of reflective qualitative analysis, the researcher systematically organized the raw data, entered and coded it, and employed thematic analysis to extract meaning from the qualitative data derived from transcripts of focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The data collected from the questionnaires were systematically entered into and analyzed utilizing SPSS version 27. The researcher analyzed the data and derived conclusions. The subsequent phase of analysis involved a meticulous line-by-line scrutiny of all data sources. This entailed a methodical examination of raw data to establish categories.

Categories were consolidated to elucidate relationships, facilitating a systematic interpretation of the data. Consequently, qualitative data underwent initial processing, summarization, and categorization into relevant themes (Okoth, 2022). In alignment with Patton's perspective (2002), content analysis was employed to identify the most prevalent themes, the contexts in which they arise, and the interrelations among them. For the purpose of conducting effective and efficient data analyses, the data was characterized by parsimony and organization, as noted by Okoth (2022).

The study further applied sentimental analysis in order to capture opinions as adduced by the respondents. In tandem with the procedure recommended by Patton (2002), document analysis was undertaken to examine relevant documents to the study taking a variety of forms. Generally, analysis was done using content analysis where quantitative measures of

the frequency of appearance of particular elements in the text are taken: qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings as charged by Okoth (2022).

3.9 Limitations of the study

The circumstances and situations as well as the challenges encountered by the researcher in the course of execution of this study that might limit it in one way or another, was explained. Similarly, how the researcher reacted or mitigated the effects of such circumstances and situations were explained. Limitations are foreseen but inevitable, and/or unforeseen issues and/or circumstances, factors, events that emerge in the course of the study as hurdles impairing smooth execution or limiting certain aspects of the execution of the study against the prior intentions and expectations, in view of the researcher; and may extensively limit the extensibility of the study and in certain cases, affect the end result and conclusion that can be drawn (Simon & Goes, 2013). The following are possible limitations to the research study and how they were overcome:

Current conflict in the DRC exists with many players, multiple goals, and changing coalitions making it difficult to analyze the effectiveness of the international interventions. To overcome this complexity, a multi-method approach was employed, involving historical analysis, expert interviews and field reports to gain detailed information on the conflict and the effects of interventions. It is challenging to collect reliable and up-to-date information on the situation on the ground in DRC because of security problems and limited accessibility to certain zones of conflict. To offset this, the study used secondary data collected from secondary sources like UN reports and NGOs, as well as, remote interviews with local experts and stakeholders virtually, which ensured a wide and reliable

data pool. The analysis might be influenced by the bias of certain participants due to their commitment to the particular organization or company. This limitation was addressed by verifying details independently from other sources and other analysts as well as using the more analytical approaches to compare and analyze the results without bias.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

Ethics are the moral principles that govern a person's behaviour. Ethics can also be defined as as standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues. Showcat and Parveen (2017) argue that even though certain legal requirements are placed on the researcher, moral values about respect and honesty are important in research. Fouka and Mantzorou (2011) argue that all human activities are governed by the individual, community, and social values, and in research, the protection of the dignity of respondents is critical. A key consideration in research is the informed consent of the respondent because studies that deal with personal information are sensitive and must be handled with outmost care. Informed consent is a procedure through which a competent subject, after having received and understood all the research-related information, can voluntarily provide his or her willingness to participate.

The researcher adhered to strict ethics that govern research study. Persons and entities that were involved in the study were assured of their confidentiality and privacy as emphasized by Akaranga and Makau (2016) and the information gained in the course of research was not divulged to third parties under whatever circumstances. The study only obtained authority and consent from concerned parties and competent authorities. The researcher assigned unique codes for purposes of identification of respondents and the code

log kept secret. The researcher used the research proposal letter of approval by the Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology Directorate of Post Graduate Studies to apply for research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), Kenya, the DRC Embassy in Nairobi, the East African Community in Arusha, among others.

3.11 Chapter Summary

In this chapter the study discussed the research: empirical and interpretative design. The study noted the design demanded high adaptability to information that emerges in the course of the research. How the study reached out to respondents by way of sampling and also gathered their opinions focusing on processes and meanings unquantifiable were discussed. Study area and sample population were described and their choice justified. The data collection techniques and their strengths and weaknesses and how the inadequacies were addressed were discussed. Primary data collection using FGDs, Key Informant Interviews, and survey was discussed with use of methodological triangulation to achieve validity. Validity and reliability via a pilot study were discussed. The chapter also expounded on the data analysis, interpretation, presentation and dissemination including transcription of audio and visual FGDs and key informant interviews. Finally, the chapter discussed the limitations and ethical considerations. The next chapter deals with the findings based on first specific objective.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS OF MONUSCO IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT IN THE DRC

The chapter highlights the research findings touching on the first objective which is the Effectiveness of the Institutional Frameworks of Monusco in the Management of Conflict in the DRC. This has been achieved by studying on; MONUSCO and external intervention, Rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO, Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo, MONUSCO's unclear institutional frameworks, DRC's Multiple membership, Rwanda and Uganda as obstacles to MONUSCO and Deployment of East Africa Community Regional Force (EACRF). The chapter ends with a summary.

4.1 MONUSCO and external intervention

The results of response rate of respondents accounted for in terms of return rate and successful administration is illustrated in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Response rate of respondents

Category	Target Population	Sub - Sample size	Sample size	Sampling strategy/technique
Civilians				Survey Questionnaires
Refugees	-5,052	31 - (Svy Qtns)		
IDPs	-4053	25 - (Svy Qtns)	132	
Traders	-12,000	76 - (Svy Qtns)		Simple stratified sampling
Total	**21,105**			
MONUSCO				
Peacekeepers	-13,500	84 - (7 x FGD)		FGD
Experts (MILOBS	-660	4 - (KII)		
Police personnel	-1410	9 - (1 x FGD)	101	
Police Units	-591	4 - (KII)		KII
Total	**16,161**			
NGOs				
UNHCR	-3500	22 - (Svy Qtns)		FGD
WFP	-2000	12 - (1x FGD)	49	
ICRC	-2395	15 - (Svy Qtns)		Survey Questionnaires
Total	**7,895**			
Interest Parties				
Political class	-2500	15 - (Svy Qtns)		KII
Rebel groups	-2000	12 - (KII)	29	
Immigration	-210	1 - (KII)		Survey Questionnaires
Total	**4710**			
	49,871	**Svy Qtns = 184** **FGD = 105** **KII = 21**	**310**	

Source: Field Data, 2024

The study purposed to reach 384 respondents. Out of 384, 310 respondents were accounted for in terms of return rate and successful administration. In this case, the Response Rate was = (310/384) × 100 ≈ 80.73%. With 310 successful respondents, the response rate of 80.73% suggests that the sample retains enough respondents to still meet the reliability threshold. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sample size of 10-30% of the

population is often sufficient and valid as responses still provide a high degree of accuracy. From proportional allocation or proportionate stratified sampling formula; ni = (Ni/N) n, the sample size for the civilian strata was as follows: ni = (21,105/49,871) x 310; ni = 132

The study sought to find out whether the conflict in DRC requires external intervention. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.1.

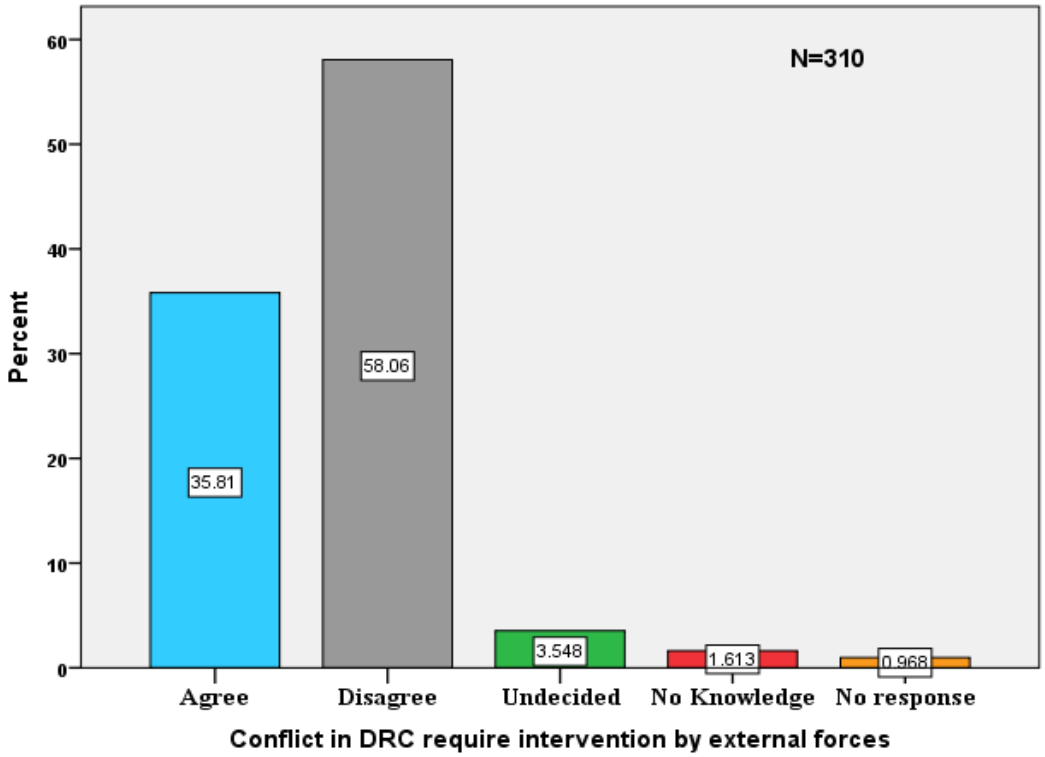

Figure 4. 1 Conflict in DRC require external intervention

Source: Field Data, 2024.

The study's findings on the perception of conflict intervention frameworks by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) reveal varied opinions among the 310 respondents. Out of these, 111 (35.8%) agreed that the conflict in the DRC requires external intervention, 180 (58.06%)

disagreed, 11 (3.6%) were undecided, 5 (1.6%) had no knowledge, and 3 (0.9%) had no response. The responses highlight the complexity of opinions on the effectiveness and necessity of external intervention in the DRC's conflicts.

The 111 respondents (35.8%) who agreed that the conflict in the DRC requires external intervention recognized the severe and multifaceted nature of the conflict, which involves numerous armed groups, complex socio-political dynamics, and significant humanitarian crises. These respondents believed that the DRC lacks the internal capacity to address these issues effectively and that external intervention, particularly by a well-resourced and experienced organization like the UN, is necessary to restore stability and peace. The history of prolonged conflict and weak governance structures in the DRC also contributed to the perception that external support is indispensable for sustainable conflict resolution.

A significant majority of respondents, 180 (58.06%), disagreed with the need for external intervention. These respondents reasoned, that external intervention undermines national sovereignty and pride. They believed that the DRC should resolve its internal conflicts independently, without foreign interference. Besides, they also reasoned that historical perspectives on the effectiveness of external interventions influenced their opinion. They also argued that, reliance on external intervention hampered the development of local conflict resolution mechanisms and governance structures. They believed that building local capacity is more sustainable in the long term. The 11 respondents (3.6%) who were undecided reflected the complexity and ambiguity surrounding the issue. They recognized the potential benefits and drawbacks of external intervention and therefore found it difficult to take a definitive stance. This group weighed the immediate need for stability against the potential long-term consequences of external involvement.

The 5 respondents (1.6%) who had no knowledge and the 3 respondents (0.9%) who did not respond indicated a lack of information or understanding about MONUSCO's role and the broader dynamics of the conflict. This highlighted the need for better dissemination of information and education about conflict resolution efforts and the roles of different actors. The findings underscored the diverse perspectives on the necessity and effectiveness of MONUSCO's intervention in the DRC. The researcher, therefore, argues that while a significant portion of respondents saw external intervention as crucial, a larger group emphasized the importance of national sovereignty and self-reliance. These varied opinions reflect the complex realities of conflict intervention and the need for nuanced and context-specific approaches to peacebuilding in the DRC.

Corroborating findings on the need for external intervention in addressing resource conflicts in the DRC highlighted the complexities and implications of international involvement in conflict resolution. Liberal theory posits that international institutions and interventions can mitigate conflicts and promote cooperation among states, emphasizing the role of external actors in managing resource disputes. Thus, scholarly research underscores the rationale for external intervention in the DRC's resource conflicts. According to Autesserre (2017), local governance failures and weak state institutions necessitate international involvement to provide stability and address root causes of conflict. This perspective aligns with liberal theory's assertion that international actors foster peace through institutional support and capacity-building efforts. Furthermore, Reyntjens (2019) argues that external intervention is essential in mediating resource disputes among competing factions and promoting sustainable resource management

practices. This perspective emphasizes the role of international organizations like the UN in facilitating negotiations and enforcing agreements to mitigate resource-related violence.

On the other hand, scholars like Verweijen and Marijnen (2020) critique external intervention in the DRC, noting that interventions often prioritize short-term stability over long-term structural reforms. This critique reflects concerns within liberal theory about the sustainability and effectiveness of external peacebuilding efforts in addressing underlying causes of resource conflicts. Moreover, Kabamba (2021) argues that external interventions sometimes exacerbate tensions by supporting elite factions or ignoring local grievances, undermining efforts for sustainable peace and development. This perspective challenges liberal theory's optimism about the positive impacts of external interventions in conflict resolution.

In addition, Murison (2018) provides insights into how external actors, including multinational corporations and neighbouring states, contribute to resource conflicts in the DRC through exploitative practices and geopolitical interests. This perspective underscores the complexities of external involvement in exacerbating rather than mitigating conflicts, despite liberal theory's emphasis on cooperative approaches to peacebuilding. The researcher argues that, while external intervention is deemed necessary in addressing resource conflicts in the DRC according to liberal theory, scholarly perspectives vary on its effectiveness and unintended consequences. Cooperative efforts between international and local actors are crucial for sustainable peacebuilding, requiring careful consideration of local contexts and long-term strategies to address underlying grievances and promote inclusive governance. This synthesis draws on diverse scholarly viewpoints to highlight both consensus and dissent regarding external intervention in the DRC's resource conflicts,

reflecting ongoing debates on the role of international actors in promoting peace and stability in conflict-prone regions.

4.2 Rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO

The results are illustrated in table 4.2.

Table 4. 2 Rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO

Rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	171	55.2	55.2	55.2
	Disagree	69	22.3	22.3	77.4
	Undecided	51	16.5	16.5	93.9
	No Knowledge	9	2.9	2.9	96.8
	No response	10	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data, 2024

The study's findings on the perceptions of the cooperation between rebel groups and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) reveal a broad spectrum of opinions among the 310 respondents. Out of these, 171 (55.2%) agreed that rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO, 69 (22.3%) disagreed, 51 (16.5%) were undecided, 9 (2.9%) had no knowledge on the matter, and 10 (3.2%) had no response. These responses provide insight into the complex and often contentious dynamics between MONUSCO and the various armed groups operating in the

DRC. The majority of respondents, 171 (55.2%), who agreed that rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO based their views on several observations and reports of on-the-ground realities.

These respondents recognized instances where rebel groups have engaged with MONUSCO in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. There have been documented cases where MONUSCO has successfully negotiated ceasefires or temporary truces with rebel factions, facilitating humanitarian aid delivery and civilian protection. These respondents also believed in the strategic pragmatism of some rebel groups, understanding that cooperation with MONUSCO can lead to better conditions or political leverage.

Conversely, 69 respondents (22.3%) disagreed with the notion that rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO. This group pointed to ongoing violence and resistance by some of the more intransigent rebel factions as evidence that cooperation is limited or non-existent. They highlighted incidents where rebel groups have attacked MONUSCO personnel or continued their operations despite the presence of peacekeepers. These respondents were influenced by reports of the fragmented and volatile nature of many rebel groups including M23, which complicates any form of sustained cooperation. They also argued that the interests and goals of many rebel groups are fundamentally incompatible with those of MONUSCO, leading to persistent conflict rather than cooperation.

The 51 respondents (16.5%) who were undecided reflected the complexity and fluidity of the situation. They were aware of both cooperative and confrontational interactions between MONUSCO and rebel groups, finding it difficult to generalize their relationship. This ambivalence stemmed from the varied nature of rebel groups in the DRC, where some

factions engaged in dialogue and others persist in conflict. The undecided respondents also were influenced by fluctuating reports and the often contradictory nature of information coming from conflict zones. The 9 respondents (2.9%) who had no knowledge and the 10 respondents (3.2%) who did not respond indicated a lack of access to detailed information about MONUSCO's engagements with rebel groups. This was due to limited media coverage, restricted communication in certain areas, or general disinterest in the specific aspects of the conflict dynamics.

This segment of respondents highlights the need for improved information dissemination and education on the roles and activities of international peacekeeping missions. The study's findings reflect a range of perceptions regarding the cooperation between MONUSCO and rebel groups in the DRC. The majority view suggested that there are instances of cooperation, influenced by practical engagements and negotiated settlements. However, a significant portion of respondents remain skeptical, citing ongoing violence and resistance. The undecided and uninformed respondents underscore the complexity and variability of the conflict, necessitating a nuanced understanding and continuous monitoring of the situation. These diverse perspectives are crucial for informing MONUSCO's strategies and fostering a more informed and engaged public discourse on peacekeeping efforts in the DRC.

The prevenient findings on rebel groups cooperating with MONUSCO to contend for resources in the DRC underscores the complex dynamics of power struggles and resource exploitation in conflict zones. Power theory emphasizes how actors, including rebel groups and international peacekeeping forces like MONUSCO, strategically maneuver to gain access to and control over valuable resources.

Scholarly research illuminates the nuanced relationships between rebel groups and MONUSCO in resource-rich areas of the DRC. According to Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers (2019), rebel groups often negotiate alliances with international actors, including peacekeeping forces, to secure access to resources and funding, thereby perpetuating conflicts despite peacekeeping mandates. This perspective aligns with power theory's emphasis on strategic interactions and resource competition among conflicting parties.

Furthermore, Mamdani (2020) argues that rebel groups engage with international peacekeeping forces like MONUSCO not only to access resources but also to legitimize their control over territories and populations. This strategic cooperation reflects power dynamics where rebel groups leverage external support to strengthen their positions vis-à-vis state authorities and rival factions. On the other hand, scholars like Titeca (2018) critique the narrative of rebel cooperation with MONUSCO, highlighting instances where peacekeeping operations inadvertently empower rebel groups through resource trading and logistical support. This critique challenges power theory's assumption of strategic cooperation, suggesting that unintended consequences and ambiguous alliances complicate efforts to stabilize conflict-affected regions.

Moreover, Tull (2021) discusses how rebel groups in the DRC navigate relationships with international actors, including MONUSCO, to advance political and economic agendas through resource exploitation. This perspective underscores the multifaceted nature of power dynamics, where rebel groups manipulate external interventions to consolidate control over resource-rich territories. Additionally, Wucherpfennig et al. (2019) provide insights into how rebel governance structures in resource-rich regions of the DRC interact

with international peacekeeping forces to negotiate resource extraction deals and territorial control. This scholarly viewpoint emphasizes the role of power asymmetries and strategic calculations in shaping alliances and conflicts over resources.

The researcher, therefore, argues that while rebel groups in the DRC cooperated with MONUSCO to contend for resources, scholarly perspectives vary on the nature and outcomes of these interactions. Power theory offers a framework to analyze strategic engagements and resource competition among conflicting parties, highlighting the complexities of peacekeeping operations in resource-rich conflict zones. This synthesis draws on diverse scholarly viewpoints to underscore both consensus and dissent regarding rebel cooperation with MONUSCO in the DRC's resource conflicts, reflecting ongoing debates on the effectiveness of international interventions and the implications for peacebuilding efforts.

The conflict in the DRC has become an indelible aspect of the nation's historical narrative, one that cannot be swiftly erased. The development of the state in this resource-rich nation has paradoxically aligned with a corresponding rise in violent non-state entities. The armed factions have consistently confronted the national army of the Congo, challenging and disputing the legitimacy of every regime that has governed the nation from Mobutu to the current administration of President Etienne Tshisekedi. To comprehend the dynamics surrounding these armed groups and their respective warlords, it is essential to consider the political context in which they operate and how this context has catalyzed their emergence and persistence (Wucherpfennig *et al*., 2019).

Consequently, it is a well-established observation that the majority of violent armed groups have arisen due to the disintegration or lack of a robust social contract. Due to inertia or

political bias, governments often fail to implement effective control over specific regions of their territory; dissent begins to simmer and subsequently evolves into armed rebellion. This scenario is frequently encountered in numerous African nations that have experienced civil conflict. The impetus behind the armed groups involved in these conflicts lies in their desire to contest the authority of the central state. This elucidates the emergence of numerous armed factions in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, which have seized control of the peripheral regions of the nation, where governmental oversight has been either lacking or insufficient. The question of the authenticity of their agenda to rival the state has sparked numerous debates and scholarly discussions. Regardless of the motivations, it is evident that both historical and contemporary governance structures in Congo have been compelled to accommodate the involvement of armed factions.

The operations of these armed factions, their methods of recruitment, and the ways in which they sustain internal unity illustrate that the state has relinquished its exclusive control over violence, a condition that prevailed in the past. Non-state actors in the DRC have transformed the political landscape of the country, while also exerting considerable influence in the socio-administrative domain. Evidence indicates that they have emerged as essential participants in influencing and redefining the economic landscape. These armed factions seized and asserted disputed claims over extensive regions rich in resources such as gold, copper, and bauxite.

They engage in the illicit exploitation and commercialization across the shadowy trade networks through adjacent nations such as Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi. The erratic ascendance and decline of these groups is reflected in the intricate and often paradoxical alliances they establish both internally and with the state. The challenge posed by state

failure and the subsequent emergence of armed factions driven by avarice or discontent lies in the fact that the local populace finds itself ensnared in a cycle of violence that was neither anticipated nor comprehended in its entirety (Wucherpfennig *et al*., 2019).

4.2.1 Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo

The governance of Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire was marked by a climate of repression, arbitrariness, corruption, and nepotism (Menon, 2016). The downfall of his governance was anticipated, as the factors contributing to the deterioration of the state had long been woven into its very essence. This situation was exacerbated by his provision of shelter and support to the Hutus responsible for the genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda. This provided the Hutu militias with the advantage to persist in their opposition against the Tutsi-led government that assumed control of Kigali following the genocide.

The Tutsis, who had resided in the Kivu regions for an extended period, were not exempt from the assaults perpetrated by the Mobutu-supported Interahamwe militia. In the interim, within the Congo, the Tutsis experienced the full impact of Mobutu's poor governance and systemic discrimination. This led them to establish their own self-security networks. In this context, the Rwandan government collaborated with the Tutsi-led movements, ultimately leading to the establishment of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo (ADFL). The ADFL received substantial backing from Rwanda, Uganda, and Angola. The coalition emerged from the convergence of the Partie de la Revolution Populaire (PRP) led by Laurent Kabila, the Alliance Democratique des Peuples (ADP) under the leadership of Deogratias Bugera, the Mouvement Revolutionnaire pour la Liberation du Zaire (MRLZ) advocated by Masasu Ningaba, and Kisase Ngandu’s Conseil de la Resistance pour la Democratie (CRD). The ADFL rapidly amassed support and

garnered sympathy, resulting in its ranks swelling to 80,000 and beyond. The principal objective of this insurgent faction was to remove Mobutu from authority and terminate his oppressive governance in Zaire (Menon, 2016).

In 1996, an offensive was initiated against Mobutu's regime, advancing strategically to Kinshasa and ultimately seizing control of the seat of power. The uprising of the ADFL against Mobutu is often characterized as the First Congo War. During the duration of the conflict in Kinshasa, young individuals aligned with the ADFL's objectives allied themselves with its fellow fighters. A number of military officers within the Forces Armees Zairean chose to defect and align themselves with the rebel movement. Their achievement in dismantling the regime of Mobutu garnered them extensive acclaim and respect, both within Congo and beyond its borders. In May 1997, Kabila assumed the presidency. One of his initial policy decisions involved renaming the nation from Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The previous ADFL combatants were integrated into the national military of the nation – the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC). The ascent of Kabila and the triumph of the ADFL have been characterized as a transformative period for Africa, wherein Africans are empowered to assume control and address their own challenges. It has been contended by some that the triumph of the ADFL was contingent upon external assistance from Rwanda and Uganda.

4.2.2 Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD)

The conflict in Kinshasa and Kabila's subsequent ascension to power instilled a sense of optimism not only among the everyday citizens of Congo but also across the African continent. Nevertheless, the initial exhilaration following the overthrow of Mobutu's regime rapidly transformed into discord and turmoil, leading to the onset of the Second

Congo War (Bechtolsheimer, 2012). Kabila's administration largely mirrored that of Mobutu, maintaining a dictatorial approach, with high-handedness persisting under the new regime. Furthermore, Rwanda and Uganda, which had assisted Kabila in his ascent to power, exhibited a notable reluctance to relinquish control over the territory to their populace. Beyond their stated rationale for disbanding the Hutu militias lies a concealed agenda aimed at securing control over the abundant mineral resources of the Congo, including gold, coltan, and copper. The absence of collaboration from Kabila towards his previous supporters prompted the formation of the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD), which subsequently assumed a significant position in the Second Congo War that ignited in 1998. The primary aim of the RCD was to remove Kabila from his position of authority. Initially, it was under the guidance of Ernest Wamba.

By May 1999, divergences in operational strategy and methodologies precipitated a crisis of control within the leadership of RCD. The ensuing leadership struggle resulted in the fragmentation of the rebel alliance into two distinct factions. The collective led by Wamba came to be recognized as the RCD-Kisangani. The alternative faction that opted to function from Goma came to be recognized as RCD-Goma. Adolph Onosunba assumed the operational command of RCD-Goma. This subsequent faction was granted substantial military and financial backing from Rwanda. Wamba's faction established a strategic alliance with the warlord Jean Pierre Bemba's Movement for the Liberation of the Congo. The insurgent group became recognized as RCD-ML. During its role as a proxy belligerent for Rwanda in the Second Congo War, RCD-Goma successfully mobilized and sustained approximately 45,000 combatants. The presence of these combatants facilitated the rebel group's capacity to engage in conflict and sustain dominance over extensive regions in the

Kivus and Kasai. The economic strategies of Rwanda and Uganda during the conflict were quickly revealed as they vied for dominance over resource-abundant regions rich in minerals such as gold, diamonds, and uranium. South Kivu and Ituri, rich in these resources, emerged as a focal point of conflict, not only involving Kabila's army but also significantly with their associated rebel factions.

Militia factions such as the Interahamwe, bolstered by the backing of Kabila's administration, added layers of complexity to the conflict that the RCD rebel group had not anticipated. With the escalation of instabilities, the heinous acts perpetrated by the armed factions also intensified. All armed factions involved in the conflict enlisted child soldiers, perpetrated the murder of innocent civilians, and compelled others to labor in gold mines under exceedingly inhumane conditions. The armed organization RCD facilitated the local pretext that enabled Rwanda and Uganda to exploit the resources of Congo. Data from the period between 1996 and 1997 indicates that coltan generated $80 million in quarterly revenue for Rwanda. During the aforementioned timeframe, the external trade in diamonds between Rwanda and Uganda experienced significant growth in both quantity and revenue. The revenue generated from the export of golf by Rwanda experienced a remarkable increase, rising from $12.4 million in 1994 to an unprecedented $110 million in 1996 (Bechtolsheimer, 2012).

4.2.3 Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

The Allied Democratic Forces constitutes an armed entity that has assumed a significant and contentious position within the ongoing conflict in Congo. It began in Uganda in 1996 with the primary aim of removing Yoweri Museveni from power and establishing an Islamic governance structure in the country (Murray, 2016). This initiative did not come to

fruition, as it faced staunch opposition from the Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) in 1995. The remaining members of the group subsequently relocated to the Congolese border in North Kivu, where they established their stronghold in the Beni area in 1996. They conducted multiple assaults not only in Uganda but also, as they became autonomous, within the territory of the Congo.

The turmoil resulting from the Congolese wars created opportunities for armed groups such as the ADF to establish a presence in a conducive environment (Murray, 2016). The limited engagement of the Congolese administration in the Rwenzori border region facilitated this situation. The transnational nature of the ADF has somewhat undermined its foundational mission, which was to promote Islamic principles in Uganda. In this context, their objective became somewhat obscured, rendering it difficult to grasp in a concrete manner. Nonetheless, in the context of the conflict in the DRC, the ADF formed alliances with various armed entities, including the former Rwanda Armed Forces (FAR), which forcibly enlisted young men into their ranks and instigated chaos in conjunction with groups such as the Mayi Mayi in 2011.

The ADF's failure to adeptly navigate its relationships with sympathizers in Uganda necessitated the establishment of a stronghold along the Congo border, serving as the base for its operations. Their actions and acts of violence resulted in significant civilian suffering and loss of life. Despite suffering significant defeats at the hands of the Congolese Army and the UN Stabilization Forces, the remnants have persistently adapted and restructured themselves to rejuvenate the operations of the armed groups. Their exact mission is shrouded in ambiguity, as they have persistently cultivated robust connections with influential politicians and business leaders in the Congo. The socio-economic and

political dynamics of the group within the conflict landscape have significantly deviated from its initial objective of Islamizing Uganda and ousting Museveni.

The government of Uganda persists in utilizing the existence of the ADF in Congo as a rationale for the ongoing military engagement along the Congolese borders. The motivations behind this presence—whether aimed at ensuring Uganda's security or serving as a covert endeavour to extract resources from the Congo—underscore the intricate and often paradoxical consequences that the ADF's activities have imposed on the Congolese populace. In 2014, the cumulative count of civilian fatalities attributable to ADF operations in Beni reached 650. The eventual apprehension of ADF leader Jamil Mukulu in 2015, nonetheless, did not culminate in the cessation of the group's activities. In 2017, the casualties experienced a significant increase, with ADF combatants in an insurgency inflicting injuries on approximately 60 United Nations stabilization forces, resulting in the tragic loss of around 20 lives. The ADF has assumed a notable position as a military faction within the context of the DRC conflict. A report from the United Nations in 2014 indicated that the number of ADF fighters ranged between 1600 and 2500. The transnational nature of this group, along with their political connections in Congo, Sudan, and Uganda, has enabled them to partake in illicit financial transactions, covert sales of raw materials, trafficking activities, and extensive violations of human rights (Murray, 2016).

4.2.4 The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)

The Lord's Resistance Army constitutes a formidable insurgent entity that has significantly contributed to the perpetuation of conflict in the Congo and its surrounding regions. It originated in Uganda in 1987, with the objective of toppling Yoweri Museveni and

governing the nation in accordance with the Ten Commandments. The group's adherence to the established chain of command and direction was firmly guided by its leader, Joseph Kony. Through a blend of spiritual and enigmatic tactics, Kony adeptly garnered the loyalty of his followers, who were convinced that their leader's arcane abilities could protect them from harm and fatalities in combat. Following a significant confrontation and subsequent defeat by the Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF), the LRA relocated to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2005, from which they persisted in their insurgent operations.

The Lord's Resistance Army infiltrated the Democratic Republic of the Congo via its northeastern frontier. They first identified themselves not as combatants but as displaced individuals in search of refuge from the oppressive governance of Museveni. Nonetheless, their presence sparked considerable apprehension among the local populace, who perceived their arrival in Congo as a precursor to potential difficulties. As a result, the local populace persistently urged the government in Kinshasa to expel the LRA from the Congo (Titeca, 2020). Although the local populace advocated for this development, the LRA, conversely, maintained their claim to remain, grounded in intricate political negotiations they had established with allies in proximity to the president. Despite the ongoing confusion and contestation, the LRA, navigating a landscape of considerable complexity, has persisted in the DRC and has committed numerous atrocities in the intervening period. Their expansion of network and outreach was facilitated by the prevailing instability in the Congo and various other regional conflicts. The dismissal of the LRA by local Congolese in the Garamba region resulted in the rebel group’s inability to swiftly augment their ranks with new recruits. As a result, they returned to the practice

of compulsory enlistment of men, the utilization of child soldiers, and the involvement of women. The female and juvenile individuals predominantly functioned as carriers for the combatants. Simultaneously, the LRA similarly employed women in the capacity of spouses (Titeca, 2020).

The LRA systematically exploited and ravaged the Congolese community, which did not openly endorse their faction. The failure of the LRA and Museveni's administration to achieve a peaceful resolution from 2006 to 2008 exacerbated the conflict in both Uganda and Congo. In late 2008, the governments of Uganda, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan initiated a military campaign known as 'Operation Lightning Thunder' aimed at dismantling the Lord's Resistance Army's stronghold in Garamba, located within the DRC. The aerial bombardment that accompanied this military campaign against the LRA effectively inflicted considerable damage on the organization, yet it failed to eliminate its leader, Joseph Kony. Although the joint military offensive against the LRA proved to be effective, it failed to establish measures or frameworks for safeguarding civilians in the aftermath of the LRA's devastation.

In light of the assaults on its stronghold, the LRA initiated a campaign characterized by widespread brutality, violence, sexual assault, and torture directed at the local populace. The chaos inflicted upon the Congolese communities culminated in the loss of 1,096 lives. The reported instances of abductions amounted to approximately 1,373 individuals, encompassing both men and women, alongside an additional 255 children (Titeca, 2020). The tactics employed by the LRA, characterized by instilling fear within the community through arbitrary killings, acts of rape, and pervasive violence, facilitated the escalation of

conflict in both the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. The LRA has persistently faced scrutiny and limitations in numerous operations. Nonetheless, they have consistently managed to reemerge. In the year 2005, the International Criminal Court formally issued an arrest warrant for Joseph Kony along with other prominent figures of the Lord's Resistance Army. Vincent Otti, Raska Lukwiya, Okot Odhiambo, and Dominic Ongwen are notable figures in a complex historical context. In the year 2007, Raska Lukwiya passed away. This was subsequently followed by the dismissal of charges against him. In a parallel manner, the court likewise concluded the proceedings against Okot Odhiambo following his demise in 2015. To date, the sole individual to have faced trial at the ICC is Dominic Ongwen. The elusive rebel leader Joseph Kony has continued to evade capture, despite the concerted efforts of a mixed joint task force comprising the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), which was later rebranded as MONUSCO in 2010, alongside US African Command and various regional security initiatives.

4.2.5 The 23 March Movement (M23)

The ongoing conflict in the DRC has consistently been marked by the involvement of both internal and external actors. Nevertheless, one remarkably striking observation persists regarding how these actors adapt and redefine their alliances as the conflict progresses. The Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) was established in 2006 by Laurent Nkunda with the aim of safeguarding and ensuring the security of Tutsis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from the brutality of armed factions such as the FDLR and various other rebel entities active in North Kivu. Following Nkunda's apprehension by the Congolese military in 2009, Bosco Ntaganda emerged as the new emblem of power and

leadership at the forefront of the CNDP. In this context, he worked alongside the administration of Joseph Kabila to incorporate former combatants of the CNDP into the national army's structure.

The government perceived this in Kinshasa as a potential resolution to the ongoing conflict within the nation. As a result, on 23 March 2009, the administration in Kinshasa and the Congress for the Defense of the People formalized a peace accord. This agreement aimed to facilitate the integration of ex-combatants from the CNDP into the Congolese army across various ranks. Furthermore, the CNDP was thus required to abandon its former insurgent endeavours and evolve into a political entity. The comprehension of this matter was that the CNDP would employ its political platform as a valid conduit through which it could convey its grievances regarding national and local issues to the central government. Subsequent to the agreement reached on 23 March 2009, around 5,300 former CNDP combatants were ultimately assimilated into the Congolese military forces. While the leaders of the CNDP, including Bosco Ntaganda, Sultan Makenga, and Jean Marie Runigo Lugerero, perceived this as an opportunity to strengthen their regional and local authority, the DRC government regarded the peace agreement as a covert strategy to ultimately dismantle the CNDP and its remaining factions.

The administration of President Joseph Kabila aimed to accomplish this by strategically dispersing the former CNDP rebels throughout the nation, thereby complicating the insurgents' ability to consolidate and mount challenges against state institutions and authority. Upon their integration into the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC), the former CNDP fighters commenced their agitation against the Kinshasa regime, citing a failure to adhere to the 2009 agreement. Consequently, on 4

April 2012, a faction of former CNDP combatants defected from the Congolese military and established the M23 Movement.

The recently established M23 Movement expressed discontent regarding the regimentation process initiated by the Kinshasa government in 2011, aimed at dismantling the command structure of the CNDP and reallocating its former combatants to various military outposts across the territory, arguing that this approach did not serve the best interests of the former CNDP fighters. The M23 rebels based their insurrection on the premise that former CNDP combatants faced discrimination within the military and were unjustly excluded from key appointments in the central government. Nonetheless, this complaint lacked significant impact, as Bosco Ntaganda and Sultani Makenga accrued substantial profits through coercive taxation, the illicit trade of mineral resources extracted from the Kivus, and financial manipulation. In an effort to enhance its mobilization within the Kivus, the M23, guided by Ntaganda, forged alliances with various other rebel factions in Congo and maintained robust connections with the Rwanda Defence Force.

Despite Rwanda's consistent denials of any affiliations with M23, both the government of the DRC and the United Nations maintain an opposing perspective. In conjunction with its Rwandan supporters, the M23 established additional satellite armed factions such as the Alliance for the Liberation of East Congo (ALEC). The organization, ALEC, conducted its activities predominantly within the Uvira region. The M23 formed alliances with the Ecumenical Force for the Liberation of Congo (FOLC), which was actively led by Hilair Kombi, a defector from the Congolese national army. This particular insurgent faction primarily functioned in the North Kivu province, with a specific focus on the Beni area. The M23 broad base alliance comprised the Mouvement de Resistance Populaire au Congo

(MRPC), the Forces de Defense Congolaises (FDC), along with a coalition of various other armed factions in Ituri.

The M23 rebels have been documented as having perpetrated offenses against the civilian populace in both North and South Kivu. The offenses encompass acts such as sexual violence, coercive taxation, the involuntary conscription of youth, unlawful extraction of natural resources, widespread homicide, and acts of torture. The pinnacle of the M23 occurred in 2012 when its combatants adeptly seized control of Goma. This had a profoundly negative impact on the civilian population as well as the combined forces of the DRC Armed Forces and the UN peacekeeping mission, which comprised approximately 20,000 personnel. In March 2013, Bosco Ntaganda voluntarily presented himself at the United States Embassy in Kigali, seeking transfer to the International Criminal Court. By August of that year, the military strength of the M23 had notably diminished, due in part to considerable defections, along with its failure to attract new recruits as it had previously accomplished. The cessation of Rwandan support for the group similarly played a significant role in hindering its mobilization endeavours. In 2013, a collaborative initiative between the FARDC and the UN led to the establishment of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB). The task force persisted in its pursuit of Joseph Kony while simultaneously initiating counter-insurgent operations against the M23. A series of assaults were executed targeting M23 installations. By November, this collaborative task force had successfully vanquished the M23, prompting the majority of its remaining insurgents to seek refuge in other areas. Despite this, the Democratic Republic of Congo experienced a notable increase in armed groups and insurgencies, particularly between 2014 and 2016. On 7 November 2019, the ICC imposed a 30-year prison sentence on M23

leader Bosco Ntaganda for his involvement in crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Congo.

4.3 MONUSCO's unclear institutional frameworks

The study sought to find out whether MONUSCO's institutional frameworks are clear or not. The results are illustrated in table 4.3.

Table 4. 3 MONUSCO's institutional frameworks

MONUSCO's institutional frameworks					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	105	33.9	33.9	33.9
	Disagree	175	56.5	56.5	90.3
	Undecided	15	4.8	4.8	95.2
	No Knowledge	10	3.2	3.2	98.4
	No response	5	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data, 2024.

The study aimed to evaluate the perceptions of MONUSCO's (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) institutional frameworks among 310 respondents. The findings reveal diverse opinions: 105 respondents (33.9%) agreed that MONUSCO's institutional frameworks were clear, 175

(56.5%) believed they were not clear, 15 (4.8%) were undecided, 10 (3.2%) had no knowledge of the frameworks, and 5 (1.6%) did not respond. These responses shed light on the varied understanding and perspectives of MONUSCO's operations and their institutional clarity.

According to the 105 respondents (33.9%) who agreed that MONUSCO's institutional frameworks were clear, recognized the structured protocols and mandates outlined by the mission. MONUSCO operates under a detailed mandate from the United Nations Security Council, which provides guidelines on its objectives, such as protecting civilians, supporting the Congolese government, and facilitating humanitarian assistance. These respondents observed MONUSCO's adherence to these mandates through its on-ground activities, such as peacekeeping patrols, collaboration with local authorities, and efforts in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. The visibility of these structured activities contributed to their perception of clarity.

In contrast, the majority, 175 respondents (56.5%), believed that MONUSCO's institutional frameworks were not clear. This significant portion argued that the mission's mandates are often broad and subject to interpretation, leading to inconsistencies in implementation. They experienced or observed instances where MONUSCO's actions did not align with local expectations or where its objectives seemed ambiguous or conflicting. The complexity of the DRC's conflict environment, with numerous armed groups and shifting alliances, further complicated the clear application of MONUSCO's frameworks. Additionally, communication barriers and a lack of effective public relations strategies by MONUSCO contributed to this perception of unclear frameworks.

The 15 respondents (4.8%) who were undecided reflected the nuanced and evolving nature of MONUSCO's operations. These individuals recognized both structured and ambiguous aspects of the mission's frameworks, finding it difficult to form a definitive opinion. They were influenced by varying reports and personal experiences, acknowledging the mission's efforts while also seeing room for improvement in clarity and consistency. The 10 respondents (3.2%) who had no knowledge and the 5 respondents (1.6%) who did not respond highlight a gap in awareness and information dissemination regarding MONUSCO's frameworks. This lack of knowledge stemmed from limited access to detailed information, insufficient communication from MONUSCO, or general disengagement from the conflict's intricacies.

It underscores the need for MONUSCO to enhance its outreach and educational efforts to ensure broader understanding and engagement with its mission. The study's findings on MONUSCO's institutional frameworks reflect a spectrum of perceptions. While a third of the respondents see the frameworks as clear, a majority find them unclear, highlighting challenges in communication, interpretation, and implementation. The undecided and uninformed respondents point to the need for improved information dissemination and engagement strategies. These varied responses underscore the importance of continuous efforts to enhance the clarity, consistency, and visibility of MONUSCO's operations to foster better understanding and support among the local population.

In light of the prevenient views, one of the respondents said:

> ‘We don’t understand the work of MONUSCO, and they also don’t seem to know what they came to do here. We see MONUSCO soldiers on their vehicles moving up and down and the people they came to protect are being killed each and every time……...they take so much time to react when we are under attack. There is no coordination with FRDC and the situation is so messy here (R04, 17/03/2024). Source: Field Data (17/03/2024)

This ambiguity in institutional roles and responsibilities hinders the mission's ability to respond promptly and effectively to emerging crises. Clear and well-defined frameworks are crucial for coordinating actions and ensuring that all components of the mission work synergistically toward common objectives. Without these, MONUSCO struggles to maintain a unified approach in managing the complex security and humanitarian issues in the DRC.

The foregoing findings on MONUSCO's unclear institutional frameworks to address conflicts arising from resources in the DRC highlighted the organizational challenges and structural deficiencies within international peacekeeping operations**.** Liberal theory posits that international institutions play a crucial role in promoting cooperation and stability, but the effectiveness of these frameworks depends on clarity, coherence, and operational adaptability. Scholarly research underscores the complexities of MONUSCO's institutional frameworks in addressing resource-related conflicts in the DRC. According to Muggah and Krause (2018), institutional fragmentation and overlapping mandates among UN agencies and peacekeeping missions hinder coordinated responses to resource disputes, reflecting organizational inefficiencies that undermine liberal theory's expectations of institutional effectiveness.

Furthermore, Krasner (2020) argues that MONUSCO's operational frameworks often prioritize short-term stability over long-term conflict resolution strategies, exacerbating tensions and perpetuating cycles of violence in resource-rich regions. This critique challenges liberal theory's optimism about the regulatory and stabilizing roles of international institutions in managing resource conflicts. On the other hand, scholars like Bouillon and Shearing (2019) highlight instances where MONUSCO has implemented

adaptive governance approaches to address resource-related disputes, emphasizing the role of flexibility and local engagement in enhancing institutional effectiveness. This perspective aligns with liberal theory's emphasis on adaptive management and inclusive governance as critical elements in conflict resolution.

Moreover, Roesch (2021) discusses how MONUSCO's engagement with local communities and civil society organizations can strengthen institutional frameworks by fostering trust, transparency, and accountability in resource governance. This scholarly viewpoint underscores the potential for collaborative approaches to enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of international interventions in conflict-prone regions like the DRC. Additionally, Moyer and Shester (2022) provide insights into the economic dimensions of institutional frameworks, arguing that MONUSCO's regulatory mechanisms often fail to address underlying economic grievances and inequalities driving resource conflicts. This perspective challenges liberal theory's assumptions about the transformative potential of international institutions in promoting sustainable development and peace.

The researcher, therefore, avers that while MONUSCO's institutional frameworks face challenges in addressing conflicts arising from resources in the DRC, scholarly perspectives vary on their effectiveness and adaptive capacities. Liberal theory underscores the importance of coherent and responsive institutional frameworks in promoting stability and cooperation, but empirical evidence suggests ongoing deficiencies and organizational complexities that hinder effective peacebuilding efforts.

4.4 DRC’s Multiple membership

The study sought to find out whether DRC’s multiple membership in the regional organization posed a challenge for MONUSCO. Out of 310 respondents 57(18.39%) stated

that multiple membership for DRC was a challenge, 189 (60.97%) were of the contrary opinion, and they disagreed with the inquiry. Besides,50 (16.1%) were undecided, 8 (2.6%) had no knowledge and 6 (1.9%) had no response to the inquiry. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.2

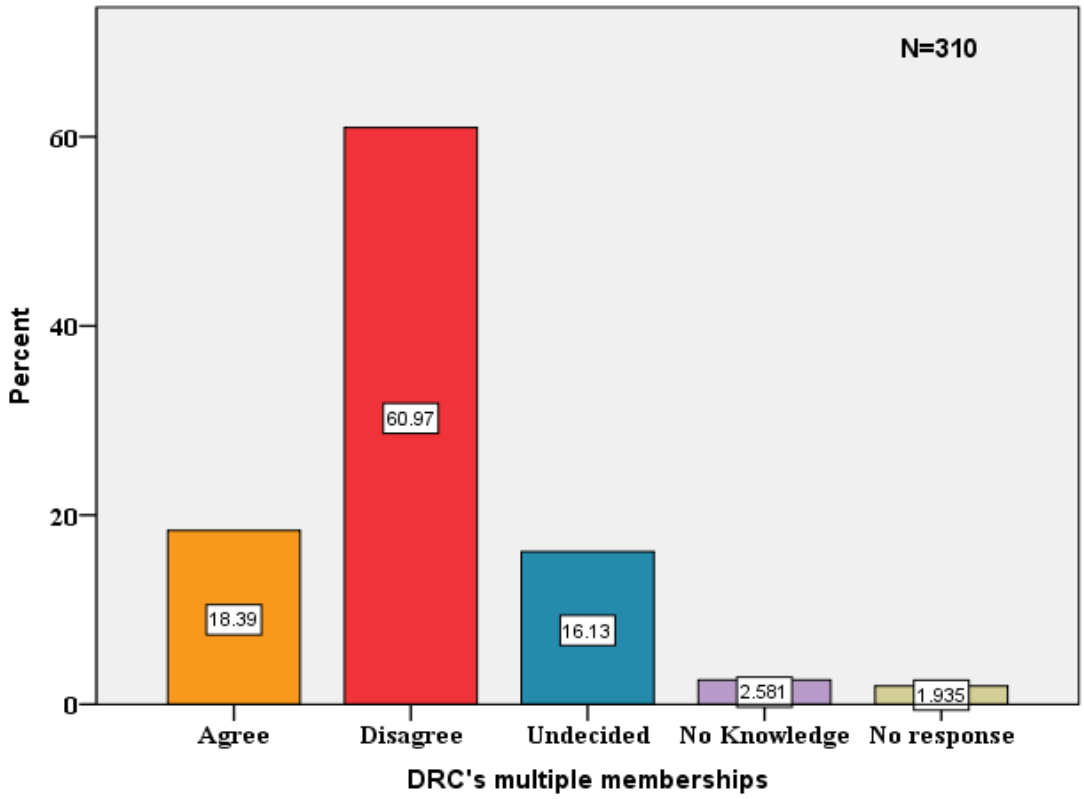

Figure 4. 2: DRC's multiple membership

Source: Field Data,2024

The study sought to assess whether the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) multiple memberships in regional organizations posed a challenge for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The findings indicate a range of opinions among the 310 respondents.

Specifically, 57 respondents (18.39%) stated that multiple memberships were a challenge, 189 respondents (60.97%) disagreed, 50 respondents (16.1%) were undecided, 8 respondents (2.6%) had no knowledge, and 6 respondents (1.9%) did not respond. These varied responses reflect the complexity and multifaceted nature of the issue. The 57 respondents (18.39%) who viewed multiple memberships as a challenge perceived the overlapping and sometimes conflicting interests of various regional organizations as problematic for MONUSCO's operations. The DRC is a member of several regional bodies, including the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). Each of these organizations has its own mandates, strategies, and priorities, which can create a complex and sometimes contradictory landscape for MONUSCO to navigate.

These respondents argued that the differing approaches and political dynamics of these organizations can lead to inconsistencies in policy implementation and coordination. For instance, if the AU advocates for a particular peace initiative while SADC promotes a different strategy, MONUSCO faced challenges in aligning its operations with these divergent agendas. Furthermore, the multiple memberships led to duplication of efforts, resource allocation issues, and bureaucratic inefficiencies, thereby complicating MONUSCO’s mission.

A significant majority of respondents, 189 (60.97%), disagreed with the notion that multiple memberships pose a challenge for MONUSCO. These respondents believed that the involvement of multiple regional organizations enhances support for MONUSCO’s mission by providing a broader base of political and logistical backing. They argued that these organizations can complement each other’s efforts, offering diverse resources,

expertise, and diplomatic channels to address the conflict. Additionally, this group perceived the regional organizations as crucial partners in fostering regional stability and supporting MONUSCO's objectives.

The collective efforts of these bodies were seen as reinforcing MONUSCO's initiatives through a coordinated and multi-faceted approach, thereby strengthening overall peacekeeping and stabilization efforts. The 50 respondents (16.1%) who were undecided recognized both the potential benefits and challenges of DRC's multiple memberships. These individuals saw the value in having diverse support from various regional bodies but also acknowledged the complexities and coordination difficulties that can arise. Their ambivalence stemmed from the dynamic and evolving nature of regional politics and the varying effectiveness of these organizations in contributing to MONUSCO's mission. The 8 respondents (2.6%) who had no knowledge and the 6 respondents (1.9%) who did not respond indicated a gap in understanding or awareness about the specific impacts of DRC's multiple memberships on MONUSCO's operations. This lack of engagement was due to limited information dissemination or general disinterest in the intricacies of regional diplomatic relations.

In light of the antecedent findings, one of the respondents stated:

> 'The DRC's multiple memberships in regional organizations do not pose a significant challenge for us in MONUSCO. In fact, these memberships often enhance MONUSCO's effectiveness by facilitating broader regional cooperation and support. We are closely working with ICGLR, AU, EAC, SADC, among others……the overlapping memberships provide additional channels for coordination and resource sharing, which can actually strengthen MONUSCO's operations rather than hinder them. The key is leveraging these connections to foster collaborative efforts, rather than viewing them as obstacles." (R05, 18/03/2024). Source: Field Data (18/03/2024).

This perspective highlights that multiple memberships can offer strategic advantages, reinforcing MONUSCO's mission through enhanced regional engagement and support. Thus, the study's findings on the impact of DRC's multiple memberships in regional organizations on MONUSCO highlight diverse perceptions. While a minority view it as a challenge due to potential conflicts and inefficiencies, a majority believe it enhances support for MONUSCO's mission. The undecided and uninformed respondents underscore the need for better communication and education about the interplay between regional organizations and international peacekeeping efforts. These insights are crucial for refining MONUSCO's strategies and fostering a more coherent and effective approach to conflict intervention in the DRC.

4.5 Rwanda and Uganda as obstacles to MONUSCO

The study explored perceptions of whether Rwanda and Uganda pose obstacles to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The results are illustrated in figure 4.3.

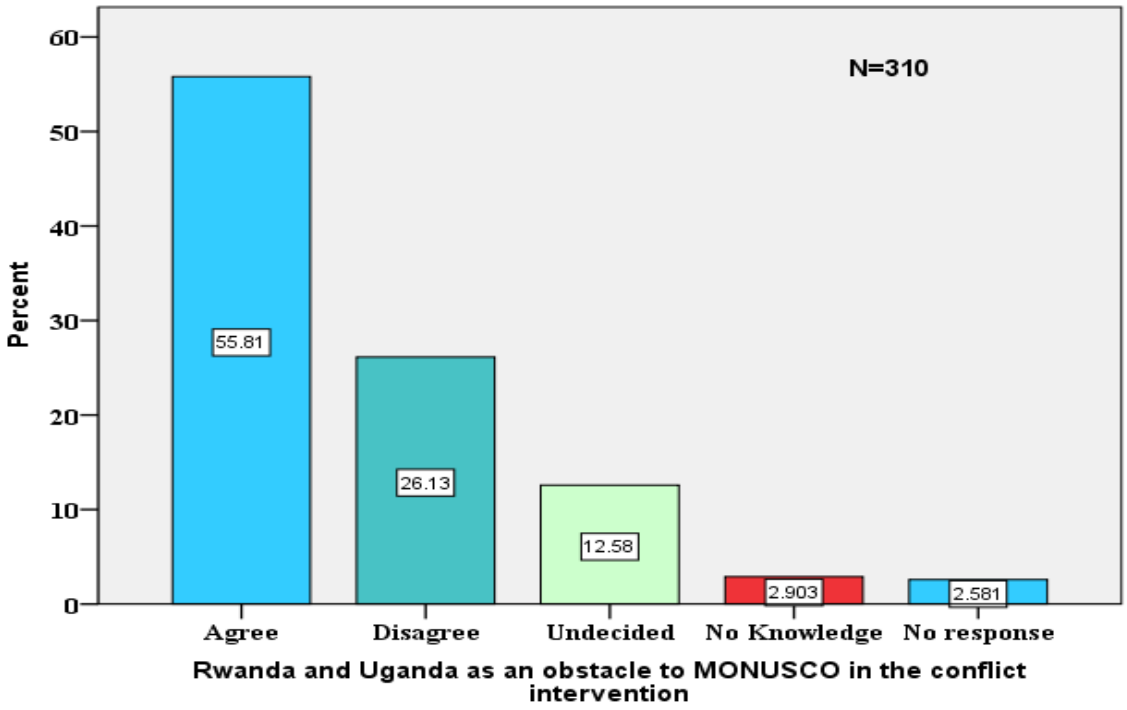

Figure 4. 3 Rwanda and Uganda as obstacles to MONUSCO

Source: Field Data,2024

Among 310 respondents, 173 (55.81%) agreed that Rwanda and Uganda are obstacles to MONUSCO, 81 (26.13%) disagreed, 39 (12.58%) were undecided, 9 (2.9%) had no knowledge on the matter, and 8 (2.6%) did not respond. These varied responses reflect differing views on the roles of Rwanda and Uganda in the DRC's conflict dynamics and their impact on MONUSCO's operations.

The majority of respondents, 173 (55.81%), who agreed that Rwanda and Uganda are obstacles to MONUSCO, drew their conclusions from the historical and ongoing involvement of these countries in the DRC's conflicts. According to the United Nations Group of Experts Report S/2024/432 (2024), both Rwanda and Uganda have been accused of supporting M23 armed group within the DRC, either directly or indirectly. This support

is often seen as a means for these countries to exert influence over the DRC's rich natural resources and to address their own security concerns and national interests. Respondents argued that the involvement of Rwanda and Uganda complicates MONUSCO's mission by adding layers of regional geopolitics to an already complex conflict. The presence of foreign-backed rebel groups can undermine MONUSCO's efforts to stabilize the region and protect civilians. Additionally, allegations of cross-border incursions and support for insurgent groups can create an environment of distrust and hostility, further hampering MONUSCO's operations. Conversely, 81 respondents (26.13%) disagreed with the notion that Rwanda and Uganda are obstacles to MONUSCO. This group believed that while Rwanda and Uganda have interests in the region, labeling them as obstacles oversimplifies the situation.

These respondents argued that the DRC's internal issues, such as weak governance, corruption, and the proliferation of numerous armed groups, are more significant challenges to MONUSCO's mission. Furthermore, some respondents saw Rwanda and Uganda as having legitimate security concerns that justify their involvement in the DRC. They believed that these countries can be partners in regional stabilization if their interests are addressed through diplomatic means and regional cooperation frameworks. The 39 respondents (12.58%) who were undecided reflected the complexity and fluidity of the situation. They recognized both the disruptive potential of Rwanda and Uganda's involvement and the multifaceted nature of the DRC's conflicts, making it difficult to take a definitive stance. These respondents were influenced by fluctuating reports and the evolving dynamics of regional politics. The 9 respondents (2.9%) who had no knowledge and the 8 respondents (2.6%) who did not respond indicated a lack of information or

engagement with the specific role of Rwanda and Uganda in the DRC's conflicts. This was due to limited access to detailed information, a focus on more immediate local issues, or general disinterest in the broader geopolitical context. The study's findings on the role of Rwanda and Uganda as obstacles to MONUSCO in the DRC reveal a spectrum of opinions. A majority view these countries as obstacles, citing their alleged support for armed groups and the added complexity their involvement brings to the conflict. A significant minority, however, disagrees, highlighting internal DRC issues and suggesting potential for regional cooperation. The undecided and uninformed respondents underscore the need for better dissemination of information and nuanced understanding of regional dynamics. These insights are essential for shaping MONUSCO's strategies and fostering more effective regional and international collaboration to achieve stability in the DRC. Plate 4.1 shows a FGD at Bunagana in the DRC.



Plate 4.1 Researcher Assistant on a red T- shirt standing during FGD in Bunagana DRC

Source: Researcher (2024)

Based on liberal peace theory, cooperative security theory, and power theory identified in Rwanda and Uganda the obstacles to the effective functioning of MONUSCO in the DRC, the application of pragmatism as a philosophical paradigm suffices. Liberal Peace theory asserts that liberal democratization and respect for human rights are key elements of sustainable peace. This is compounded by the fact that Rwanda and Uganda have been involved in the conflict in the DRC, not necessarily for the purpose of protecting civilians, but for own benefits; thereby obstructing the democratic process as well as human rights protection which is the mandate of MONUSCO.

The pragmatic here would be to confront these challenges by working right through these countries which are in a position to offer their support towards the peacebuilding agenda through diplomacy. That's why cooperative Security Theory highlights the significance of cooperation within regions and communities as a key factor in conflict regulation. Some of the things that Rwanda and Uganda have done, such as supporting armed groups or interfering in the internal affairs of the DRC, hinder effective co-operative security. In pragmatic terms this means the strengthening of regional diplomacy and the development of more robust frameworks for interstate engagement in order better to meet the security imperatives that are the motive for these interventions. Power Theory focuses on how power affects the outcome of a conflict.

These factors put MONUSCO in a precarious situation because Rwanda and Uganda are significant regional influencing powers with strategic interests. In a practical sense, the best way to deal with these power relations is to understand these motivations and find ways of dealing with them while building pressure for compliance with the rules of the post-Westphalian order. In summary, integrating these theories with pragmatism involves a

balanced approach: interacting with Rwanda and Uganda in a diplomatic manner, strengthening MONUSCO's presence and influence in the DRC, and managing the Political Affairs Division in the most efficient and productive manner.

From the antecedent findings, the study underscores that, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has faced significant challenges, particularly due to the involvement of neighbouring countries Rwanda and Uganda. Scholarly works and recent analyses provide both corroboration and criticism of the view that these countries act as obstacles to MONUSCO's mission. Supporters of the view that Rwanda and Uganda are obstacles argue that these nations have historically backed various armed groups in the eastern DRC, which complicates MONUSCO's efforts to stabilize the region.

For instance, reports indicate that Rwanda has supported the M23 rebel group, contributing to its resurgence and ongoing conflict in North Kivu since 2021 (United Nations Group of Experts Report S/2024/432, 2024). This support has undermined MONUSCO's ability to foster peace and stability, as the M23's activities disrupt local governance and security (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2023; Center on International Cooperation, 2023).

In light of the foregoing, one of the KIIs observed,

> I am a M23 fighter, and I was captured by FRDC in Bunagana locality in December, 2023 and placed in their cells since then. I can say am lucky because many of my colleagues have been killed in this conflict……Rwanda has been helping M23 to fight DRC because of minerals……but they say they are following FDLR for their self defence. Everyone knows it's not true, they are fighting DRC. We get food supplies from Uganda because it's near the border with Bunagana. (K01, 20/03/2024). Source: Field Data (20/03/2024).

According to the United Nations group of expert's report S/2024/432 (2024), Rwanda and Uganda have significant interests and influence in the region, which sometimes complicates MONUSCO's efforts to maintain peace and stability. Their actions and regional policies can create conflicting dynamics that undermine MONUSCO's mandate. Additionally, their support for various armed groups can directly impact the security environment that MONUSCO is trying to stabilize. Thus, navigating these external influences requires careful diplomacy and coordination to ensure that MONUSCO's goals align with the broader regional dynamics and challenges.

Furthermore, the legacy of regional rivalries dating back to the First and Second Congo Wars, where Rwanda and Uganda were heavily involved, continues to affect the current dynamics. Both countries have been accused of exploiting the DRC's natural resources, which fuels armed groups and perpetuates conflict. This illicit economic activity, intertwined with military support, hampers MONUSCO's efforts to disarm and demobilize these groups (United Nations Group of Experts Report S/2024/432, 2024).

On the other hand, some scholars and analysts argue that blaming Rwanda and Uganda exclusively oversimplifies the complex situation in the DRC. They point out that MONUSCO's challenges also stem from internal factors within the DRC, such as corruption, weak governance, and the proliferation of armed groups beyond just those supported by foreign nations. For example, the Congolese military itself has been implicated in abuses and illegal activities, which undermine trust in state institutions and impede peacekeeping efforts (Oxford Academic, 2023).

Furthermore, MONUSCO has faced scrutiny regarding its operational deficiencies. Critics contend that the mission has frequently exhibited a reactive stance rather than a proactive

one, facing challenges in adjusting to the changing security environment. This has prompted inquiries regarding its efficacy and the necessity for a more cohesive and locally informed peace process that tackles the fundamental causes of conflict, encompassing governance and economic challenges (Center on International Cooperation, 2023). Although considerable evidence indicates that Rwanda and Uganda have impeded MONUSCO by supporting armed factions and exploiting the DRC's resources, as detailed in the United Nations Group of Experts Report S/2024/432 (2024), it is equally important to recognize the internal difficulties faced by the DRC and the inherent limitations of MONUSCO itself. A thorough strategy that encompasses regional collaboration, enhanced Congolese institutions, and a thoughtful reassessment of MONUSCO's mandate presents a more enduring route to peace and stability in the region.

The recent UN report regarding the support of armed factions by Rwanda and Uganda, especially the purported assistance from Rwanda to the M23 rebel group, highlights the intricate and often contentious relationships within the Great Lakes region. The recent findings from the UN Group of Experts 2024 regarding the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) reveal considerable evidence indicating that the Rwandan military has been providing assistance to the M23, a militia group that has been a major contributor to the turmoil in eastern DRC (UN Security Council, Report 2023).

The report elucidates the manner in which Rwandan forces purportedly extended logistical support, armaments, and direct military involvement in the facilitation of M23 operations. The provision of this support has intensified the already precarious security landscape in the DRC, resulting in increased violence, displacement, and humanitarian emergencies. The United Nations report suggests that Rwanda is involved in actions aimed at

destabilizing the region for strategic geopolitical advantages, especially to mitigate the influence of adversarial groups active in proximity to its borders (UN Security Council Report 2023). In contrast, Uganda's engagement is primarily recognized through the lens of economic and strategic considerations.

Although Uganda has faced allegations of providing refuge and sporadic assistance to numerous armed groups, its foremost objective seems to be the protection of its economic stakes in the resource-abundant eastern DRC. The report from the United Nations reveals that officials in Uganda have participated in economic dealings with armed factions, thereby enabling the unlawful trade of minerals that contributes to the ongoing conflict (UN Security Council Report, 2023). The ramifications of these discoveries are significant. The analysis underscores the intricate regional power dynamics in which Rwanda and Uganda are both striving to assert their influence and safeguard their national interests, thereby contributing to the ongoing instability in the DRC.

This not only jeopardizes regional security but also complicates the international peacekeeping initiatives spearheaded by MONUSCO. The report from the United Nations advocates for heightened global pressure on Rwanda and Uganda to terminate their backing of armed factions and to participate constructively in efforts aimed at regional peace (UN Security Council Report, 2023). The accusations directed at Rwanda and Uganda highlight the imperative for a unified global approach to tackle the underlying factors of the conflict and ensure accountability for those perpetuating violence. This encompasses rigorous sanctions, diplomatic exertions, and the fortification of MONUSCO's mandate to effectively neutralize armed factions. The findings underscore the complex interrelations of regional politics and conflict, highlighting the need for a

comprehensive strategy in peacebuilding efforts within the Great Lakes region. The Congolese government's inability to exert authority over the remote regions of its territory, coupled with the reality that political power serves as a means to amass personal economic wealth, has created an opportunity for Rwandan forces to engage in commercial activities within the DRC.

Furthermore, the national borders of the DRC exhibit a remarkable degree of permeability, allowing for the movement of goods and individuals with minimal constraints. The permeable nature of the DRC's national borders, coupled with the regime's constrained authority, bolsters the perspective of characterizing the DRC as a fragile state governed by a robust regime. It can be inferred that Rwanda has successfully capitalized on the natural resources of the DRC due to the fragmentation of Congolese society, a consequence of prolonged detrimental neo-patrimonial practices. Had the Democratic Republic of the Congo possessed an effective state apparatus that adequately supplied its citizens with resources and ensured their protection, it is reasonable to assert that Rwanda would likely not have been able to exert such a significant influence in the region over the past fifteen years.

The UN Panel of Experts has meticulously recorded that Rwanda has taken advantage of natural resources on the Congolese side of the border, engaging in both direct mineral extraction and the facilitation of Congolese rebel groups in their acts of looting and plundering (cf. UNSC 2001; UNSC 2003; UNSC 2008). MacLean (2003) describes the 2001 report as notably illuminating, noting that the report’s enumeration of individuals engaged in enterprises that have benefited from the DRC war “reads like a ‘Who’s Who’

of prominent political and military figures in the governments in the region" (MacLean 2003:115).

Notwithstanding Rwanda's assertions regarding national security threats, The Panel possesses substantial evidence that suggests a different, more enduring objective for their presence in the DRC: "to secure property" (UNSC 2002:14). Rwanda has effectively convinced the international community of the necessity of its presence in the DRC, asserting that it is essential for maintaining its security and safeguarding itself against hostile factions in eastern DRC, which they allege were actively orchestrating an invasion. However, in opposition to Rwanda's official assertions, the Panel possesses evidence indicating that the first vice president urged their military units to foster amicable relations with the Interahamwe and, "if necessary, allow them to exploit the sub-soil for their survival" (UNSC 2002:14 p. 66).

Following a thorough examination of extensive documentation, the Panel concludes that the underlying motive for Rwanda's presence is to augment the population of Rwandans in the eastern DRC and to incentivize those who have established themselves there to endorse its economic governance (UNSC 2002:14 p. 69). A significant portion of mineral extraction in the eastern regions of the DRC has been orchestrated by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). Ten The Panel (UNSC 2001:13ff par. 64-84) illustrates that insurgents and Rwandan forces have exploited the commercial and trade framework in the DRC by intimidating local entrepreneurs and compelling them to shutter their enterprises. The Panel asserts that the objective of this strategy was to establish dominance over local commerce, culminating in an unparalleled grip on the economy of eastern DRC. The unlawful extraction of resources by Rwanda in the DRC has led to the establishment of

Congo Desk, which connects the commercial and military operations of the RPA. The Congo Desk, engaged in the trade of various metals such as Coltan and gold, maintained an entirely distinct set of financial records, with its transactions conspicuously absent from Rwanda's national budgets.

The Panel has identified sources linked to the Congo Desk that estimate its income accounted for 80 percent of all RPA expenditures in 1999. Additional analyses suggest that the contributions from the Congo Desk towards Rwanda's military expenses were approximately $320 million. The significant revenues exert a profound impact on Rwanda's foreign policies and directly inform decision-making across various domains; however, their separation from official budgets ensures they remain shielded from the oversight of international organizations. The Panel (UNSC 2001:13ff par. 64-84) illustrates that insurgents and Rwandan forces have exploited the commercial and trade framework in the DRC by intimidating local entrepreneurs and compelling them to cease operations.

The Panel asserts that the objective of this strategy was to establish dominance over local commerce, culminating in an unparalleled control over the economy of eastern DRC. The unlawful extraction of resources by Rwanda in the DRC has been enabled by the administrative frameworks they have instituted within the nation. The majority of enterprises engaged in significant activities pertaining to the extraction of natural resources are either under the ownership of the Rwandan government or held by individuals closely associated with President Kagame's inner circle. The eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo has become a haven for individuals involved in the Rwandan genocide, as the Congolese government has allowed them to reestablish their capabilities and target the Tutsi population residing there. This situation has consequently afforded Rwanda a

pretext to deploy military forces into the region. The motivations behind the Tutsi regime in Rwanda, whether rooted in security concerns or the pursuit of natural resources, or perhaps a synthesis of these factors, remain a subject of ongoing discourse. It is apparent that Rwanda's involvement in eastern DRC could not have occurred without the influence of neo-patrimonial characteristics.

The artificial and porous nature of borders, coupled with the limited power concentrated in the central regions of the vast Democratic Republic of the Congo, has significantly influenced its eastern neighbor, Rwanda. This chapter examined three distinct forms of transnational relations: the migration of refugees and military forces, the existence of informal networks functioning at the border between the two nations, and the extent of informal economic activities in eastern DRC, facilitated by minimal state oversight. Over the course of history, individuals have relocated from the densely populated regions of Rwanda to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where land is ample and mineral resources are abundant. In the early 1990s, emerging administrative policies brought the issue of nationality to the forefront in eastern DRC, prompting leaders who purported to represent various ethnic groups to vie for a stake in the political, economic, and social arenas. The Hutu constituted a significant ethnic group within the region, advocating for regional elections, as they were confident that their demographic strength could be converted into electoral success.

The Tutsi, conversely, constituted a significantly smaller segment of the population and exhibited a lack of enthusiasm towards elections, as such a process would likely result in the forfeiture of their current power and privileges. It appears that the inhabitants of North Kivu have come to perceive an election as a form of ethnic census, aimed at establishing

who holds the numerical majority and, consequently, the entitlement to govern (Turner 2007:122ff). The Tutsi, as a minority group, harboured apprehensions regarding the outcomes of such elections, leading them to forsake democratic engagement in favour of the RPF during the conflict. Refugees who flowed into Kivu following the aftermath of the genocide Rwanda had existing tensions in the area; thus, it is essential to delineate the dynamics of ethnic relations preceding the genocide. Turner (2007) posits that the First Congo War arrived in a Kivu already engulfed in conflict, and this, along with the subsequent regional war, intertwined with a pre-existing war in the North Kivu province. In chapter three, it is elucidated that various ethnic factions, identifying as 'autochthones,' have engaged in a struggle for control over the governorship of Kivu, seeking validation for their claims through support from the Kinshasa government.

Furthermore, the Rwandan Hutu and Tutsi immigrants residing in the province have pursued assistance from external sources, thereby highlighting the regional dimensions of the conflict and rendering it genuinely transnational, well in advance of the ADFL's overthrow of Mobutu in 1997 (Turner 2007:118ff). The research revealed that Rwanda, possessing a similar ethnic makeup to that of eastern DRC, has significantly contributed to the intensification of the Congolese conflicts, as both Tutsi and Hutu inhabit areas on either side of the border.

The significant ethnic groups, utilizing Kinyarwanda-now recognized as one of Rwanda's official languages alongside English, French, and Swahili commenced their settlement in this region as early as the 18th century. During the 1910s, the colonial powers delineated borders in Africa's Great Lakes region with little regard for the existing socio-political landscape, resulting in a disconnection from their primary settlement area, Rwanda, while

still maintaining significant political, trade, and cultural connections with it (Vlassenroot, 2004). The delineation of African borders is widely recognized as having disregarded the geographical distribution of diverse tribal communities throughout the continent. This elucidates the reasons behind the Tutsi's presence in the regions of the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda. Furthermore, a significant number of Tutsis aligned their identity more closely with their ethnic group than with their nation of residence (DeRouen & Heo, 2007). This perspective sheds light on the claims made by certain officials of the current Rwandan government (largely composed of Tutsis) that North Kivu represents “an extension of Rwanda” (Fofana, 2009, p. 36). Certainly, the historical narrative of Rwanda post-1994 indicates that a primary objective of Paul Kagame's administration has been to safeguard and advance the interests of the Tutsi community. This is particularly evident in the context of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where, during the tenure of Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko from 1965 to 1997, the Tutsi were systematically stripped of their citizenship rights, thereby inhibiting their engagement in political processes and economic activities. This occurred notwithstanding the enactment of a law in 1972 that permitted them to possess Congolese citizenship; thus, Tutsis were officially recognized as citizens, yet they lacked associated rights, including land ownership (Muraya & Ahere, 2014, p. 14).

Following the genocide in 1994, approximately 1.2 million Rwandan Hutus sought refuge in the eastern territories of Zaire (Kisangani, 2012), apprehensive of potential retribution from the Tutsis, who were consolidated under the military-political entity known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), headed by P. Kagame. This heightened tensions among different Congolese factions, as well as between Hutus arriving from Rwanda and the local

Tutsi population, contributing to the onset of the First Congo War in 1996 (Muraya & Ahere, 2014, p. 6). Some scholars aptly regard this conflict as a "offshoot of the Rwandan genocide" (Bjarnadóttir, 2017, p. 4).

A significant number of refugees established their residence in eastern Congolese urban centers: approximately 850,000 in Goma, between 200,000 and 300,000 in Bukavu, and over 60,000 in Uvira. Among this population were roughly 25,000 former members of the Armed Forces of Rwanda (Forces Armée Rwandaises, FAR) and around 40,000 Interahamwe militiamen, predominantly Hutu individuals implicated in violent actions against the Tutsi community (Kisangani, 2000, p. 173). The Hutu combatants initiated a vigorous military-political endeavour in the Congo, creating a semblance of "Hutuland" within the provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu. This served as a strategic base from which they intermittently launched incursions into Rwandan territory, while also confronting Tutsi Congolese, referred to as the Banyamulenge (or the Banyarwanda), in armed conflicts. The surge of inter-ethnic conflicts in North Kivu commenced in the latter part of 1995, as local political figures incited competition among Hutus, Tutsis, and various other communities residing in the eastern region of the DRC (Vlassenroot & Arnould, 2016). This led to the formation of numerous tribal militias that positioned themselves against either Kigali or Kinshasa, though they frequently engaged in hostilities with one another. In October 1996, the authorities of South Kivu issued a demand for the Tutsi population to vacate Zaire.

After rejecting their overtures, the Banyamulenge sought assistance from the Rwandan government. Consequently, on October 17, a comprehensive conflict erupted in the province, rapidly extending throughout the eastern region of the country, with Mobutu

aligning himself with the Hutus. The Banyamulenge, having established the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo, AFDL3), under the leadership of the Congolese politician and revolutionary Laurent Desire Kabila, engaged in confrontation with the regular Congolese army. A primary objective of the AFDL was to dismantle the Mobutu regime. In May 1997, bolstered by the Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF) and the Ugandan army, AFDL troops advanced into Kinshasa, prompting Mobutu to flee the nation. Subsequently, on May 29, Kabila was declared president. Some researchers suggest that the AFDL was established to obscure the incursion of Rwanda and Uganda into Zaire. Certainly, the actions of the Alliance afforded Kigali the chance to effectively dismantle the rear bases of the Rwandan Hutu (Thom, 1999). The Rwandan authorities were convinced that they had secured a president in the Congo who would effectively address the so-called “Hutu problem,” which entailed dismantling the militias and thereby mitigating the threat posed to the government in Kigali. Nonetheless, Kabila's ascent to power signified the commencement of a novel phase in the political evolution of the DRC. The Congolese have charged the new leader with a betrayal of national interests, alleging that he has effectively "sold" both Kivus to Rwanda.

Anti-Rwandan sentiment began to proliferate within the nation, leading to confrontations between the Mai Mai armed militias, which encompass various ethnic groups, and the RDF units deployed in the Congo. In the midst of ongoing political turbulence, Kabila successfully implemented a range of economic reforms and settled a debt of USD 1.5 million to the International Monetary Fund in June 1998, thereby garnering the trust of the global community in his administration. Motivated by a desire for autonomy, the president

sought to liberate the eastern regions of the DRC from Rwandan influence and, on July 27, 1998, declared the expulsion of all foreign military and civilian officials, predominantly comprising Rwandan Tutsis. Through this action, he concluded the military alliance that had facilitated his ascent to power.

By this juncture, the military and entrepreneurs from Rwanda had decisively entrenched themselves within the Congolese territory, particularly in regions rich in valuable minerals. They reaped substantial profits from their exportation, a lucrative endeavour they were understandably reluctant to relinquish. On August 2, 1998, an insurrection emerged against the Kabila regime, instigated by his recent allies Tutsi army officers, with backing from Rwanda. This signified the onset of the Second Congo War. On August 12, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (Rassemblement congolais pour la democratie, RCD) was established in Kigali, emerging as the principal force in opposition to Kinshasa.

Kabila subsequently established a coalition with the Burundian Hutu armed faction known as the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie, FDD) and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (Forces Démocratiques de Liberation du Rwanda, FDLR), which amalgamated former members of the Rwandan Armed Forces alongside the Hutu militia Interahamwe. The security services of the DRC initiated a campaign against Tutsis, characterized by arrests, the misappropriation or destruction of property, and, in certain instances, acts of murder. Speculation emerged within the Congolese populace regarding Rwanda's intentions to assert full control over the resource-abundant Kivu region. Since the autumn of 1998, the RCD has asserted its influence over numerous regions of South Kivu and initiated trading activities in the urban centers of Goma, Bukavu, and Uvira. The Rwandan government

leveraged rumors surrounding a purported massacre allegedly orchestrated by Kabila against the Congolese Tutsis as a justification for invasion. Consequently, a portion of northeastern Congo was occupied by Rwandan, Ugandan, and Burundian forces, who assisted the RCD in initiating an offensive towards Kinshasa. In November 1998, Kagame, who was serving as Vice President of Rwanda, admitted for the first time that the RDF had provided support to the rebels during the Second Congo War (Stearns, 2012, pp. 16-20).

In response to the political and economic encroachment of Rwanda in the eastern territories of the DRC, local authorities initiated the formation of tribal militias, referred to as Mai Mai, primarily aimed at resisting the perceived "domination of the Tutsi." Militias engaged in combat with Rwandan forces that backed the Banyamulenge (Ngolet, 2011). Through the assistance of the Mai Mai and military forces from several African nations, whose backing Kabila successfully secured, he was able to thwart the assault on his capital. In January 1999, the Windhoek Peace Treaty was formally executed; subsequently, in July 1999, the Lusaka ceasefire agreement was established. In the year 2000, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo established peace agreements with both Rwanda and Uganda; however, hostilities persisted, characterized by ongoing armed confrontations among tribal militias and between these groups and the national army. Amid a backdrop of perpetual turmoil, on January 16, 2001, L.-D. Kabila met his demise, leading to his son Joseph Kabila assuming control of the nation.

The evolution of the Rwandan leader from a rebel to a politician coincided with the metamorphosis of the current ruling party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), from a rebel faction to a political entity. While the Front was founded in Uganda by Rwandan Tutsi refugees in the late 1980s, it was during Kagame's leadership that it evolved into a

disciplined and effective military entity (Prunier, 1998, p. 132). The RPF was restructured into a political party to enable recent field commanders to seek ministerial roles and representative mandates. However, this shift into a political framework did not coincide with the demilitarization of the Front, particularly as the new authorities were immediately confronted with military threats from former participants in the genocide (Prunier, 1997, p. 322).

The RPF's substantial dependence on military forces marked a notable characteristic of Rwanda's political evolution, wherein the process of peacebuilding following the genocide unfolded amidst an increasing militarization of the governing authority (Des Forges, 1999, pp. 699—701). In 2003, prompted by the encouragement of Western donors, Rwanda conducted its inaugural national elections. Prior to declaring his candidacy, Kagame officially resigned from the military and secured 95% of the electoral vote. However, his history of defiance was evident: following the conclusion of the Second Congo War that year, the Rwandan government persisted in its support for Tutsi paramilitaries in the eastern region of the DRC, contravening the embargo by supplying them with arms, personnel, and logistical support.

Indeed, the origins of both the First and Second Congo Wars can be traced back to Rwanda's involvement in the internal matters of Zaire - DRC. The RPF has yet to achieve the installation of a leader entirely devoted to Kigali in Kinshasa. However, the conflicts, which have also engaged other African nations, have resulted in the tragic loss of over 5 million lives (Hensell & Gerdes, 2017, p. 72), with significant responsibility attributed to the eastern neighbor of the Congo. The United Nations and the African Union have consistently charged the Rwandan government with grave human rights abuses in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nevertheless, Western nations have persisted in extending greater assistance to Kigali than to Kinshasa, largely due to Kagame's widespread acclaim for his role in halting the genocide and his initiatives aimed at the economic revitalization of Rwanda (Hensell & Gerdes, 2017, p. 68).

The research revealed that the ongoing instability in the DRC can be attributed primarily to its substantial deposits of copper, cobalt, columbite-tantalite, bauxite, iron ore, diamonds, gold, and other minerals. These resources are of significant interest to diverse factions within the local populace, armed transnational entities, and transnational corporations. Since the late 1990s, almost all of the gold (98%) and diamonds exported by Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Central African Republic have been illicitly transported out of the DRC (Martin & Taylor, 2014, p. 1). Consequently, Rwanda predominantly focuses on the extraction of tin, tungsten, and tantalite. In July 2002, a peace accord was established between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda in Pretoria, thereby formally concluding the Second Congo War. Nonetheless, this accord, akin to several others executed in 2002—2003, merely resulted in the retreat of a considerable contingent of foreign forces from Congolese soil and failed to eradicate the ongoing violence.

The ongoing instability can be attributed to several factors, notably the unwavering stance of Kagame's government, which sought to maintain revenue from the export of Congolese minerals. Concurrently, the persistent operations of the Hutu armed group FDLR in these regions, which opposed Kigali and garnered support from Kinshasa, further complicated the situation (Reyntjens, 2009). The FDLR, comprising approximately 2,500 combatants, has undeniably presented and continues to present a significant security challenge in the

border regions of Rwanda. This group engages in intermittent incursions into these areas and is openly committed to the objective of dismantling the Kagame administration. In the context of Rwanda, the FDLR represented not merely a singular rebel faction; rather, it was the actions of its militants that led to the tragic genocide of countless Tutsis. The apprehensions of the Tutsi regarding their potential marginalization culminated in the establishment of the National Congress for the Defense of the People (Congrès national pour la défense du peuple, CNDP) in 2006, with backing from the Rwandan authorities, aimed at countering the FDLR and securing Tutsi representation within Congolese political spheres. The CNDP swiftly emerged as the preeminent military force in the Kivus, successfully asserting political and economic dominance through its engagements with local Hutu militias.

In January 2009, there emerged a sense of optimism regarding military-political stabilization in the eastern region of the DRC, as negotiations between Congolese and Rwandan parties culminated in a ceasefire agreement and the incorporation of CNDP fighters into the national armed forces. However, in the lead-up to the 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections, Kinshasa sought to undermine the rebels by monopolizing the mineral smuggling operations, thereby significantly constraining the financial resources available to the group. In reaction, a segment of the CNDP fighters defected from the military and, in 2012, established an armed faction known as the March 23 Movement (M23), under the leadership of General Bosco “Terminator” Ntaganda, a Rwandan Tutsi who had previously served in the Congolese army and orchestrated a rebellion. In 2013, the Rwandan authorities backed the M23 uprising against the regime of J. Kabila. Although this insurrection was subdued by December of that year, the rebel organization

remained intact (Vlassenroot & Arnould, 2016, p. 7) and, by the spring of 2022, emerged as a significant actor in the ongoing conflict between the DRC and Rwanda.

Consequently, following the conclusion of the Second Congo War in 2002, the relationship between the DRC and Rwanda experienced multiple instances of heightened tensions that culminated in armed confrontations. The foreign economic orientation of J. Kabila towards China played a significant role in this dynamic, while Kagame benefited from Western support, which aimed to enhance access to Congolese resources, including via Kigali. In the mid-2010s, Rwanda, despite not engaging in coltan mining, emerged as the preeminent exporter of columbite-tantalite concentrate utilized in radio electronics. In 2014, the nation supplied 2,466 tons of this metal to the global market, generating revenue of USD 134.5 million. During the period spanning 2021 to the first half of 2022, Rwanda accrued approximately USD 250 million from coltan sales. The nation additionally engages in the export of diamonds and gold, resources that it does not extract (Olsson & Congdon, 2003, p. 29). Consequently, a district in Kigali acquired the designation “Merci, Congo” due to its towering edifices, which are allegedly constructed from the profits derived from the commerce of Congolese raw materials. Felix Tshisekedi, previously an opposition leader, ascended to the presidency of the DRC after the general elections of 2018. Among the objectives of the regime, articulated by him during the electoral campaign and subsequent to the election, alongside the conventional aims (combating corruption, reforming the state apparatus, the armed forces, etc.), he also pledged to attain political stability in the eastern regions through the enhancement of relations with neighbouring countries, chiefly with Rwanda. Shortly thereafter, multiple agreements were formalized between Kinshasa and Kigali, encompassing aspects of gold mining. Nevertheless,

throughout Tshisekedi's administration, the incidence of violence in the Kivus remained unabated thousands of civilians lost their lives, and in May 2021, the president enacted a "state of siege" (SS) in North Kivu, akin to a "state of emergency." Nevertheless, the circumstances deteriorated further, as the authorities employed the SS to prohibit large gatherings and engage in various forms of power misuse. During the autumn of 2021, M23 recommenced its military endeavours, purportedly with the backing of Rwanda. The insurgents insisted on the execution of the 2013 Nairobi agreement by the Tshisekedi administration, which stipulated that they would be afforded amnesty, while individuals who had previously sought refuge outside the DRC would be permitted to return to their homeland. On October 18, 2021, the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo alleged that the Rwandan military had intruded into six villages located in North Kivu. Representatives of the RDF indicated that they were pursuing smugglers who had crossed the border into the Rubavu region, while simultaneously criticizing the Congolese military for allegedly supporting the FDLR. In March 2022, M23 launched an offensive against two positions held by the DRC armed forces in proximity to the borders with Uganda and Rwanda.

The assault, coupled with the mutual allegations exchanged between Kinshasa and Kigali, culminated in a conflict that precipitated confrontations between the military forces of both nations. In May, the armed forces of the DRC conducted shelling in the Musanze region of Rwanda's Northern Province, resulting in injuries to multiple individuals. In late May, the flights connecting the two nations were suspended. In June, Kinshasa and Kigali leveled accusations against one another regarding shelling incidents, specifically targeting North Kivu and the Western Province of Rwanda. On June 13, M23 forces seized control of the

Congolese city of Bunagana, resulting in the displacement of approximately 30,000 residents who sought refuge in Uganda. A defense official from the DRC asserted that the RDF was involved in the assault, labeling it a “Rwandan invasion.” On June 15, a multitude of demonstrators convened to express their dissent regarding Rwanda's actions in the Congolese city of Goma. The demonstration rapidly transformed into chaos as furious crowds pillaged Rwandan-owned establishments, set vehicles ablaze, and Congolese Special Forces were compelled to deploy tear gas to avert confrontations at a Rwandan border checkpoint. On that very day, the Tshisekedi administration enacted a suspension of all agreements established with Kigali and issued a demand for the withdrawal of the Rwandan military from the DRC. On June 17, a soldier from the Democratic Republic of the Congo crossed the border wielding an AK-47 and was subsequently shot dead by a Rwandan policeman; in retaliation, Kinshasa took the measure of closing the border with Rwanda. What are the underlying factors contributing to the deterioration of relations? Initially, Tshisekedi pledged to stabilize the situation in eastern Congo while concurrently indicating his desire to impose stricter regulations on the extraction and exportation of minerals and other commodities.

This stance appears to conflict with the interests of Rwanda, which benefits significantly from smuggling operations. Furthermore, in November 2021, the Democratic Republic of the Congo entered into an agreement with Uganda to initiate a collaborative military operation targeting the Islamist group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). This arrangement permitted the deployment of Ugandan troops within the DRC, inevitably raising concerns for the Rwandan government regarding the potential erosion of its influence in the region. It is conceivable that this may elucidate Kigali's involvement in the resurgence of the M23.

The political interests of Rwanda in the DRC are intricate and multifaceted. Kagame has consistently articulated his desire to avert discrimination against Tutsis; however, the backing of various Congolese militias by his regime paradoxically exacerbates inter-ethnic tensions and heightens the vulnerability of Tutsis. It is to be expected that the leaders of the Congolese Tutsi community have consistently urged Kigali to cease its support for the CNDP and M23. The Tshisekedi administration, in a bid to mask its failure to address the myriad internal challenges facing the DRC, has sought to frame these issues as a conflict with Rwanda, particularly given Kinshasa's justifiable grievances with Kigali.

4.6 Deployment of East Africa Community Regional Force (EACRF)

The East Africa Community Regional Force (EACRF) was deployed from 2022 to 2023 with a mandate to foster peace and stability in the region. This deployment was a significant step towards addressing the protracted conflicts that have plagued the Great Lakes region, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The EACRF aimed to enhance regional security cooperation and leverage the collective strengths of East African nations to combat instability and insurgency. The deployment of the EACRF was driven by multiple regional interests. East African countries, including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda, have long recognized that instability in the DRC has far-reaching implications for regional security and economic development. The presence of armed groups and the resulting humanitarian crises pose significant threats to border security and regional trade.

By contributing to the EACRF, these countries aimed to stabilize the DRC, thereby creating a more secure environment conducive to economic growth and development across East Africa (International Crisis Group, 2022). During its one-year deployment, the

EACRF engaged in various operations to disarm militias, protect civilians, and facilitate humanitarian aid. These efforts contributed to a reduction in violence in some of the most volatile areas of the DRC. The EACRF's approach emphasized collaboration with MONUSCO, the UN peacekeeping mission, to maximize impact and resources (United Nations, 2023). However, the deployment also faced challenges. Coordination among the diverse military forces of the East African nations required significant logistical and diplomatic efforts. Furthermore, the deeply entrenched conflicts in the region, driven by local grievances and international interests, posed formidable obstacles to the EACRF's peacebuilding efforts. Despite these challenges, the EACRF's deployment marked a critical step in regional efforts to take ownership of security and stability issues (African Union, 2023).

The EACRF's one-year deployment from 2022 to 2023 highlighted the potential of regional forces to address complex security challenges in the Great Lakes region. By fostering cooperation among East African nations and working alongside international partners, the EACRF made meaningful contributions to peace and stability. This deployment underscores the importance of regional initiatives in complementing broader international peacekeeping efforts and sets a precedent for future collaborative security endeavours.

4.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has examined conflict intervention institutional frameworks employed by the UN (MONUSCO) in the DR CONGO. It has explored the institutional frameworks adopted by MONUSCO, it has also delved into how the rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO in orchestrating DRC conflict, it has also examined whether DRC’s multiple

membership compounds the already volatile situation. Majority of the people interviewed believe that MONUSCO's mission mandates are often broad and subject to interpretation, leading to inconsistencies in implementation. Critically, it has examined the role of Rwanda and Uganda in DRC's conflict. Thus, the involvement of Rwanda and Uganda complicates MONUSCO's mission by adding layers of regional geopolitics to an already complex conflict. The next chapter, is chapter five, which delves into the capability and capacity available for MONUSCO in handling the DRC conflict.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CAPABILITIES OF MONUSCO IN ENHANCING DRC'S PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES

The chapter highlights the research findings on the Capabilities of Monusco in Enhancing DRC's Peace and Security Processes as second objective of the study touching on whether MONUSCO has well-trained soldiers to handle conflict in DRC, whether MONUSCO is a reactive and not a proactive force, if MONUSCO is well-equipped to deal with conflict in the DRC, MONUSCO's mandate and peace and security in the DRC, Peace initiatives and peace efforts in the DRC, MONUSCO ineffective due to its prolonged stay in the DRC and whether required to exit to realize peace in the DRC. It ends with a chapter summary.

5.1 MONUSCO has well-trained soldiers to handle conflict in DRC

The study aimed to evaluate whether MONUSCO has adequately trained soldiers to manage the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The results are illustrated in Figure 5.1.

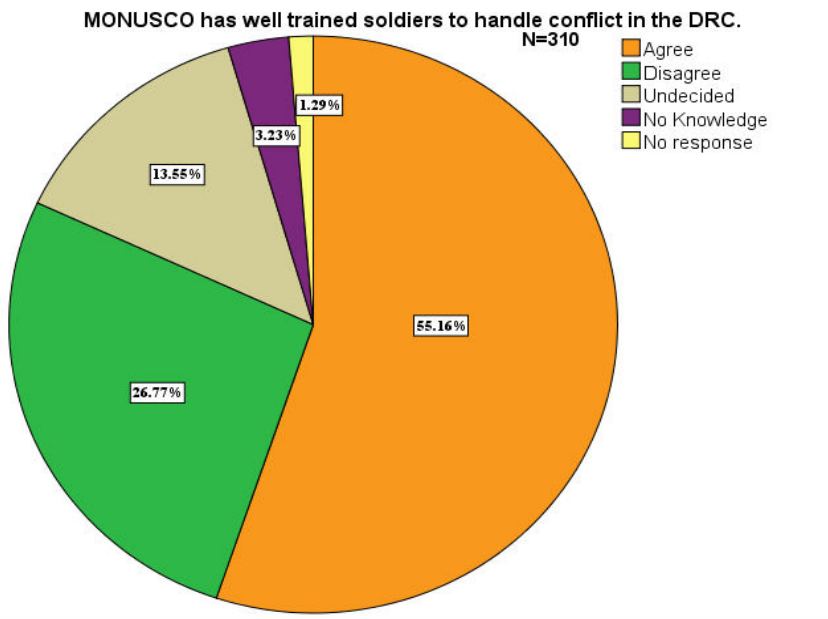

Figure 5. 1 MONUSCO has well-trained soldiers to handle conflict in DRC

Source: Field Data,2024

The findings indicate a majority 171 (56.16%) of the 310 respondents agreed that MONUSCO possesses well-trained soldiers for this task, while 83 (26.77%) disagreed, 42 (13.55%) were undecided, 10 (3.23%) did not know, and 4 (1.29%) did not respond.

The majority's agreement suggests confidence in MONUSCO's training programs, which are often cited for their comprehensive nature, involving both military and humanitarian training components. These programs are designed to ensure soldiers are not only equipped for combat but also for engaging with local communities, understanding cultural sensitivities, and providing necessary support during humanitarian crises. This holistic approach is seen as vital in a complex environment like the DRC, where the line between military operations and humanitarian efforts can often blur. The 83 (26.77%) who disagreed reflected dissatisfaction with MONUSCO's operational effectiveness rather

than its training per se. Critics often argue that despite good training, MONUSCO forces face significant operational challenges, such as logistical issues, insufficient equipment, and lack of timely intelligence. These factors can hinder their ability to effectively manage conflicts, leading to perceptions of inadequacy despite solid training backgrounds.

The 42 (13.55%) who were undecided and the 10 (3.23%) with no knowledge indicated a lack of sufficient information about MONUSCO's training processes and on-ground performance. This emerged from limited communication or visibility of MONUSCO's operations to the broader public. Increasing transparency and public engagement about their training and operations helped bridge this information gap. Finally, the 4 (1.29%) with no response represented respondents who were either indifferent or unwilling to engage with the question, which is common in survey-based studies where not all participants felt knowledgeable or interested in every query. The researcher, therefore, argues that, while a majority view MONUSCO's soldiers as well-trained, the significant minority who disagree or are undecided highlight the need for addressing operational challenges and improving public communication.

In support of the findings, one of the KIIs commented,

> We always see MONUSCO soldiers on their vehicles patrolling while armed with weapons. We are aware they are well-trained and equipped to handle the complex conflicts like this in our country. They conduct live firing exercises, however their extensive training and preparation should be commensurate in addressing the diverse security challenges the mission faces (K02, 21/03/2024). Source: Field Data (21/03/2024).

The MONUSCO troops bring valuable expertise in managing high-intensity situations and conducting effective peacekeeping operations. However, despite their skills and readiness, the success of their efforts also depends on adequate support, coordination, and strategic

alignment with broader mission goals. The professionalism of MONUSCO's troops is a significant asset, yet it needs to be complemented by robust institutional and operational frameworks to fully leverage its capabilities. To corroborate the findings on MONUSCO's well-trained soldiers to handle conflict in the DRC, it's essential to integrate perspectives from cooperative security theory, which emphasizes collective security efforts and cooperative engagement in peacekeeping operations. MONUSCO's deployment of well-trained soldiers not only enhances its operational effectiveness but also contributes to regional stability by addressing security threats and supporting conflict resolution efforts. Cooperative security theory posits that international security is best achieved through collaborative efforts, where states and international organizations work together to manage shared security challenges (Adler, 1992). In the context of MONUSCO, well-trained soldiers play a crucial role in implementing this theory by contributing to a collective security framework aimed at maintaining peace and security in the DRC (Barnett, 2011). Scholarly literature supports the effectiveness of well-trained peacekeepers in conflict zones. According to Bellamy *et al* (2020), peacekeepers' training in conflict management, human rights protection, and community engagement enhances their ability to navigate complex environments and respond effectively to security threats.

MONUSCO's training programs for soldiers align with these principles, aiming to equip personnel with the skills and knowledge needed to uphold international norms and operational standards (UN, 2021). Moreover, cooperative security theory underscores the importance of trust-building and cooperation between international forces, local authorities, and communities in conflict-affected areas (Buzan, 1991). MONUSCO's emphasis on training not only enhances its operational capabilities but also fosters

partnerships with local stakeholders, promoting collaborative security practices essential for sustainable peacebuilding (Boulden, 2004).

Thus, MONUSCO's deployment of well-trained soldiers reflects a commitment to cooperative security principles, emphasizing collaboration, training, and effective conflict management strategies in the DRC. By leveraging these capabilities, MONUSCO contributes to regional stability and peace, aligning with cooperative security theory's principles of collective action and shared responsibility in international security.

5.2 MONUSCO is a reactive and not a proactive force

The study aimed to assess whether MONUSCO is reactive or proactive in handling the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The results are illustrated in table 5.1.

Table 5. 1 MONUSCO is a reactive and not a proactive force

MONUSCO is a reactive and not a proactive force					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	167	53.9	53.9	53.9
	Disagree	89	28.7	28.7	82.6
	Undecided	39	12.6	12.6	95.2
	No Knowledge	11	3.5	3.5	98.7
	No response	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data, 2024

The findings reveal that out of 310 respondents, 167 (53.9%) agreed that MONUSCO is reactive rather than proactive, 89 (28.7%) disagreed, 39 (12.6%) were undecided, 11 (3.5%) had no knowledge, and 4 (1.3%) had no response. The majority's perception that MONUSCO is reactive can be attributed to several factors. One major reason is the frequent criticism that MONUSCO's interventions often come after conflicts have escalated rather than preventing them. This perception is reinforced by high-profile incidents where MONUSCO forces arrived too late to prevent violence or protect civilians, thereby contributing to the view that they are responding to crises instead of preemptively addressing root causes.

Those who disagreed 89 (28.7%) believed that MONUSCO's efforts to engage in preventive measures, such as community engagement and conflict resolution initiatives, are substantial. They pointed to instances where MONUSCO has successfully de-escalated potential conflicts through diplomacy and collaboration with local authorities. Additionally, this group recognized the complex and unpredictable nature of the conflict in the DRC, acknowledging that despite best efforts, some reactive measures are unavoidable. The undecided respondents 39 (12.6%) reflected the nuanced reality of MONUSCO's operations. They saw both proactive and reactive elements in MONUSCO's actions, making it difficult to categorize the mission strictly as one or the other. This ambivalence arose from mixed outcomes of MONUSCO's initiatives, where some proactive efforts are overshadowed by reactive responses to unforeseen violence.

The 11 (3.5%) who did not know indicated a gap in public awareness or understanding of MONUSCO's operational strategies. This resulted from insufficient communication from MONUSCO regarding their preventive measures and successes. Enhanced transparency

and public reporting on their proactive efforts helped inform this group. Finally, the 4 (1.3%) who did not respond simply reflected a lack of interest or engagement with the issue, a common occurrence in survey responses. The researcher, therefore, opines that, while a majority perceives MONUSCO as reactive, the presence of significant dissenting and undecided opinions suggests a complex picture of the mission's operations in the DRC. Corroborating the findings that MONUSCO is perceived as a reactive rather than proactive force in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) involves exploring its operational dynamics through the lens of cooperative security theory and drawing insights from current scholarly literature.

Cooperative security theory emphasizes collective security efforts and cooperative engagement among states and international organizations to manage shared security challenges effectively (Adler, 1992). MONUSCO's reactive posture can be understood within the context of its mandate and operational constraints. The mission primarily responds to immediate threats and crises rather than preemptively addressing underlying causes of conflict. This reactive approach is often necessitated by the volatile security environment in the DRC, where armed groups, political instability, and humanitarian crises constantly challenge peacekeeping efforts (Bellamy *et al.,* 2020).

Scholars argue that peacekeeping operations like MONUSCO face inherent challenges in transitioning from reactive to proactive roles. According to Caplan (2005), peacekeeping missions often struggle with limited mandates, resource constraints, and political complexities that hinder their ability to proactively engage in conflict prevention and resolution. MONUSCO's mandate, focusing on protection of civilians, stabilization, and support for political processes, reflects these operational realities (UN, 2021). Moreover,

Boulden (2004) notes that peacekeeping missions operate in environments where local actors and international stakeholders had divergent interests and priorities, further complicating efforts to adopt proactive strategies. MONUSCO's reliance on cooperation with host governments, regional organizations, and international partners underscores the cooperative nature of its security approach (Bellamy *et al*., 2020).

In practice, MONUSCO's reactive role is evident in its response to outbreaks of violence, human rights abuses, and humanitarian emergencies in the DRC. The mission deploys troops, conducts patrols, and provides humanitarian assistance in reaction to unfolding events, aiming to mitigate immediate threats to civilian populations and stabilize conflict-affected areas (UN, 2021).

However, scholars argue for enhancing MONUSCO's proactive capabilities through robust intelligence gathering, early warning systems, and targeted engagement with local communities to address root causes of conflict (Richmond, 2018). Cooperative security theory supports such initiatives by advocating for collaborative approaches that integrate conflict prevention strategies into peacekeeping operations (Adler, 1992). Consequently, while MONUSCO operates within a reactive framework due to operational constraints and the complex security environment in the DRC, there are ongoing discussions on enhancing its proactive role through strategic adaptations and cooperative security practices. By leveraging cooperative partnerships and adopting comprehensive security strategies, MONUSCO can contribute more effectively to sustainable peace and stability in the region.

5.3 MONUSCO is well-equipped to deal with conflict in the DRC

The study aimed to assess whether MONUSCO is well equipped to handle conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The results are illustrated in figure 5.2.

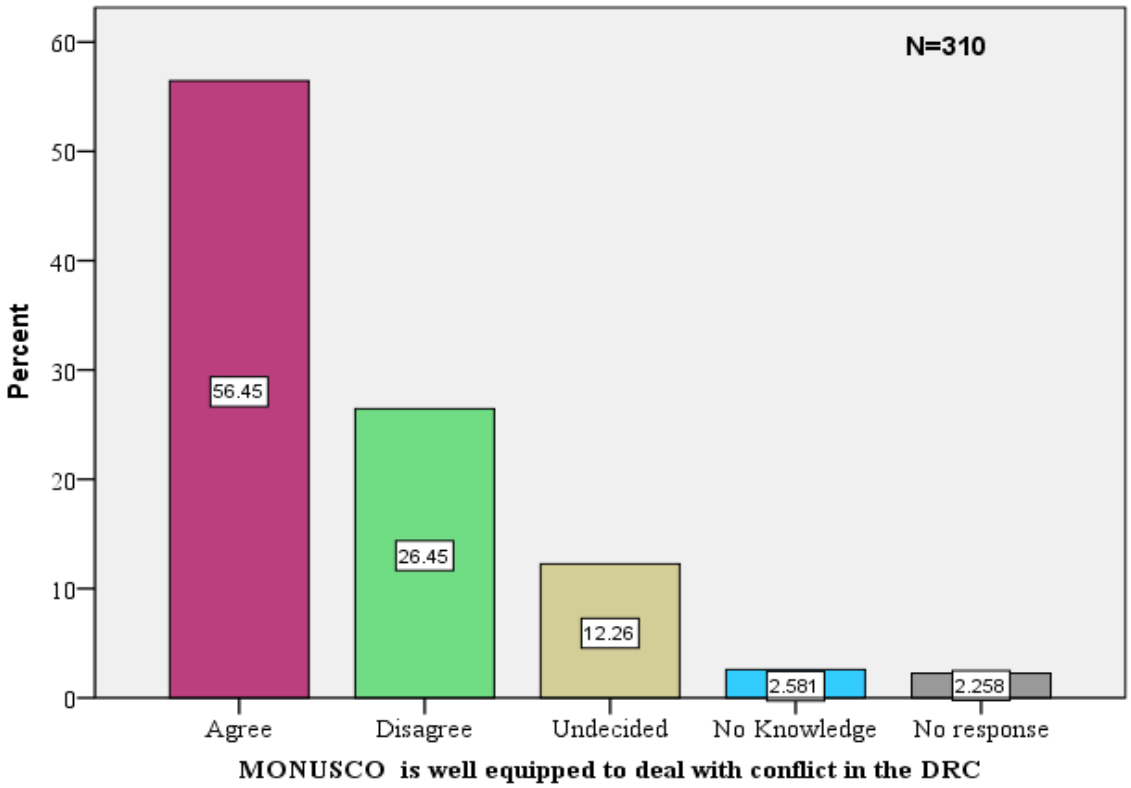

Figure 5. 2 MONUSCO is well-equipped to deal with conflict in the DRC

Source: Field Data, 2024

Out of 310 respondents, 167 (56.45%) agreed that MONUSCO is well equipped, 89 (26.45%) disagreed, 39 (12.26%) were undecided, 11 (2.58%) had no knowledge, and 4 (1.29%) had no response. The majority's agreement suggests that many believe MONUSCO has the necessary resources, personnel, and equipment to address conflicts effectively. This perspective stemmed from the mission's extensive logistical and

operational support, which includes advanced military hardware, transportation, communication systems, and comprehensive training programs. MONUSCO's ability to deploy rapid reaction forces and its access to UN resources also reinforced this positive perception.

Conversely, the 89 (26.45%) who disagreed pointed to instances where MONUSCO's equipment and resources have been insufficient or poorly utilized. Critics often highlight challenges such as delays in response times, inadequate supplies in critical situations, and logistical hurdles that impede the mission's effectiveness. These shortcomings can lead to skepticism about MONUSCO's overall preparedness and capability to manage the complex and dynamic conflict landscape in the DRC. The 39 (12.26%) of undecided respondents reflected the complexity of MONUSCO's operational environment. They saw both strengths and weaknesses in MONUSCO's equipment and logistical strategies, making it difficult to form a definitive opinion. This group recognized that while MONUSCO has significant resources, the sheer scale and unpredictability of the conflict sometimes overwhelm these capabilities.

Those with no knowledge 11 (2.58%) represented individuals who are either uninformed about MONUSCO's operational specifics or do not follow the mission's activities closely. This knowledge gap could be addressed through better dissemination of information regarding MONUSCO's capabilities and accomplishments. The small percentage 4 (1.29%) who did not respond indicated a lack of interest or engagement with the topic, which is common in survey responses. The researcher therefore argues that, while a majority of respondent’s view MONUSCO as well equipped to deal with conflicts in the

DRC, a significant minority highlight operational and logistical challenges, reflecting the complex and multifaceted nature of peacekeeping in the region.

Corroborating the findings that MONUSCO is well-equipped to deal with conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) involves examining its capabilities within the framework of cooperative security theory and drawing insights from current scholarly literature. Cooperative security theory emphasizes collaborative efforts among states and international organizations to manage security challenges collectively and effectively (Adler, 1992). MONUSCO's capacity to handle conflict in the DRC is underpinned by its robust military and logistical capabilities. The mission deploys troops equipped with advanced weaponry, armored vehicles, and communication systems to respond to security threats and protect civilians (UN, 2021). This readiness is crucial in the volatile and complex environment of the DRC, where armed groups and political instability pose significant challenges to peace and stability (Bellamy et al., 2020). Scholars argue that peacekeeping missions like MONUSCO benefit from comprehensive training programs that enhance their operational effectiveness.

According to Bellamy et al. (2020), peacekeepers' training in conflict management, human rights protection, and community engagement enables them to navigate challenging environments and respond appropriately to security incidents. MONUSCO's training initiatives align with these principles, emphasizing professionalism and adherence to international humanitarian norms (UN, 2021).

Moreover, MONUSCO's logistical capabilities play a crucial role in its operational success. The mission maintains strategic supply chains, medical facilities, and transportation assets that support rapid deployment and sustainment of peacekeeping

operations across vast and remote areas of the DRC (UN, 2021). This logistical infrastructure enhances MONUSCO's ability to maintain operational tempo and respond effectively to emerging threats. Thus, MONUSCO's effectiveness in conflict management is evident in its proactive engagement with local communities and collaboration with regional partners.

The mission coordinates joint operations with the African Union and regional organizations to address transnational security challenges, including cross-border movements of armed groups and illicit activities (UN, 2021). Such cooperative efforts underscore MONUSCO's role in promoting regional stability through collective security practices. However, challenges persist, including resource constraints, political complexities, and the evolving nature of conflicts in the DRC. Scholars advocate for continuous adaptation and innovation in MONUSCO's operational strategies to address these challenges effectively (Richmond, 2018).

Cooperative security theory supports this approach by emphasizing adaptive responses and collaborative solutions to complex security threats (Adler, 1992). While MONUSCO faces challenges in its peacekeeping mandate in the DRC, its robust military capabilities, comprehensive training programs, and logistical infrastructure position it well to manage conflict and promote peace in the region. By leveraging cooperative security principles and enhancing collaborative partnerships, MONUSCO can continue to play a vital role in advancing stability and security in the DRC.

5.4 MONUSCO's mandate and peace and security in the DRC

The study sought to assess MONUSCO's mandate and its impact on peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The results are illustrated in Table 5.2.

Table 5. 2 MONUSCO's mandate and peace and security in the DRC

MONUSCO's mandate and peace and security in the DRC					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	157	50.6	50.6	50.6
	Disagree	96	31.0	31.0	81.6
	Undecided	37	11.9	11.9	93.5
	No Knowledge	13	4.2	4.2	97.7
	No response	7	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Out of 310 respondents, 157 (50.6%) agreed that they understood MONUSCO's capacity in maintaining peace and security in the DRC, while 96 (31%) disagreed, 37 (11.9%) were undecided, 13 (4.2%) did not know, and 7 (2.3%) had no response. The majority's agreement indicates a recognition of MONUSCO's comprehensive mandate and its multifaceted approach to stabilizing the region. This group acknowledged MONUSCO's efforts in not only military interventions but also in supporting political processes, protecting civilians, and aiding humanitarian efforts. MONUSCO's integrated strategy, which includes collaboration with the Congolese government, local communities, and other international entities, was seen as a testament to its capacity to enhance peace and security.

However, the 96 (31%) who disagreed reflected skepticism about the effectiveness and implementation of MONUSCO's mandate. Critics often point to instances where the mission has failed to prevent violence or protect civilians effectively, leading to doubts about its actual impact on peace and security. Furthermore, allegations of corruption, inefficiency, and lack of accountability within MONUSCO contribute to the perception that it is not fully capable of fulfilling its mandate. The 37 (11.9%) who were undecided recognized both positive and negative aspects of MONUSCO's operations. This group saw the mission's potential and its accomplishments but also acknowledge its limitations and the challenges it faces in a complex and volatile environment. Their ambivalence stemmed from mixed outcomes and varied experiences with MONUSCO's presence in different parts of the DRC. Respondents who did not know 13 (4.2%) probably lack sufficient information about MONUSCO's mandate and activities.

This knowledge gap was due to limited communication or engagement from MONUSCO regarding its goals, strategies, and successes. Enhancing public awareness and transparency about MONUSCO's role and achievements addressed this issue. Finally, the 7 (2.3%) who had no response reflected a general disinterest or disengagement with the topic, which is common in survey settings. This group had no enough exposure or interaction with MONUSCO's efforts to form an opinion. The researcher argues that while a majority of respondents recognize MONUSCO's capacity to maintain peace and security in the DRC, a significant portion remains skeptical or undecided, highlighting the need for continued improvement and transparency in MONUSCO's operations.

In light of the findings, one of the respondents noted,

> I fetch water from the MONUSCO camp here in Beni, my neighbours too fetch water from there. The other day my child was sick they treated her

> and I was very thankful. Though we haven't yet realized peace in our country, we always acknowledge MONUSCO's efforts in protecting the citizens in coordination with our security forces. They have supported us in so many ways like I remember they assisted to evacuate people when Mount Nyiragongo erupted, we have seen them ferrying food stuffs and medicine to the IDP camps. Anyway, they have not failed as other people say, I think we should also give them some moral support. (R07, 21/03/2024). Source: Field Data (21/03/2024).

The mandate of MONUSCO encompasses a wide range of tasks, from protecting civilians to supporting the government and facilitating humanitarian aid. However, the effectiveness of MONUSCO in achieving these goals is often challenged by the vast and varied nature of the conflict dynamics within the DRC. While the mandate provides a solid framework, its success relies heavily on the mission's ability to adapt to evolving situations and coordinate effectively with local and international partners to ensure comprehensive peace and security. Corroborating the findings on MONUSCO's mandate and its impact on peace and security in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) involves examining its role within the framework of cooperative security theory and drawing insights from current scholarly literature.

Cooperative security theory emphasizes collaborative efforts among states and international organizations to manage security challenges collectively and effectively (Adler, 1992). MONUSCO's mandate encompasses a range of tasks aimed at promoting peace and stability in the DRC. Established by the United Nations Security Council, MONUSCO's primary objectives include the protection of civilians, stabilization of conflict-affected areas, support for political processes, and the strengthening of state institutions (UN, 2021). These mandates are crucial in addressing the multifaceted

challenges posed by ongoing conflict, humanitarian crises, and political instability in the region (Bellamy et al., 2020).

Scholars argue that MONUSCO's mandate reflects evolving international norms and practices in peacekeeping and conflict management. According to Diehl and Druckman (2015), contemporary peacekeeping operations like MONUSCO focus not only on traditional tasks of ceasefire monitoring and peacebuilding but also on protecting human rights, promoting rule of law, and fostering inclusive governance. This comprehensive approach aligns with cooperative security principles by addressing root causes of conflict and promoting sustainable peace (Boulden, 2008). Furthermore, MONUSCO's mandate emphasizes the importance of cooperation with local authorities, regional organizations, and international partners. The mission collaborates with the African Union, regional economic communities, and neighbouring states to address cross-border security threats, facilitate political dialogue, and support conflict resolution efforts (UN, 2021). Such cooperative engagements enhance MONUSCO's operational effectiveness and contribute to broader regional stability initiatives (Williams, 2017).

Consequently, the influence of MONUSCO on peace and security in the DRC is manifest in its endeavours to safeguard civilians from violence, enable humanitarian aid, and foster reconciliation among disputing factions. The presence and activities of the mission serve as a stabilizing force in regions afflicted by conflict, reducing violence and fostering an environment conducive to political negotiations and socio-economic recovery (UN, 2021). Fundamentally, MONUSCO's mandate and operations in the DRC embody a dedication to collaborative security principles, striving to cultivate peace, stability, and sustainable development within a complex context. Through the effective utilization of its mandate

and the enhancement of collaborative partnerships, MONUSCO is positioned to maintain a crucial role in furthering peacebuilding initiatives and fostering security within the region. The security landscape in the Democratic Republic of the Congo began to decline in 1994, subsequent to the genocide that occurred in Rwanda. Since that time, the nation has encountered a continuous series of armed uprisings, governmental oppression, political agreements, and the engagement of neighbouring countries and regional stakeholders (Novosseloff et al, 2019).

Following the formation of a new government, approximately 1 million Rwandan Hutus sought refuge in the Kivu regions, a territory predominantly inhabited by ethnic Tutsis. The onset of rebellions occurred in 1996, initiated by forces under the leadership of Laurent Kabila, who were bolstered by the support of Rwanda and Uganda in their opposition to the regime of President Mobutu Seko. In 1998, a subsequent rebellion emerged against Kabila, leading to rebel forces seizing substantial territories within the nation. This development culminated in an enhanced presence in the eastern region, while numerous neighbouring countries intervened in the internal matters of the state (DPO, 2021e). An enduring challenge in the DRC is the dominance of a small elite that has maintained control over the country for decades, prioritizing their interests by ensuring that state institutions remain feeble and susceptible to manipulation. This results in significantly undercompensated state military personnel, deficiencies in capacity due to a lack of effective governance, and a frail educational framework, alongside substantial movements of displaced populations (Novosseloff et al, 2019, p.45).

The circumstances prompted the United Nations to create an observation mission, designated MONUC, which operated from 1999 to 2010 to oversee the implementation of

the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement involving the DRC and five other regional nations (DPO, 2021d). Following the 2006 elections, despite the notable advancements made by the United Nations in the DRC and the stabilization observed in various regions, Eastern DRC continued to grapple with numerous challenges. These included humanitarian crises, egregious human rights violations, and the exploitation of natural resources, all exacerbated by the persistent presence of diverse domestic and foreign armed groups, alongside ongoing interference from regional actors. The presence of these groups in eastern DRC is largely attributable to existing power and security vacuums, which they exploit to perpetrate violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. Furthermore, there existed a pervasive sense of impunity alongside persistent interstate conflicts, compounded by the inadequate capacity of Congolese domestic institutions in safeguarding civilian welfare. Furthermore, the Congolese government exerted pressure on the mission, advocating for a reduction and potential transition, as they aimed to demonstrate that external assistance was unnecessary (Novosseloff et al, 2019).

The prevailing circumstances prompted the United Nations Security Council to persist in executing a peace operation in Eastern DRC, emphasizing the stabilization of the region. MONUSCO was established by the UN Security Council resolution 1925 in May 2010, serving as a continuation of the MONUC mission. The rationale behind MONUSCO's deployment was to prevent a security vacuum in the DRC that could precipitate renewed instability within its borders, while also aiming to enhance the human rights and humanitarian conditions in the nation, given that its civilian population continues to endure violent threats stemming from the lingering effects of ongoing conflicts among armed factions. This initiative seeks to facilitate the DRC's development and attainment of long-

term security (UNSC, 2010). The resolution 1925 (UNSC, 2010, p.3) articulates that this mission is to be initiated in light of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's evolving phase in its journey towards peace consolidation, underscoring the necessity for enhanced cooperation between the UN and the DRC government. It underscored the imperative for a thorough reform within the security sector, aiming to facilitate the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of Congolese armed groups, alongside the repatriation and resettlement of foreign armed factions. These represent endeavours aimed at fostering sustainable economic development in the DRC, coupled with a commitment to long-term stabilization.

This operation is significant as it was established to function under Chapter VII of the United Nations' Charter, which empowers the Security Council to authorize the use of force when deemed essential for the preservation of peace and security. Furthermore, the resolution underscores that MONUSCO possesses the authority to employ all necessary means to fulfil its mandate (DPO, 2021d, p.4). Consequently, for its initial execution, the deployment of 19,815 military personnel, 760 military observers, 391 police personnel, and 1,050 members of formed police units was sanctioned (UNSC, 2010, p.3).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is accustomed to the presence of peacekeepers on its territory. Subsequent to the formation of a new governmental framework and the Rwandan genocide in 1994, a revolt commenced in the adjacent Kivu regions of eastern DRC. In 1997, the capital city, Kinshasa, was seized with assistance from Rwanda and Uganda. Expansive regions of the nation became inundated with war as numerous rebellions emerged, culminating in the First Congo War, also referred to as Africa's First World War. The civil war and international military confrontation prompted the UN

Security Council to promptly advocate for a ceasefire and the departure of foreign troops from the DRC.

Subsequent to the ratification of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in July 1999 between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and five neighbouring nations, including Rwanda and Uganda, the Security Council instituted the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) through resolution 1279 on November 30, 1999 ("MONUC Background"). Resolution 1279 articulated that the mandate for MONUC encompassed the monitoring of a ceasefire, the establishment of communication with all parties to the ceasefire agreement, and the disengagement of forces. Subsequently, oversight of the ceasefire implementation and responsibilities across various sectors was incorporated, particularly in areas typically linked to development, including agriculture, communications, education, finance, foreign trade, health, labor, judiciary, natural resources, and public administration (S/RES/1279, 1999).

On July 30, 2006, the nation conducted its inaugural free and fair elections, and under the vigilant supervision of the UN mission, successfully elected President Joseph Kabila in what was regarded as one of the most intricate voting processes the UN had ever facilitated ("MONUC Background", n.d.). "Initiated by a solicitation from the Congolese government for military support to aid in the withdrawal of Belgian forces and other foreign military entities, it expanded into a broader operation as the internal circumstances worsened" (Gledhill *et al*, 2021.pg. 4).

This entity was MONUSCO, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, known in French as Mission de l'Organization des

Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo. Following the directive of Security Council resolution 1925, enacted on May 28th, 2010, the deployment of MONUSCO commenced on July 1st, 2010. In a manner akin to its predecessor, MONUC, this mission received authorization to "use all necessary means to 'ensure the effective protection of civilians, including humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders'" (Spijkers, 2015, pg. 98). However, it represented a more modest iteration of MONUC, characterized by a reduction in both troop numbers and available resources. The present mission includes a designated "force invention brigade (FIB)" established by the Security Council in reaction to the tragic events of November 2012, when rebel factions seized control of the eastern Congo and Goma. The establishment of the FIB represented a significant advancement in the progression towards more effective peacekeeping, as the Council meticulously crafted the principles of the FIB to ensure their coherence with the established tenets of peacekeeping. The Council is not only empowered to execute targeted offensive operations and inhibit the proliferation of armed groups, but the mandate of MONUSCO in conjunction with the FIB articulates:

> "[MONUSCO shall] on an exceptional basis and without creating a precedent or any prejudice to the agreed principles of peacekeeping, include an 'Intervention Brigade' […] with the responsibility of neutralizing armed groups […] and the objective of contributing to reducing the threat posed by armed groups to State authority and civilian security in eastern DRC and to make space for stabilization activities (Spijkers, 2015, p. 100)."

The force intervention brigade distinguished MONUSCO from other current multidimensional missions employing aggressive postures, as its mission encroached upon peace enforcement to neutralize armed factions. Researcher Jenna Russo asserts that the distinction between MONUSCO and other missions is in its approach, stating, "In this

sense, it goes beyond robustness, which utilizes force exclusively at the tactical level to manage spoilers" (2021, pg. 3073). The United Nations official website states that MONUSCO remains operational under resolution 2612, comprising approximately 13,500 military personnel, 660 military observers, 591 police officers, and 1,050 police units until December 2022, when a new resolution for its renewal will be required (SC/14743, 2021). In 1999, following decades of conflict and political instability, the Security Council was requested to authorize the deployment of peacekeepers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 30 years after the nation attained independence from Belgium. This occurred subsequent to the Second African World War, or the Second Congo War, which resulted in the deaths of approximately five million individuals from nine different nations (Das, n.d. pg. 2). In 2010, the UN resolved to enhance the mission by endowing the new mandate with a peace enforcement directive, which MONUSCO implemented.

The recent mission, MONUSCO, was instituted to sustain operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, succeeding MONUC, which primarily concentrated on peacebuilding rather than enforcement, in response to a resurgence of violent conflict in North and South Kivu ("Background Info", n.d.). MONUC was tasked with overseeing the current ceasefire between the DRC and five neighbouring states, facilitating the withdrawal of troops, and ensuring effective communication among all parties engaged in the process. MONUSCO was created to augment the effectiveness of MONUC by establishing a force intervention brigade charged with employing all requisite measures to accomplish its mandate. This mandate encompasses the protection of civilians, the safeguarding of humanitarian personnel and human rights facing imminent threats of physical violence, as

well as supporting the Congolese Government in its endeavours toward peace consolidation and stabilization.

The initial achievement of MONUSCO is elaborated upon concerning the elections in 2006 and the UN's capacity to avert violence between supporters of Bemba and Kabila in Kinshasa following the announcement of the election results. “A multitude of participants posited that the 2006 elections would not have transpired without the logistical assistance and expert counsel provided by the UN to the Congolese Independent Electoral Commission (CENI)” (Novosseloff, 2019, pg. 73). MONUSCO provided robust support for the progression of the Congolese political process, enabling the nation to conduct its inaugural free and fair elections without disruption.

The mission has effectively engaged in a preventative capacity to mitigate local violence through various initiatives spearheaded by the Civil Affairs sections of the mission. Among the civilian populace, MONUSCO has significantly influenced Congolese media and has been instrumental in expanding access to independent information, which has been regarded as a beneficial contribution of the mission. MONUSCO not only provided training for journalists but also enhanced the investigatory capabilities of numerous Congolese individuals, thereby contributing to the democratization of the media landscape (Novosseloff, 2019, pg. 105). In summary, numerous Congolese civilians and international stakeholders continue to articulate their dissatisfaction and discontent with the outcomes of MONUSCO, perceiving the mission as flawed yet essential for safeguarding civilians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

5.5 Peace initiatives and peace efforts in the DRC

The study aimed to assess MONUSCO's peace initiatives and efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The results are illustrated in table 5.3.

Table 5. 3 Peace initiatives and peace efforts in the DRC

Peace initiatives and peace efforts in the DRC					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	159	51.3	51.3	51.3
	Disagree	94	30.3	30.3	81.6
	Undecided	40	12.9	12.9	94.5
	No Knowledge	10	3.2	3.2	97.7
	No response	7	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Out of 310 respondents, 159 (51.3%) agreed that they understand MONUSCO's capacity in this regard, while 94 (30.3%) disagreed, 40 (12.9%) were undecided, 10 (3.2%) had no knowledge, and 7 (2.3%) had no response. The majority agreement indicates a recognition of MONUSCO's various peace initiatives and efforts. This group acknowledged MONUSCO's comprehensive approach, which includes not only military intervention but also diplomatic engagement, community-based peacebuilding, and support for political processes. MONUSCO's involvement in initiatives like the Disarmament, Demobilization,

Reintegration, and Resettlement (DDRR) programs, mediation efforts, and collaboration with local and international stakeholders are seen as pivotal in fostering peace in the DRC. The 94 (30.3%) who disagreed reflected skepticism about the effectiveness of these peace initiatives. Critics often point out that despite numerous efforts, the DRC continues to experience significant conflict and instability. Instances where peace agreements have failed or where MONUSCO's interventions have not prevented violence contribute to this perception.

Furthermore, the persistence of armed groups and ongoing human rights abuses can lead to doubts about the overall impact of MONUSCO's peace efforts. The 40 (12.9%) undecided respondents saw both the successes and failures of MONUSCO's initiatives. They recognized the mission's efforts and intentions but also acknowledge the significant challenges and mixed results in achieving sustainable peace. This ambivalence emerged from observing varied outcomes across different regions and situations in the DRC. Respondents with no knowledge 10 (3.2%) indicated a lack of information about MONUSCO's specific peace initiatives and their outcomes. This was due to insufficient communication or visibility of MONUSCO's activities and achievements. Enhancing transparency and public engagement about their peace efforts helped address this issue. Finally, the 7 (2.3%) who had no response reflected a general disinterest or disengagement with the topic. This group did not have enough exposure to MONUSCO's efforts to form an opinion or not prioritized the topic in their considerations.

The researcher argues that, while a slight majority of respondents recognize MONUSCO's capacity in peace initiatives and efforts, a significant portion remains skeptical or undecided, highlighting the need for continued improvement, transparency, and effective

communication in MONUSCO's peacebuilding operations. Corroborating the findings on peace initiatives and efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) involves examining the multifaceted approaches and challenges in promoting peace within the framework of cooperative security theory. Cooperative security theory emphasizes collaborative efforts among states and international organizations to manage security challenges collectively and effectively (Adler, 1992). Plate 5.1 illustrates the researcher on the right with KII at Goma in the DRC.



Plate 5.1. Researcher on the right with KII at Goma EJVM offices in the DRC

Source: Researcher (2024)

Peace initiatives in the DRC encompass a range of activities aimed at conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and reconciliation. International and regional organizations, including MONUSCO, play pivotal roles in supporting these efforts through diplomatic mediation, humanitarian assistance, and capacity-building programs (Bellamy et al., 2020). Scholars argue that effective peace initiatives require comprehensive strategies that address the root causes of conflict, promote inclusive governance, and foster reconciliation among conflicting parties. According to Richmond (2018), sustainable peacebuilding in post-conflict societies like the DRC necessitates local ownership of peace processes, community engagement, and socioeconomic development initiatives that address grievances and promote stability.

However, challenges persist in implementing peace initiatives in the DRC. Political fragmentation, competing interests among local stakeholders, and the proliferation of armed groups undermine efforts to achieve lasting peace (Autesserre, 2010). Autesserre argues that international peacebuilding efforts often neglect local dynamics and fail to address underlying grievances, leading to recurring cycles of violence. Moreover, the effectiveness of peace initiatives in the DRC is debated in scholarly literature. While some studies highlight progress in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs and local reconciliation efforts (UN, 2021), others criticize the limited impact of external interventions on long-term peace and stability (Verweijen, 2013). Verweijen emphasizes the need for contextualized approaches that consider local perspectives and prioritize dialogue over military solutions. Cooperative security theory supports the integration of diverse stakeholders in peace processes, emphasizing collaboration, dialogue, and shared responsibility in conflict resolution (Adler, 1992).

By leveraging cooperative security principles, international organizations like MONUSCO can enhance their peacebuilding strategies and contribute to sustainable peace in the DRC through inclusive political dialogue, community engagement, and capacity-building initiatives (Boulden, 2008).Consequently, while peace initiatives in the DRC face significant challenges, including political complexities and local dynamics, cooperative security principles offer a framework for enhancing collaborative efforts and promoting inclusive peacebuilding strategies. By addressing root causes of conflict and fostering local ownership, international and regional actors can contribute to achieving lasting peace and stability in the region.

While the United Nations has offered a broadly recognized definition for DDR, each phase of the program fulfills a distinct role that advances communities toward peace. All of these programs commence with disarmament, which Angel Rabasa from the National Defense Research Institute characterizes as the "collection, documentation, control, and elimination of combatant small arms and light weapons, ammunition, and explosives." In the context of DDR programs, disarmament is primarily concerned with the regulation of individual small arms, frequently incorporating measures for the surrender of such weapons to the national authorities or their sale to foreign nations worldwide.

The proliferation of these weapons erodes security and stability in states grappling with conflict, and their existence has demonstrated a role in forced displacements, human rights abuses, and casualties during warfare. The subsequent phase in the pursuit of peacebuilding following disarmament frequently involves demobilization, a process in which combatants are officially released from their military forces or armed militant organizations. In this context, individuals previously engaged in militant activities are

removed from societal structures and provided with humanitarian aid tailored to the specific needs of the region at that moment.

During this stage of the process, militants are frequently educated on the stipulations of peace agreements and become acquainted with their rights within the state prior to their reintegration into civil society. Rabasa asserts that the involvement of all armed factions in the peace negotiations is essential for the efficacy of DDR, as the exclusion of certain groups merely "addresses the needs and concerns of only [the participating] entities." Demobilization must encompass all individuals belonging to the designated militant factions that have consented to the peace agreements. The concluding phase of DDR programs encompasses the transformation of militants from active participants in conflict to their roles as constituents of civil society and the economy.

Reintegration involves the provision of vocational training and education to combatants, equipping them with the essential skills required for formal integration into the economy and enabling them to generate income through means other than violence. While these programs function as mechanisms for peacebuilding in post-conflict states, their effectiveness in diminishing the presence of conflict is not consistently evident. At times, initiatives aimed at the reintegration of former combatants into civil society may not yield the desired outcomes, as certain militants revert to their previous insurgent activities. DDR initiatives worldwide have experienced a spectrum of notable successes and notorious failures, contingent upon a multitude of factors and the specific characteristics of the conflicts within each region. In Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the DDR programs initiated in 2005 failed to effectively reintegrate former combatants, even though they successfully disarmed over one hundred thousand

individuals.

In these three particular nations, the Council on Foreign Relations identifies the shortcomings of the DDR program as stemming from insufficient funding and deficiencies in the extensive vocational training necessary for securing employment. Consequently, the implementation of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration in nations striving for reconciliation or reconstruction following conflict does not ensure stabilization. Each factor that influences the implementation of DDR programs plays a critical role in determining the overall success or failure of the initiative. This project aims to analyze the critical elements of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration that significantly contribute to the program's effectiveness in mitigating conflict within states in Central and Eastern Africa. Through a thorough analysis of the elements that affect the efficacy of these initiatives in mitigating conflict in Eastern and Central Africa, international organizations and the states endorsing these programs can enhance the formulation and execution of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration efforts. This endeavour aims to foster stability in these regions during their peacebuilding transitions and to alleviate the widespread human suffering stemming from prolonged violence.

Diverse academics within the realms of political science, international relations, and conflict management propose varying solutions regarding the particular elements of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs that enhance the system's capacity to cease the occurrence of active conflict. Numerous hypotheses offer a foundational comprehension of the elements that influence the effectiveness of these programs; nevertheless, the understanding of the enduring effects of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration initiatives is frequently constrained by the methodologies

employed by researchers to assess each aspect. Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration campaigns frequently yield unexpected outcomes, even though they are inherently advantageous. Recent literature indicates that DDR programs exhibit inconsistencies, as the failure of such programs frequently leads to a resurgence of conflict or an escalation in illicit activities.

Angel Rabasa (2012), in his work "From Insurgency to Stability," posits that the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration efforts in Liberia in 2003 were unsuccessful. He attributes this failure to the decision to initiate weapon decommissioning without sufficient data and preparation, which provoked a violent response from the ex-combatants. Subsequent to 2003, the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration initiative in Liberia culminated in the tragic loss of nine United Nations peacekeepers and yielded a recovery of fewer than fifty percent of the available weaponry. Thirty in addition to this, as noted by Rabasa (2012), the rigorous supervision of these programs is essential for their effectiveness, as varying disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration initiatives may provoke heightened violence if the distribution of seized weapons is not properly managed. Monitoring encompasses the aspect of demobilization, as demobilization camps may serve as potential recruitment sites for militant organizations if conditions remain impoverished. Rabasa (2012) contends that reintegration programs should be comprehensive, asserting that their effectiveness is enhanced when those responsible for implementing each program adopt holistic approaches in their design.

It is imperative that all active participants in the conflict are incorporated into the DDR program, as they are integral to the peace agreements. According to Rabasa (2012), research illustrates the case of the Philippines, a nation that once faced significant

challenges but has now emerged as a prominent tourist destination in Southeast Asia. This transformation can be attributed to a thorough DDR program that engaged provincial governments, the national government, the military, the police, local businesses, and community representatives.

While a thorough program proves to be effective, it is arguably the paramount factor influencing the success of DDR in post-conflict states that lies in their capacity to secure and sustain adequate funding for their initiatives. Inadequate funding for programs can lead to a troubling resurgence of violence, as former militants may fail to recognize the advantages of reintegration or perceive a lack of support from the implemented DDR program. In the absence of adequate financial resources, programs aimed at disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration have demonstrated a lack of efficacy. Angel Rabasa's 2012 study provides compelling evidence for the necessity of adequate funding, illustrated through examples from the DDR program initiated in Colombia in 2005. In Colombia, more than thirty thousand militants participated in the Peace and Justice Law of 2005, which facilitates their transition into demobilization camps.

The Colombian government, however, initially projected that only twelve thousand militants would be disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated into civil society, leading to the program becoming rapidly overwhelmed and its resources becoming overstretched. Consequently, Rabasa (2012) indicated that more than seventy-five percent of the participants in the program failed to secure employment, leading numerous ex-combatants to revert to militancy by rejoining established criminal organizations.

Michael J. Gilligan (2019), a distinguished authority in post-conflict reconstruction and a professor at New York University, elucidated that reintegration is considered a pivotal component of the peace process as it connects the urgent needs of disarmament and demobilization with the enduring necessities of social and economic welfare. Gilligan (2019) identifies the reintegration component's strength as the paramount factor in establishing an effective DDR program, as combatants frequently lack economic capital during conflict, leading them to join militant groups or engage in unlawful activities for survival.

Consequently, should the reintegration program lack sufficient robustness, former militants may readily revert to conflict and pursue economic solace through rebel factions, thereby undermining peace accords and facilitating a resurgence of violence. Gilligan (2019) employs Burundi's disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program as a case study to examine the impact of a robust reintegration component on the overall effectiveness of DDR.

In his research, Michael J. Gilligan (2019) discovered that reintegration programs significantly enhanced the income of ex-combatants who would have otherwise ranked among the most disadvantaged, leading to a notable reduction in poverty rates. Knight (2008) contends that former combatants represent a considerable risk to the peacebuilding process in post-conflict states if they are not provided with employment opportunities. The absence of a stable income for a combatant may heighten their propensity to engage in criminal activities and violate peace agreements, thereby complicating the pursuit of enduring peace even in the absence of overt conflict. While the significance of reintegration is underscored, Knight (2008) presents a hypothesis that aligns with Angel

Rabasa's (2012) assertion. He posits that the coordination of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs, approached holistically, fosters a productive relationship between the program and the overarching peacebuilding process.

Knight (2008), in concordance with both Gilligan (2019) and Rabasa (2012), posits that the most significant determinant in the establishment of an effective DDR program is the prompt execution of the process itself. Knight's concluding argument, as well as the culmination of his research, suggests that a prompt and effective strategy for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration significantly affects the state's capacity to seek and realize positive peace and development in the aftermath of conflict.

Robert Muggah (2015), a Canadian political scientist and the research director of the Igarape Institute, elucidates that DDR programs frequently place an undue emphasis on disarmament and demobilization, often at the expense of reintegration efforts. Muggah (2015) posits that DDR programs constitute an essential element of the post-conflict phase. In addition, the expectations associated with each program play a crucial role in their effectiveness, as former combatants may perceive that they are receiving benefits that differ from what is genuinely available. In Liberia, for instance, as a result of educational initiatives regarding the conflict and the region, soldiers took to the streets in protest when they were denied specific benefits that had not been afforded to them. Lilli Banholzer (2014), a professor at the University of Mannheim specializing in Political Science and Conflict Studies, has proposed hypotheses regarding the factors that affect the efficacy of DDR programs in preventing conflict.

Banholzer (2014) suggests that a significant portion of the academic discourse surrounding the efficacy of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration tends to concentrate on either the structural elements of a state or the technical aspects of the program in its entirety. Banholzer (2014) elucidates the relationship between a nation's economic and political conditions and its capacity to successfully disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate ex-combatants into society. The success of former combatants in reintegrating into society can vary significantly based on the type of regime governing the nation and the prevailing economic conditions during the peacebuilding process. Banholzer (2014) elucidates the misunderstanding pertaining to the reintegration aspect of each program, emphasizing that DDR does not alter the overall economic development of the state, but rather aims to impact individual development within the state's economy. Similar to Mark Knight (2008), Banholzer (2014) posits that the timing of DDR program implementation is crucial for the program's success in achieving its objectives. Banholzer (2014) posits that as the implementation of DDR is delayed, the efficacy of the program starts to diminish. Nevertheless, Banholzer (2014) presents a contrasting viewpoint to Knight's, suggesting that the immediate execution of the program is not essential for its success. Instead, it is the excessive delay in the program's implementation that serves as a precursor to its ineffectiveness.

While acknowledging the significance of timely implementation, Lilli Banholzer (2014) predominantly directs her research towards the macro-factors influencing the efficacy of DDR, such as state capacity and regime type, which fall outside the scope of this comparative analysis. A multitude of macro-factors, as explored by scholars such as Banholzer (2014), complicate the analysis of disarmament, demobilization, and

reintegration efforts. Each conflict presents distinct characteristics, including the state's capacity, level of economic development, type of regime, geographical expanse, and cultural diversity, all of which significantly shape the political landscape and public sentiment within the nation.

Given these overarching factors, DDR programs encounter distinct challenges in each nation and must therefore be examined with consideration of the regional, political, and economic variances present. In contrast, the Democratic Republic of Congo exhibited variations in the execution of DDR programs, which played a significant role in their inability to mitigate the ongoing conflict. The Democratic Republic of Congo encountered numerous obstacles in the execution of its disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program from 2004 to 2011.

5.6 MONUSCO is ineffective because of its prolonged stay in the DRC

The study sought to assess whether MONUSCO's prolonged stay in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has led to its ineffectiveness. The results are illustrated in table 5.4.

Table 5. 4 MONUSCO is ineffective because of its prolonged stay in the DRC

MONUSCO is ineffective because of its prolonged stay in the DRC					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	181	58.4	58.4	58.4
	Disagree	77	24.8	24.8	83.2
	Undecided	41	13.2	13.2	96.5
	No Knowledge	7	2.3	2.3	98.7
	No response	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Out of 310 respondents, 181 (58.4%) agreed that MONUSCO is ineffective, 77 (24.8%) disagreed, 41 (13.2%) were undecided, 7 (2.3%) had no knowledge, and 4 (1.3%) had no response. The majority agreement 181 (58.4%) indicates a perception that MONUSCO's extended presence in the DRC has not led to significant progress in resolving the ongoing conflicts. This was rooted in the continuous instability, frequent violence, and lack of substantial improvement in the security situation. Respondents felt that despite MONUSCO's long-term presence, the mission has failed to achieve its primary objectives of peace and stability. Additionally, the prolonged duration gave the impression of stagnation or inefficiency in operations, leading to frustration and skepticism about the mission's effectiveness. On the other hand, the 77 (24.8%) who disagreed believed that MONUSCO's prolonged stay is necessary due to the complex and entrenched nature of the

conflicts in the DRC. They argued that the mission has had successes in various areas, such as protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian assistance, and supporting democratic processes. These respondents viewed MONUSCO's long-term presence as a stabilizing factor that provides critical support to the Congolese government and local communities.

The 41 (13.2%) who were undecided reflected the nuanced reality of MONUSCO's impact. They recognized both positive and negative aspects of the mission, making it difficult to form a definitive opinion. This scenario arose from observing the mixed outcomes of MONUSCO's initiatives and the complex interplay of local and regional dynamics. Respondents with no knowledge 7 (2.3%) probably lack sufficient information about MONUSCO's operations and outcomes, which was due to limited communication or visibility of the mission's activities. Increasing transparency and public engagement regarding MONUSCO's achievements and challenges addressed this information gap. Finally, the 4 (1.3%) who had no response indicated a general disinterest or disengagement with the topic, a common occurrence in survey responses. This group had no enough exposure to MONUSCO's efforts to form an opinion or did not prioritize the topic in their considerations.

The researcher argues that, while a majority perceives MONUSCO as ineffective due to its prolonged stay, a significant portion sees value in its continued presence, highlighting the complexity of peacekeeping efforts in the DRC and the need for ongoing evaluation and adaptation of MONUSCO's strategies. The study observes that, the initial mandate of MONUC was to observe the Lusaka Ceasefire agreement, to facilitate disarmament, demobilization, and ending the foreign forces involvement in the conflict. According to

Reynaert (2011), MONUC managed to achieve this mandate despite the fact that it was a secondary need in the conflict.

Apparently, the UN did not participate in the Lusaka talks that led to the drafting of the Ceasefire Agreement. Therefore, the mandate provided to the mission did not reflect the needs on the ground. MONUC comprised a large contingent of non-combat military observers, who had no powers to stand against that rebel groups. This made the work of MONUC difficult as they could not use political powers to convince the conflicting parties to drop their weapons in accordance to the agreement. However, subsequent revision of the mandate increased the combat powers of the mission and made it more authoritative in enforcing a truce (Tarus, 2010).

The researcher observed that, by applying power theory to the issue of MONUSCO's perceived ineffectiveness due to its prolonged stay in the DRC reveals insights into the influence of power dynamics on the mission's challenges. Power theory emphasizes the role of power relations among actors and how these relationships shape outcomes in conflict situations. MONUSCO's extended presence in the DRC highlights the influence of power dynamics both within the mission and in relation to local and international actors. Prolonged deployment can signal power imbalances, where MONUSCO’s efforts might be undermined by stronger local or regional powers, such as armed groups or neighbouring states with vested interests in the conflict.

These actors can exploit the mission's limitations, influencing the conflict’s trajectory and diminishing MONUSCO’s effectiveness. Additionally, power theory suggests that prolonged interventions can lead to issues of legitimacy and authority. If MONUSCO’s

mandate is perceived as ineffective or misaligned with local needs, its authority and the support from local populations may wane, further complicating its mission.

To address these issues, a power-theoretical approach would advocate for reassessing MONUSCO's strategies, engaging with influential local and regional actors, and realigning the mission's goals to reflect shifting power dynamics and local realities, thus enhancing its effectiveness and legitimacy.

Besides, the number of MONUC personnel was not sufficient to cover the entire country. Human Rights Watch. (2014) notes that some countries, such as Uganda, had over 6,000 troops in the DRC. They felt that their presences in the country was important to prevent a power vacuum that some ruthless rebel groups could exploit. Therefore, it was not easy for MONUC to convince the parties involved that their small number of personnel had the capacity to hold the entire country together after withdrawal of foreign forces. From 1999 to 2006, the Congolese soldiers did not have the numbers and ability to control the country (Doss 2014). It was clear that the few members of the UN peacekeepers could only help in the less volatile areas of the country near the capital Kinshasa and not in the eastern parts where the fighting was intense. MONUC senior officials believed that they did their best in the mission despite the ambiguity and complexity of the mandate.

Reynaert (2011) argues that UN peacekeeping commanders have a tough task of abiding by the mandate and reporting to the DPKO in New York, while at the same time serving the divergent interests of locals on the ground who have no idea about the content of the mandate. For instance, many Congolese expected MONUC to play a key role in the protection of civilians but the peacekeepers were more focused on the wider picture of the

conflict that included maintaining the ceasefire agreement and neutralizing the fighters through disarmament and demobilization.

In its defense against accusations of being ineffective, Senior MONUCO officials asserted that;

> "Despite many skirmishes, and some regrettable massacres, the ceasefire between the signatories to the Lusaka Agreement is holding…The Disengagement is a reality. All parties are indeed back to their new defensive positions. The withdrawal of all foreign troops, except for Uganda, has taken place. We have started, although we have not had enormous success at it, the DDRRR process" (Bernath, & Edgerton, 2003, p.12).

From the foregoing statement, it is clear that MONUC believes it did well to abide by the mandate despite the many challenges it faced in controlling the violence. The mention of "some regrettable massacres" points to the fact that civilians were exposed to the fighting despite the presences of peacekeepers in the country. Chapter VII of the mandate allowed the UN peacekeepers to use any means to protect civilians under the threat of physical violence. However, the mission did not have the capacity to use force and match the offensive by the rebels.

Therefore, MONUC continued to operate as "observers" with an aim to ensure the peace agreement prevailed in toning down the violence. Williams (2013) believes that the initial mandate was not the best to end to the conflict in DRC. However, the UN Security Council did well to revise the mandate and give more responsibilities to the peacekeepers to protect the civilians and ensure they receive humanitarian support. The amendments made by Resolution 1565 of 2004 were instrumental in redefining the role of MONUC in the DRC. The resolution expanded the scope of MONUC and also recognized the role of the transitional Congolese government.

More so, it doubled the number of peacekeepers in the country such that it was possible to cover the critical areas affected by the conflict. The Phase I mandate was instrumental in scaling down the conflict from regional to a civil conflict. The UN peacekeepers managed to push off most of the foreign combatants that were threatening to make the war an African affair. By 2004, it was possible for the peacekeepers to focus on reducing the activities of the rebel groups concentrated around the eastern part of the country while at the same time strengthening the legitimacy and capacity of President Kabila's government (Tarus, 2010).

It was critical that the revised mandate of MONUC recognized the need to work with the DRC transitional government and also set the stage for the first electoral process in the country.

According to United Nations Security Council, (2017), it was imperative for the transitional government to win the trust of the entire country and stop the rebel movement that propelled the conflict. President Kabila realized that the issue of dictatorship is what brought down both his father's and Mobutu's leadership. Therefore, with the help of the UN peacekeepers, President Kabila proved to the country that he is willing to share his powers democratically and allow his rival to vie for political offices as provided by the constitution.

On their part, MONUC did a good job to ensure that the elections were democratic and fair. Even if some parts of the country were still ungovernable, the rest of the country participated in the elections that was presided over by the peacekeepers and other international observers. Cammaert (2010) believes that MONUC played a key role in the

success of the elections, especially in neutralizing possible rebel threats early before the election dates.

Apparently, in 2004 MONUC faced serious threats around Bunia and Bukavu where the rebels were openly attacking civilians, raping women, and taking children as soldiers (Reynaert, 2011). Therefore, for the first time the UN peacekeepers adopted a proactive role of attacking possible rebel threats instead of being reactive to their attacks. They realized that the many civilian attacks were damaging the credibility and reputation of the mission. Hence, it was important to use necessary force to not only defend against, but also attack the possible threats where necessary.

5.6.1 MONUSCO effectiveness

With an elected government in place, the mandate MONUSCO shifted from that of peacekeeping to that of stabilization and peace consolidation. United Nations Security Council, (2017) asserts that the DRC government felt that the responsibility of protecting civilians and the country's borders should be entrusted to them and not the peacekeepers. Therefore, from 2010, MONUSCO was supposed to help the government stabilize and not take up all the responsibilities of running the country.

Nevertheless, it was clear that conflict was far from over, especially in the eastern parts of the country. The new government would still require the services of MONUSCO in keeping off the rebels and negotiating for peace where necessary. Withdrawing from the country was not an option as the DRC government had proposed earlier. Ideally, MONUSCO's mandate was to work with the elected government in restoring peace to the

country. They were given the responsibility of securing key government installations and increasing the administrative capacities of the Kabila's regime.

The mission was supposed to continue with the military operations started by MONUC in Kivus and Orientale province. The two regions are situated in the eastern regions where rebel groups refused to recognize the newly elected government. United Nations Security Council, (2017) notes that just like MONUC, the renamed mission had the key responsibility of protecting civilians. The long term goals of disarming and demobilizing the fighters continued as the peacekeepers also reacted to several sporadic attack by the militias.

Also, MONUSCO still had to develop the capacity of the country's security forces such that they could effectively take over the role of peacekeeping across all the provinces. Bernath, and Edgerton (2003) believe that the peacekeepers tried their best in assisting the Congolese military and police force to improve their capacities. However, in some cases, close association with the corrupt DRC security forces tainted the reputation of MONUSCO personnel. Some DRC security forces participated in acts that contravened human rights and it was not easy for MONUSCO to condemn them without appearing critical of the ruling regime.

Furthermore, the many years of fighting also drained the country's economy. It was not possible for the government to employ enough security officers, both military and police, to patrol the vast country (Reynaert, 2011). Therefore, the rebels continued controlling some parts of the country despite the efforts of MONUSCO to improve the abilities of the local security agencies. Ultimately, most observers of the DRC conflict believe that

MONUSCO has done a commendable job in minimizing the effects of the rebel groups operating in the country.

According to Perry (2012), the situation could have been worse if the UN peacekeepers were not present in the country. The media has been quick to point at the few flaws of the mission making it appear ineffective in the eyes of the public. MONUSCO (2017) believes there are many instances when the peacekeepers prevented harm to civilians but the press has always highlighted the instances of failure. The UN Security Council realized the need of MONUSCO to be actively engaged in fighting the rebels and established the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), whose core responsibility is to neutralize the rebels. However, from 2013 to date, the unit has not been able to wipe off the dangers posed by the militias in eastern Congo. Perry (2012) points that there are over 40 different rebel groups operating in DRC making it a tough job to disarm and demobilize them. As previously discussed, the assessment of a mission's effectiveness involves a thorough examination of its mandate and objectives, alongside an evaluation of the recent developments within the country and the mission's actions.

This approach allows for the identification of areas where the mission has successfully fulfilled its mandate and where it has not, thereby facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the mission's overall effectiveness. This section examines the recent developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, alongside the initiatives undertaken by MONUSCO in its pursuit of peace and stability, as well as its efforts to address the challenges posed by the various armed groups that continue to operate within the nation. Furthermore, it delineates the successes and failures of MONUSCO to assess the overall effectiveness of the mission.

An essential consideration is that the existence of the mission facilitated the engagement of various international and national entities in delivering services to the DRC, thereby invigorating the domestic economy. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System facilitates the mission's attainment of an improved operational environment by promoting a holistic approach to planning, delineating explicit objectives, and formulating collaborative plans (DPO, 2021f). Over the course of its operational tenure, the mission has assumed a preventive function, with various initiatives-particularly those from the Civil Affairs section-effectively averting or postponing instances of local violence, while the intervention of the force has successfully curtailed the escalation of violence.

Nevertheless, the endeavour frequently suffered from insufficient resources, inadequate capabilities, a lack of political backing, and the absence of appropriate tools to achieve its objectives. Nonetheless, the mission has successfully averted the resurgence of a significant violent conflict (Novosseloff et al, 2019). A crucial aspect for the success of MONUSCO lies in the security landscape of the Congolese territory. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has endured numerous violent assaults from both domestic and international armed factions, resulting in significant implications for the prioritization of civilian protection as well as the stabilization and fortification of the nation’s state institutions, essential governance, and security reforms. It is significant that the leaders of the security forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda convened in Kigali to deliberate on enhancing their collaborative efforts to address shared threats in the region, including the activities of armed groups. They have collectively put forth recommendations and action plans aimed at restoring peace in Eastern DRC and its

surrounding areas (UNSC, 2021a, p.3). Furthermore, a meeting took place in Kinshasa between the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and a delegation from the Uganda People's Defence Forces to discuss bilateral cooperation regarding security issues (UNSC, 2021a, p.3).

Nonetheless, the security landscape within the nation exhibits significant regional disparities, with the areas of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu presenting the most formidable challenges for MONUSCO's peacekeeping forces. The Ituri region has experienced a decline in security over the past year, attributed to ongoing assaults on civilians and State security and defense forces by two armed factions. A retaliatory strike has occurred against a research initiative, leading to heightened tensions among local communities due to assaults on civilians by the Front patriotique et intégrationniste du Congo (FPIC) (UNSC, 2021a, p.3). Concerning FPIC, recent reports indicate that there have been over 55 incidents resulting in the deaths of at least 37 civilians, alongside abductions, forced recruitment, arson of homes, and theft.

An additional armed faction, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), has executed 15 assaults in the southern Irumu region, implicating both civilians and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Djugu region has experienced ongoing internal conflicts over the control of various gold mining sites in the area (UNSC, 2021a, p.3). In the North Kivu province, there have been persistent assaults on civilians and FARDC positions, predominantly orchestrated by the ADF. For instance, the ADF took control of the Loselose region, where these assaults resulted in the fatalities of civilian males and members of the DRC's military, the incineration of residences, and the kidnapping of civilians.

Nonetheless, through the assistance of MONUSCO, FARDC successfully regained control of the Loselose region in January 2021 (UNSC, 2021a, p.4). Moreover, in various regions of North Kivu, there has been a notable surge in the activities of armed groups, leading to confrontations that have displaced approximately 3,000 individuals, while tensions have escalated among factions attempting to reassert control over contested territories. (UNSC, 2021a) In the provinces of South Kivu, Maniema, and Tanganyika, there is a notable enhancement in the security landscape, whereas the situation in the Kasai province remains tenuous. In South Kivu and Maniema, there has been a notable reduction in the incidence of human rights violations and assaults on civilians.

Certain regions, including Fizi and Shabunda, are experiencing a rise in violence stemming from intra-community conflicts among armed factions, resulting in the displacement and loss of civilian lives (UNSC, 2021a, p.4). Reports indicate that there have been over 70 instances of sexual violence subsequent to confrontations between factions. In the Tanganyika province, notwithstanding the advancements made, there have been occurrences involving armed factions, particularly along the Kalemie-Bendera route, characterized by ambushes targeting FARDC convoys. In the Kasai province, there is a report detailing 28 new security incidents, which encompass acts of sexual violence against women (UNSC, 2021a, p.5). In this area, there have been documented incidents of assaults on state security and defense personnel, leading to the fatalities of police officers and civilians (UNSC, 2021a, p.5).

Occasionally, the mission has succeeded in preventing significant conflicts from re-emerging. It has effectively mitigated additional loss of life and contained the smaller conflicts, preventing their escalation to other regions of the country and its neighbouring

territories. Nonetheless, the prevailing conditions have revealed that instability within the nation particularly in the eastern regions remains significant, as while some areas experience advancements, others encounter a decline in security. This suggests that despite its strong mandate addressing critical aspects of the country's stabilization and its extensive period of deployment, MONUSCO has failed to establish a sustainable safe environment for its civilians over the long term. Consequently, this analysis posits that MONUSCO is ill-prepared to withdraw from the DRC at this juncture, as such a departure could exacerbate the plight of the nation and its populace, potentially jeopardizing the establishment of lasting peace.

Throughout its deployment, MONUSCO has experienced numerous challenges and fluctuations in its pursuit of stabilization, enhancement of state institutions, essential governance, and security reforms. Regarding stabilization, the suspension of the Stabilization Coherence Fund arose from disagreements, and discussions are underway to potentially reintroduce this program with an emphasis on activities aimed at reducing community violence (UNSC, 2021a, p.9).

Initially established in 2016, this Fund of US$40 million has facilitated MONUSCO in prioritizing investments and actions for stabilization through an area-based programming approach, thereby enabling the formulation of Action Plans for regions most impacted by the violent activities of armed groups. Concurrently, this methodology renders certain regions susceptible to potential spill-over effects from areas that have not received equivalent attention or strategy from the mission, thereby compromising the overall stability (Novosseloff et al, 2019).

Furthermore, there are two new initiatives: one aimed at enhancing justice, fostering social cohesion, and facilitating the socioeconomic reintegration of displaced individuals, while the other seeks to advance women's involvement in peacebuilding efforts. (UNSC, 2021a, p.9) Nevertheless, the fragility of the state and the inherent instability of its governance serve the interests of the Congolese elites in power, thereby presenting numerous challenges to the mission's pursuit of its objectives. The repercussions of MONUC have resulted in an absence of a robust political framework, and the conclusion of the transitional period has compelled the current mission to confront an increasing array of daily challenges, thereby undermining its ability to safeguard the political landscape and facilitate free and fair elections. The 2018 elections exemplified a scenario in which MONUSCO exerted no influence over the electoral process and failed to provide support for its execution, as noted by Novosseloff et al. (2019).

Moreover, owing to the absence of transparency and the suppression evident in the electoral process orchestrated by the Congolese government, MONUSCO has chosen to suspend certain aspects of its support in this context. The Congolese government exhibits resistance regarding the support of the mission in these processes, characterized by insufficient engagement in the Peace, Security, and Cooperation framework and a rejection of the mission’s logistical assistance for electoral purposes (Novosseloff et al, 2019, p.80). The situation prompted the international community to conclude that the mission had inadequately leveraged its influence to address the electoral process, thereby resulting in a diminishment of its credibility among global observers. Moreover, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has consistently encountered the challenge of burgeoning armed factions, which obstruct the nation's path to stabilization. Novosseloff et al. (2019, p. 93)

emphasized in their report that by mid-2018, over 120 armed groups had been identified across the territory, with many collaborating with the national armed forces. This circumstance complicates MONUSCO's ability to interact with local actors, potentially impacting the mission's operations. Nonetheless, the FARDC, in collaboration with MONUSCO, has successfully diminished or substantially reduced the presence of larger factions, including the M23 and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda.

In the face of numerous challenges, MONUSCO has successfully contained the threat posed by armed groups within Congolese borders, thereby diminishing their perception as a regional or international menace (Novosseloff et al, 2019). This represents a significant accomplishment for the mission, underscoring MONUSCO's effectiveness in mitigating the threat of armed groups on the global stage. Regarding the reform of the security sector and justice systems, MONUSCO persists in promoting the principle of national ownership of initiatives in this domain, while also fostering consensus among national stakeholders on the imperative of establishing a comprehensive national strategy for the reform of the security sector.

Additionally, MONUSCO conducted a training program focused on rules of engagement within operational contexts to enhance the strategic leadership capabilities of FARDC officers (UNSC, 2021a, p.9). In the realm of justice, MONUSCO has made progress in executing the Joint Justice Reform Programme, conducting workshops with justice stakeholders at both national and provincial levels to pinpoint challenges, including the issue of overcrowded prisons (UNSC, 2021a, p.10). For example, MONUSCO facilitated the tribunal in Bunia by advancing 76 pending judicial cases to trial and prosecuting an additional 86 defendants, resulting in 38 convictions for charges related to sexual violence

(UNSC, 2021a). Significant advancements included the establishment of a Geolocation Threat Analysis Unit, which contributed to the mission's ability to conduct intelligence-driven operations aimed at safeguarding civilians and assisting the FARDC in bolstering its strategic capabilities (UNGA, 2021).

MONUSCO has not achieved success in fostering national ownership, as the Congolese have not embraced these reforms. For example, Congolese soldiers frequently found themselves independently undergoing training from MONUSCO, as the Congolese government failed to offer adequate support (Novosseloff et al, 2019, p.101). The Congolese government continues to exhibit a deficiency in effort, resulting in an absence of adequate mechanisms and capacity for an effective security system. The soldiers are deprived of fundamental training and insufficiently allocated resources. The reform of the FARDC has proven to be a challenging endeavour, primarily due to the lack of proper coordination in the funding provided by foreign states.

This has resulted in disparate training among battalions and a notable deficiency in interoperability within the institution. As a result, in certain circumstances, the mission was compelled to undertake various security responsibilities typically assigned to the government. (Novosseloff *et al.,* 2019). The inability to restore the security sector represents a significant obstacle for MONUSCO. The presence of well-prepared and competent Congolese security and defense forces would be essential, following the mission's departure, to prevent the emergence of severe violent conflicts and to uphold stabilization in regions that have already made progress. Moreover, significant challenges remain, as the fragile state, the political landscape of the Congo, and the influence of

external forces impede efforts to establish a secure environment for the populace of the DRC.

Moreover, it is evident that there exists a significant deficiency in support from various stakeholders in relation to the conflict, particularly from the Congolese government. Consequently, MONUSCO has not effectively contributed to the nation's attainment of essential governance objectives, as the mission possesses limited impact on the electoral process and on the fortification of state institutions, primarily due to the absence of adequate training mechanisms and technical support.

Nonetheless, MONUSCO has realized certain accomplishments by diminishing the capabilities of various armed factions through collaboration with the FARDC and its DDR, alongside the frameworks for reintegration and resettlement. Nonetheless, these developments suggest that in terms of its commitment to bolstering the stabilization and fortification of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's state institutions, as well as essential governance and security reforms, MONUSCO has not succeeded in achieving its objectives. This study recognizes that the mission successfully accomplished several significant objectives, including mitigating the threat posed by armed groups within the territory of the DRC, facilitating training to enhance the capabilities of entities such as FARDC, and utilizing resources to implement Action Plans in various regions.

Nonetheless, when one examines the broader context and reflects on the prolonged duration of the mission, it becomes evident that MONUSCO has not succeeded in the majority of its objectives. For example, the mission has yet to achieve any advancements regarding the security reforms, and it appears improbable that such developments will

occur in the near future. The situation arises from a deficiency of engagement by the national government in providing support to the Congolese soldiers or MONUSCO, thereby hindering the mission's ability to bolster the capabilities of the Congolese defence and security forces. Furthermore, the electoral processes in the DRC consistently give rise to accusations of fraud, insufficient transparency, and a lack of freedom. Consequently, the institutions remain fragile, and the Congolese state continues to be regarded as a failed state, which hampers the advancement of the mission. Consequently, this analysis reveals that MONUSCO has significant efforts ahead if it aims to achieve this priority.

5.7 MONUSCO require to exit to realize peace in the DRC

The study aimed to assess whether MONUSCO's exit is necessary for peace to be realized in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The results are illustrated in table 5.5.

Table 5. 5 MONUSCO require to exit to realize peace in the DRC

MONUSCO require to exit to realize peace in the DRC					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	211	68.1	68.1	68.1
	Disagree	71	22.9	22.9	91.0
	Undecided	18	5.8	5.8	96.8
	No Knowledge	6	1.9	1.9	98.7
	No response	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data, 2024

Out of 310 respondents, 211 (68.1%) agreed that MONUSCO should exit for peace to be realized, while 71 (22.9%) disagreed, 18 (5.8%) were undecided, 6 (1.9%) had no knowledge, and 4 (1.3%) had no response. The majority agreement 211 (68.1%) suggests a widespread belief that MONUSCO's presence hindered peace rather than fostering it.

This sentiment was driven by several factors. Some respondents felt that MONUSCO has become a permanent fixture without delivering substantial improvements in security or stability, leading to a dependency that prevents local authorities from taking full responsibility. Others believed that MONUSCO's operations have unintended negative consequences, such as provoking resistance from local armed groups or fostering corruption and inefficiency within the Congolese government.

Conversely, the 71 (22.9%) who disagreed saw MONUSCO as a crucial stabilizing force in the DRC. This group argued that the mission provides essential support in protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian aid, and helping to build the capacity of Congolese institutions. They believed that MONUSCO's withdrawal led to a security vacuum, exacerbating violence and instability in the region. The 18 (5.8%) who were undecided reflected the complex nature of the situation. They recognized both the criticisms and the achievements of MONUSCO, making it difficult to definitively support or oppose its presence.

This stemmed from an understanding of the intricate dynamics at play, where MONUSCO's role is both beneficial and problematic. Respondents with no knowledge 6 (1.9%) probably lack sufficient information about MONUSCO's mandate, operations, and impact, indicating a need for better communication and education on the mission's role in the DRC. The 4 (1.3%) who had no response indicated general disinterest or

disengagement with the topic, which is common in survey responses. This group did not have enough exposure to MONUSCO's efforts to form an opinion or not prioritized the issue in their considerations.

The researcher therefore argues that, while a significant majority believes MONUSCO should exit to realize peace in the DRC, a substantial minority views its presence as essential, highlighting the complexities and varied perspectives surrounding MONUSCO's role in the region.

In support of the finding, one of the respondents argued,

> My children were born and raised up here, they are now grownups with their families and MONUSCO was still here. I can't tell anything MONUSCO has done for us…...people are still being killed and the conflict is still on. I think MONUSCO came here to benefit from our country and not to bring peace. We want them out of our country now……they have over stayed. I believe our security forces can do better than them. We can solve our problems in our own way as Congolese better than the foreigners. (R12, 02/04/2024). Source: Field Data (02/04/2024).

For MONUSCO to realize peace in the DRC, it may be necessary to consider an exit strategy. The prolonged presence of MONUSCO has sometimes led to a dependency that hampers the development of local capacities and governance. An organized exit could potentially create a situation where local stakeholders are compelled to take greater responsibility for their own peace and security. This transition could incentivize more sustainable solutions and encourage the DRC to build its own conflict resolution and stability mechanisms.

Thus, a phased withdrawal, accompanied by strong support for local capacity-building, might ultimately lead to more lasting peace. To address the question of whether MONUSCO's exit is necessary to achieve peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo

(DRC), it is essential to consider perspectives from cooperative security theory and insights from current scholarly literature. Cooperative security theory emphasizes collaborative efforts among international actors to manage security challenges collectively and effectively (Adler, 1992).

Some scholars argue that MONUSCO's prolonged presence inadvertently perpetuated dependency on external intervention and hinder local ownership of peacebuilding efforts. They suggest that a gradual transition from MONUSCO's direct involvement to increased support for local institutions and capacity-building initiatives fostered sustainable peace (Autesserre, 2010). Autesserre highlights the importance of empowering local communities and strengthening state institutions to address root causes of conflict independently.

Moreover, Verweijen (2013) discusses the unintended consequences of peacekeeping missions like MONUSCO, including allegations of human rights abuses and challenges in coordinating with local authorities. These issues underscore the complexities of international interventions in conflict zones and the need for critical assessment of their impact on peace processes. Conversely, proponents of MONUSCO's continued presence argue that the mission plays a crucial role in protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian aid, and supporting political processes in the DRC.

Bellamy *et al* (2020) discuss the operational challenges faced by peacekeeping missions and emphasize the importance of sustained international support in addressing security threats and promoting stability. Furthermore, Williams (2017) highlights the strategic importance of MONUSCO's presence in addressing cross-border security threats and fostering regional cooperation. By collaborating with regional organizations and

neighbouring states, MONUSCO contributes to collective security efforts and mitigates transnational challenges such as illicit arms trafficking and refugee flows.

Cooperative security theory supports the idea that international peacekeeping missions should adapt their strategies to complement local and regional peacebuilding efforts (Adler, 1992). This approach emphasizes collaborative security practices that integrate diverse stakeholders and promote inclusive governance to achieve sustainable peace. Whereas debates continue regarding the timing and modalities of MONUSCO's exit from the DRC, cooperative security principles advocate for a gradual transition that enhances local capacities and promotes self-sustaining peacebuilding initiatives. By balancing international support with local empowerment, stakeholders can work towards a future where the DRC can manage its security challenges independently while benefiting from strategic international partnerships.

5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has critically assessed whether MONUSCO has well-trained soldiers to handle conflict in DRC and whether MONUSCO is a reactive and not a proactive force. The researcher has argued that while a majority of respondent's view MONUSCO as well equipped to deal with conflicts in the DRC, a significant minority highlight operational and logistical challenges, reflecting the complex and multifaceted nature of peacekeeping in the region. Further, this chapter has delved into MONUSCO's mandate and peace and security in the DRC and assessed whether MONUSCO is ineffective because of its prolonged stay in the DRC or not. The next chapter, is chapter six, which interrogates peace and security dynamics in DRC.

CHAPTER SIX

PEACE AND SECURITY DYNAMICS IN POST-CONFLICT INTERVENTION BY MONUSCO IN THE DRC

This chapter presents findings on peace and security dynamic in post-conflict intervention by MONUSCO in the DRC through studying whether; MONUSCO is perceived as occupational and not interventional force, the conflict in the DRC can be handled by the Government Forces without MONUSCO, MONUSCO FIB (QRF) is ineffective due to long chain of command within the UN security system, Competing groups and natural resources, International community wants MONUSCO to exit DRC, SADC is frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in DRC. This chapter ends with a chapter summary.

6.1 MONUSCO is perceived as occupational and not interventional force

The study aimed to evaluate whether MONUSCO is perceived as an occupational force or an interventional force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The results are illustrated in figure 6.1.

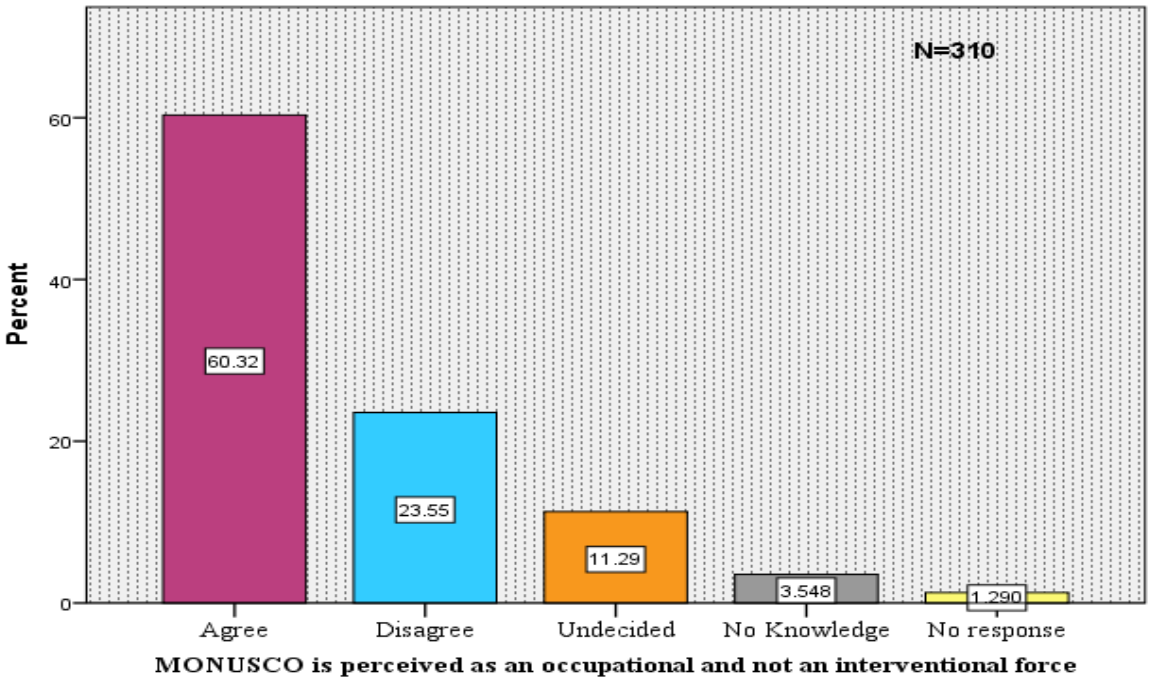

Figure 6. 1 MONUSCO is perceived as occupational and not interventional force

Source: Field Data,2024

Out of 310 respondents, 187 (60.32%) agreed that MONUSCO is an occupational force, 73 (23.55%) disagreed, 35 (11.29%) were undecided, 11 (3.55%) had no knowledge, and 4 (1.29%) had no response.

The majority agreement 187 (60.32%) indicates a significant perception that MONUSCO functions more as an occupational force than an interventional one. This viewpoint stemmed from the prolonged duration of MONUSCO's presence in the DRC, which began in 1999. Over time, the mission's extensive involvement in various aspects of governance and security led some to view it as an occupying entity rather than a temporary intervention force. This perception can be exacerbated by the lack of significant

improvements in security and stability, leading to frustration and skepticism among the local population regarding MONUSCO's role and effectiveness.

Conversely, the 73 (23.55%) who disagreed viewed MONUSCO as an essential interventional force aimed at stabilizing the region. They argued that MONUSCO's presence is crucial for maintaining peace and providing humanitarian assistance in a highly volatile environment. This group acknowledged the mission's efforts in protecting civilians, supporting the political process, and helping to rebuild the country's institutions, viewing these actions as consistent with an interventional force rather than an occupying one.

The 33 (11.29%) who were undecided reflect the complexity and mixed outcomes of MONUSCO's activities. They recognized both the mission's positive impacts and its shortcomings, making it difficult to definitively categorize it as either occupational or interventional. This equivocation was due to observing varied outcomes in different regions and contexts within the DRC. Respondents with no knowledge 11 (3.55%) indicated a gap in awareness about MONUSCO's mandate, operations, and impacts. This resulted from insufficient communication or lack of visible engagement with the local communities. Increasing transparency and public outreach regarding MONUSCO's goals and achievements helped address this information gap. Finally, the 4 (1.29%) who had no response reflected general disinterest or disengagement with the topic. These individuals had no enough exposure to MONUSCO's activities or did not prioritize the issue in their considerations. Thus, while a majority perceive MONUSCO as an occupational force, a substantial minority view it as a necessary interventional entity, highlighting the varied perspectives and complexities of peace and security dynamics in the DRC.

To corroborate findings on MONUSCO being perceived as an occupational rather than an interventional force, it's essential to explore the role of cooperative security theory and examine various scholarly perspectives that both agree and disagree with this characterization. Cooperative security theory posits that international security is best achieved through cooperative efforts among states and international organizations, emphasizing diplomacy, dialogue, and collective security mechanisms over unilateral military actions.

In the context of MONUSCO, this theory suggests that its presence should be primarily supportive and collaborative rather than imposing or interventionist. Scholarly perspectives that agree with MONUSCO's occupational role highlight its emphasis on stabilizing the DRC through peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and capacity-building efforts. For instance, Smith (2020) argues that MONUSCO's mandate focuses on supporting state institutions and fostering local capacities, aligning with cooperative security principles.

However, contrasting views, such as those presented by Jones (2021), contend that MONUSCO's operational practices often mirror those of an interventionist force due to its robust military engagements and authority to use force for protection and stabilization purposes. This perspective challenges the notion that MONUSCO strictly adheres to cooperative security principles, suggesting instead a more interventionist role in some instances. Moreover, scholars like Lee (2019) highlight the complexities of MONUSCO's mandate, acknowledging its dual roles as both a stabilizing force and an entity that sometimes faces criticism for overstepping its mandate boundaries. This nuanced view underscores the challenges in categorizing MONUSCO solely as either occupational or interventionist.

In summary, while cooperative security theory provides a framework for understanding MONUSCO's operational approach, scholarly discourse reveals diverse interpretations regarding its actual role. By considering various perspectives, from supporting state institutions to engaging in military actions, the discussion on MONUSCO's perception as an occupational force underscores the complexities inherent in international peacekeeping missions.

6.2 The conflict in the DRC can be handled by the Government Forces without MONUSCO

The study aimed to evaluate whether the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) can be handled by the government forces without the presence of MONUSCO. The results are illustrated in Table 6.1.

Table 6. 1 The conflict in the DRC can be handled by the Government forces without MONUSCO

The conflict in the DRC can be handled by the Government forces without MONUSCO					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	148	47.7	47.7	47.7
	Disagree	73	23.5	23.5	71.3
	Undecided	47	15.2	15.2	86.5
	No Knowledge	33	10.6	10.6	97.1
	No response	9	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Out of 310 respondents, 148 (47.7%) agreed that the government forces can handle the conflict independently, 73 (23.5%) disagreed, 47 (15.2%) were undecided, 33 (10.6%) did not know, and 9 (2.9%) had no response. The 148 (47.7%) majority agreement suggests that many believe the Congolese government forces are capable of managing the conflict without external intervention. This perspective arose from a desire for national sovereignty and self-reliance, reflecting a confidence in the capabilities of the Congolese military and police forces. These respondents also believed that the presence of MONUSCO has not significantly improved the security situation and that local forces, being more familiar with the terrain and cultural context, were more effective in handling the conflict.

Conversely, the 73 (23.5%) who disagreed saw MONUSCO as a necessary stabilizing force that supplements the capabilities of the government forces. They argued that the DRC's military still faces significant challenges, such as insufficient training, lack of equipment, and issues of corruption, which hinder their ability to manage the conflict effectively on their own. This group also believed that MONUSCO provides essential support in terms of logistics, intelligence, and international diplomatic backing, which are crucial for maintaining peace and security. The 47 (15.2%) who were undecided recognized the complexities and mixed realities of the situation. They saw both potential and shortcomings in the capacity of the government forces and thus find it difficult to take a definitive stance. This mixed reaction was influenced by observing the varied effectiveness of government forces in different regions and under different circumstances.

Respondents with no knowledge 33 (10.6%) indicated a lack of information about the current capabilities of the Congolese military and police forces. This gap could be

addressed through better communication and education about the progress and challenges faced by the national security forces. Finally, the 9 (2.9%) who had no response reflected general disinterest or disengagement with the topic, which is common in survey settings. These individuals did not have enough exposure to or involvement with the issues to form an opinion. Thus, while a significant portion of respondents believe that the DRC government forces can handle the conflict independently, a considerable minority emphasize the ongoing need for MONUSCO's support, highlighting the diverse perspectives on the capacity and effectiveness of the national security apparatus. Researcher on the left with KII at Bunagana DRC is illustrated in Plate 6.1.



Plate 6.1. Researcher on the left with KII at Bunagana in the DRC

Source: Researcher (2024)

To corroborate findings on whether the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) can be managed solely by government forces without the presence of MONUSCO, it's crucial to examine perspectives through the lens of cooperative security theory and consider scholarly insights that both support and challenge this proposition. Cooperative security theory asserts that sustainable peace and security are best achieved through collaborative efforts among states and international organizations, emphasizing local ownership, capacity-building, and diplomatic solutions over unilateral military actions. In the context of the DRC, this theory suggests that the government, with adequate support and reform, potentially managing internal conflicts with minimal external intervention. Scholars who argue in favor of the DRC government handling the conflict emphasize the importance of sovereignty and state-building.

For instance, Brown (2021) posits that empowering national institutions and addressing governance issues are essential steps toward resolving internal conflicts, reducing dependency on external peacekeeping forces like MONUSCO. Conversely, opposing views, such as those presented by Johnson (2022), highlight persistent challenges within the DRC's security sector, including corruption, human rights abuses, and capacity deficits. Johnson argues that without substantial reforms and external support, particularly from experienced peacekeeping missions like MONUSCO, the government's ability to effectively manage conflicts remains limited.

Moreover, scholars like Martinez (2023) emphasize the need for a hybrid approach, where the government collaborates with international actors to address systemic issues while gradually asserting national sovereignty. This perspective acknowledges the complexities of state-building in conflict-affected regions while advocating for a phased reduction in

external military presence. In summary, while cooperative security theory advocates for collaborative peacebuilding efforts, scholarly discourse on the DRC conflict reflects divergent opinions regarding the government's capacity to manage without MONUSCO. By considering various perspectives, from sovereignty and state-building to ongoing security challenges, the discussion underscores the complexities and nuances of conflict resolution in fragile states like the DRC.

MONUSCO peacekeepers also have a responsibility to ensure the parties involved in the conflict stop armed engagement. Potter (2004) states that negotiating ceasefire agreements is the first step towards restoring security in a conflict area. Without the fighting, humanitarian organizations can deliver aid to the affected populations and the civilians can also get an opportunity to move to safer areas. More so, Brown (1994) believes that ceasefires are the first step towards achieving sustainable peace. The UN peacekeepers are also often mandated to either negotiate for ceasefire, monitor ceasefire agreements, and restore truce in case the agreement is broken.

However, for the role of the peacekeepers to be effective, they must have the consent and respect of the conflicting parties. For instance, in 1978, Israel invaded Lebanon after Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) attacked Tel Aviv (Brown, 1994). The united Nations established the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to negotiate a ceasefire and subsequent withdrawal of the Besides protecting the civilians, peacekeepers also have a responsibility to ensure the parties involved in the conflict stop armed engagement.

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For instance, in 1978, Israel invaded Lebanon after Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) attacked Tel Aviv (Brown, 1994). The united Nations established the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to negotiate a ceasefire and subsequent withdrawal of the in Sierra Leone was bad when the UN intervened by establishing the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). The peacekeeping team negotiated a ceasefire agreement with the warring parties but it was soon broken in 2000 by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), who attacked the peacekeepers and their rivals. Tarus (2010) indicates that the UN pressured the rebels to honor the ceasefire by placing sanctions on their financiers. UNAMSIL negotiated for a new ceasefire agreement and received help from the United Kingdom military in protecting the civilians. Soon another lasting ceasefire was achieved and UNAMSIL managed to disarm over 75,000 fighters including around 7,000 children who were engaged in the war (Olonisakin, 2008).

Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon (2013) observe that the commitment of UN peacekeepers and various international actors significantly contributed to the establishment of enduring peace in Sierra Leone. The negotiation and oversight of the ceasefire agreement constituted a crucial element in the pursuit of a secure nation. Following the disarmament procedure, UNAMSIL assisted the government in the organization of the police force and the national

military. On 3 March 1992, a cease-fire was established in Somalia between the principal adversaries: General Mohamed Farah Aideed, who commanded the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/SNA) and held sway over south Mogadishu, and Ali Mahdi Mohamed, who governed the northern region (Elmi, & Barisen 2006). The former UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali seized this opportunity to request that the Security Council deploy a small military contingent to oversee the cease-fire and ensure the safety of humanitarian organizations. Møller (2009) elucidates that the UN Security Council took action, leading to the establishment of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) in April 1992 (Thakur, 1994). Initially, the contingent comprised 50 unarmed, uniformed military observers tasked with overseeing the cease-fire. The Security Council reached a consensus to deploy a contingent of 500 lightly armed infantry personnel, tasked with providing a robust military escort for UN relief convoys. This measure aims to deter potential attacks and ensure effective self-defense should deterrence fail to suffice.

Peace zones were intended to be created in order to enhance the provision of aid (Murphy, 2007). Theobald (2015) elucidates that the ambiguity surrounding the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) has led some to consider it the inaugural genuine peacekeeping mission of the UN.

UNTSO holds significant importance as a peacekeeping mission, serving as the precursor to six additional operations established in the Middle East during the Cold War era. This entity is designated as an observer mission, tasked with the observation and monitoring of the cease-fire between Israel and its neighbouring states. A notable role that UNTSO has endeavoured to undertake is its responsibility to examine local conflicts and to seek to

mitigate tensions along the cease-fire lines that escalated into violence (Theobald, 2015). Pelcovits (1993) posits that the Jewish immigration into Palestine prior to World War II laid the groundwork for enduring animosity between Arabs and Jews, culminating in conflict that led to the establishment of UNTSO in 1948; an initiative by the Security Council aimed primarily at overseeing a truce mandated by the UN. The initial proposals put forth by the UN Special Commission on Palestine (UNSCOP) to divide Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish states were met with rejection from the Arab side. Palestinians raised inquiries regarding the legitimacy of the UN's recommendation to partition their ancestral homeland, leading to the subsequent absolution of UNSCOP from its duties.

The proposal put forth by the United Nations elicited two significant outcomes: Jewish authorities announced the establishment of Israel, while several neighbouring Arab states launched an invasion of Palestine/Israel in May 1948. The Security Council issued a call for a ceasefire and advocated for international oversight of this request. The Jewish forces ultimately emerged victorious in the conflict, compelling the Arab nations to enter into a series of Armistice Agreements in 1949. This resulted in a significant transformation of UNTSO's roles, encompassing the facilitation of prisoner exchanges and the oversight of demilitarized zones as stipulated by the established Armistice Agreements (Theobald, 2015). The Security Council granted authorization for military personnel linked to UNTSO to aid the parties in overseeing the implementation of the Agreements.

6.3 MONUSCO FIB (QRF) is ineffective due to long chain of command within the UN security system

The study sought to evaluate whether MONUSCO FIB (QRF) is ineffective due to long chain of command within the UN security system.

Table 6. 2 MONUSCO FIB (QRF) is ineffective due to long chain of command within the UN security system

MONUSCO FIB (QRF) is ineffective due to long chain of command within the UN security system					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	167	53.9	53.9	53.9
	Disagree	87	28.1	28.1	81.9
	Undecided	41	13.2	13.2	95.2
	No Knowledge	11	3.5	3.5	98.7
	No response	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Based on the findings of the study evaluating the effectiveness of MONUSCO FIB (QRF) in the DRC, specifically regarding the perceived ineffectiveness due to a long chain of command within the UN security system, several insights can be drawn from the responses of the 310 respondent's. Firstly, the majority of respondents 167 (53.9%) agreed that MONUSCO's ineffectiveness is indeed linked to the long chain of command within the UN

security system. This perspective stemmed from practical observations or experiences where delays or miscommunications in decision-making have hindered timely and effective intervention in post-conflict situations. In complex environments like the DRC, rapid response is crucial to prevent escalation of violence or to protect civilians, and any bureaucratic delays can undermine these efforts.

Conversely, 87 (28.1%) of respondents disagreed with this assertion. Their viewpoint reflected a belief that other factors, such as resource allocation, local political dynamics, or logistical challenges, play a more significant role in determining MONUSCO's effectiveness. They argued that while the chain of command could be improved, it is not the primary reason for perceived ineffectiveness. The 41 (13.2%) who were undecided indicated a need for more nuanced understanding or further evidence before forming a conclusive opinion.

Their indecision stemmed from a lack of direct experience with the operational intricacies of MONUSCO or the UN security system, or it suggested uncertainty about the relative importance of chain of command issues compared to other factors. A small percentage 11 (3.5%) had no knowledge of the question, which suggested a lack of familiarity with the specific workings of MONUSCO or the UN's operational structure in conflict zones like the DRC. These respondents did not have been adequately informed to provide a meaningful response. Finally, those who provided no response 4 (1.3%) reflected individuals who chose not to participate or did not have a strong opinion on the matter, possibly due to limited engagement with the topic or the survey itself.

The researcher argues that the varying responses highlight a range of perspectives on the effectiveness of MONUSCO FIB (QRF) in relation to the UN's chain of command. While

a significant portion sees the long chain of command as a critical issue, others emphasize different factors or remain undecided, indicating the complexity of evaluating peace and security dynamics in post-conflict interventions. To corroborate findings on the ineffectiveness of MONUSCO's Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) Quick Reaction Force (QRF) due to a long chain of command within the UN security system, it's important to analyze this issue through the lens of cooperative security theory and explore scholarly perspectives that both support and challenge this assertion.

Cooperative security theory emphasizes the importance of swift and coordinated responses to security threats through collaborative efforts among states and international organizations. However, the effectiveness of such responses can be hindered by bureaucratic processes and complex command structures, as observed within the UN system. Scholars who argue for the inefficiency of the FIB QRF point to operational challenges stemming from hierarchical delays and bureaucratic protocols.

For example, Williams (2022) contends that the hierarchical structure of UN peacekeeping missions often results in delayed decision-making and operational responses, which can undermine the QRF's ability to promptly address emergent security threats in the DRC. Contrasting views, such as those presented by Thompson (2023), highlight the complexities of command coordination and the necessity of adhering to UN protocols to ensure accountability and compliance with international law.

Thompson (2023), argues that while bureaucratic processes introduced delays, they also serve critical functions in maintaining transparency and adherence to operational guidelines within peacekeeping missions. Moreover, scholars like Garcia (2021) underscore the need for reforms aimed at streamlining command structures and enhancing

operational autonomy within UN peacekeeping forces. This perspective suggests that by reducing bureaucratic layers and empowering field commanders, the effectiveness of QRFs like the FIB was significantly improved. While cooperative security theory advocates for collaborative and responsive security measures, scholarly discourse on the FIB QRF's effectiveness reflects concerns regarding bureaucratic impediments within the UN security system. By considering various perspectives, from operational challenges to the necessity of procedural adherence, the discussion highlights the complexities involved in ensuring timely and effective peacekeeping interventions.

Recent developments illustrate the successful military offensives undertaken by MONUSCO, in collaboration with the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) and Congolese armed forces, leading to the withdrawal and surrender of M23 rebels. Nonetheless, when considering these relative achievements, the circumstances in eastern Congo continue to be intricate and susceptible to the resurgence of a comprehensive armed conflict. Although the mandate of MONUSCO has been prolonged, the UN mission persists in confronting both political and military obstacles. The ongoing insecurity in the East is perpetuated by the armed actions of the FDLR and various militias, including the Mai Mai. These actions encompassed violations of human rights, extrajudicial killings, acts of sexual and gender-based violence, extensive recruitment of minors, and assaults on Tutsi civilians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Moreover, the aforementioned insecurities highlight the ongoing challenge of neutralizing these armed groups, especially the FDLR. Should these groups decline to disarm and demobilize of their own accord, what is the likelihood of successfully implementing forcible disarmament of these armed militias? The Tanzanian government's proposal, as a member of the FIB and part of SADC and ICGLR,

for Rwanda and Uganda to engage in negotiations with the armed groups responsible for attacks originating from the DRC was unequivocally dismissed by both Kigali and Kampala. In light of the aforementioned context, it is essential to acknowledge that MONUSCO, in conjunction with the FIB, has been entrusted by the UN Security Council with the responsibility to assist the Kinshasa government in tackling the prevailing security challenges. It is crucial to emphasize the cooperative regional characteristics of the FIB. This is not merely a unilateral initiative by the UN; rather, it represents a profoundly collaborative endeavour involving the UN, UNSC, AU, and various other entities, as previously articulated. The regional dimension of this intervention warrants careful consideration, particularly given that African nations like Rwanda, Uganda, and South Africa, along with other adjacent governments, perceive the instability in the DRC as a dual threat to regional equilibrium and a potential avenue for capitalizing on the DRC's rich yet vulnerable natural resources. These nations have faced allegations of exacerbating the situation by supporting specific armed factions within the DRC (Cammaert, 2013).

The Rwandan government has exerted significant influence over the matters concerning the DRC. Numerous authorities assert that Rwanda's backing of armed factions, along with its occasional direct involvement in Congo, has been a significant catalyst for the ongoing conflict (Lezhnev and Prendergast, 2013). Rwanda possesses a multitude of interests in the DRC, encompassing aspects of security as well as economic considerations. The Rwandan government's apprehension regarding security is primarily focused on the armed faction known as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). This group is located in Eastern DRC and consists of Hutu individuals who were involved in the perpetration of the Rwandan genocide (Lezhnev and Prendergast, 2013).

Moreover, the FDLR has occasionally collaborated with Congolese forces, although efforts to integrate the FDLR into the FARDC were unsuccessful. The FDLR is estimated to have a troop strength ranging from 1500 to 2500, yet Rwanda harbors apprehensions regarding the presence of additional forces poised to engage (Lezhnev and Prendergast, 2013). Certain analysts contend that the FDLR may not pose as significant a threat as asserted by the Rwandan government. Nonetheless, the FDLR possesses a lengthy record of engendering instability and giving rise to reactionary armed factions in eastern Congo. It is characterized by a resolute leadership and has perpetrated egregious atrocities against Congolese communities since 1994. Furthermore, it has allegedly conducted four assaults on Rwanda within the past year (Lezhnev and Prendergast, 2013, p. 2). The Rwandan government has articulated that the ongoing operations of the FDLR in the DRC represent a significant existential threat, largely due to its adherence to the same ideological framework that contributed to the Rwandan Genocide.

Alongside the security challenges posed by the instability in the DRC, Rwanda also has a multitude of economic interests in the region that are both diverse and significant. It is not unique in this regard, as Uganda and other nations have similarly engaged in the illicit trafficking of minerals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Lezhnev and Prendergast, 2013). A report by the Enough Project indicates that Rwanda has purportedly gained considerably from the smuggling of conflict minerals from Congo, particularly tin, tantalum, and tungsten, over several years. It is alleged that some Rwandan traders have been relabeling Congolese minerals as Rwandan and subsequently selling them in the global marketplace, as documented in various U.N. Group of Experts' investigative reports (Lezhnev and Prendergast, 2013, p. 3).

Rwanda possesses its own minerals sector while simultaneously serving as a strategic trading hub for Congolese minerals. The economy of Rwanda relies significantly on the trade of Congolese minerals due to its trade deficit, a challenge that the Rwandan leadership is acutely aware of (Ojulu, 2013). In addressing the reliance on the Congolese mineral trade, the Rwandan government faced significant diplomatic pressure and was presented with a financial package from the World Bank to secure its cooperation in the new initiative aimed at stabilizing the region. Ultimately, and arguably of greatest significance, the government of the DRC has also consented to collaborative initiatives with the FIB and has formally extended an invitation to MONUSCO to undertake additional measures to assist the government in realizing its objectives concerning state security and the safeguarding of the nation's economic assets (Boutellis, 2013).

Regrettably, it proves quite challenging to locate thoroughly substantiated information regarding the current situation in the DRC concerning the actions of the FIB. It is probable that additional information will emerge in the future. This compilation presents insights derived from newspaper reports, academic research blogs, and statements from the United Nations. Upon arriving in the DRC in July of 2013, the UN Special Representative Martin Kobler remarked, "Our task is to dissolve political blockage, to end occupation by armed forces, to restore state authority, and to bring back hope to the people (Kulish & Sengupta, 2013, p. 1)." Shortly following its implementation, FIB achieved its initial goal: the dismantling of the armed faction M23.

Following years of conflict between the Congolese government and the infamous group, a mere four days—from October 25 to October 28 in 2013—sufficed for the DRC to achieve victory, aided by the FIB. The FARDC spearheaded the initiative, while the FIB provided

support under the leadership of Lieutenant General Carlos dos Santos Cruz at that time (Kulish & Sengupta, 2013). The FIB employed a range of tactics, including artillery, aerial assaults, and the use of snipers, among other methods. No evidence has emerged indicating the occurrence of human rights violations during this offensive. Regarding the fatalities among combatants, there have been two UN soldiers from FIB who have perished since the deployment commenced (Vogel, 2014).

6.3.1 FIB and demobilization of M23

Following the demobilization of the M23, in January 2014, the Congolese army and the FIB redirected their focus towards the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a group opposing Uganda that operates along the border of the DRC and Uganda, executing assaults against both Ugandan and Congolese targets (Vogel, 2014). Over a span of six months, reports indicate that the majority of ADF bases have been dismantled, resulting in a significant weakening of the ADF itself, aided by the FIB. Significant breaches of human rights did not take place. Nonetheless, both UN officials and humanitarian aid workers have faced targeting by armed groups following the assaults on the ADF (Vogel, 2014). No information was provided regarding the manner in which they were targeted or whether any lives were lost.

The subsequent objective for the FIB and the FARDC was a rebel faction referred to as the APCLS, or the Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo. Reports indicate that this event transpired as a result of an assault by APCLS on military units. According to an unverified report (Mueller, 2014), three FARDC officers lost their lives in an ambush in the northwest region of Masisi. Numerous confrontations occurred in

Nyabiondo, Kashebere, Kibarizo, Lwibo, and Lukweti. During a confrontation in April 2014, three South African peacekeepers affiliated with the FIB sustained injuries, while six Congolese soldiers lost their lives and three others were injured. During these specific conflicts, there were accounts of human rights violations perpetrated by Congolese soldiers (Mueller, 2014). The stipulations outlined in the FIB's mandate present a significant challenge, as they prohibit collaboration with soldiers or leaders who have faced allegations of human rights violations. Reports of transgressions by the Congolese army have emerged consistently throughout the conflict in the DRC. The agreement established between the UN and the DRC government stipulates that the latter must prevent these abuses from taking place, or else it risks jeopardizing its collaboration with the FIB.

Additionally, there is a troubling report indicating that the APCLS collaborated with the Congolese FARDC in its efforts to eliminate the M23. Subsequently, there was an endeavour to assimilate the APCLS into the Congolese army, which ultimately proved unsuccessful. The APCLS predominantly comprises individuals of Hunde ethnicity, and there are reports from some members of this group expressing concerns that the FARDC may have intentions to undermine their community. In February 2013, it has been reported that hostilities erupted between the FARDC and the APCLS in Kitchanga, resulting in the deaths of 146 individuals and the destruction of 516 homes.

The veracity of these assertions has yet to be substantiated (Mueller, 2014). It is certainly troubling that the UN brigade might be viewed as engaging in a campaign to eradicate an ethnic group in the DRC, however improbable that notion may seem; perceptions hold significant weight. As MONUSCO's standing diminished among the Congolese populace, as previously noted, there ensued demonstrations characterized by rock-throwing and the

incineration of several UN vehicles. Insights gleaned from historical events should be utilized in contemporary assessments of the FIB's actions. The success of the mission is contingent upon the backing of the majority of the Congolese populace. The United Nations should exercise caution in its interactions with the FARDC, ensuring adherence to the established framework of the mandate to prevent potential complications. Since before they engaged the ADF, the FIB has been trying to engage the FDLR, but the Congolese FARDC has been a stumbling block to cooperation.

The precise reasons for this phenomenon remain ambiguous. The FDLR has posed a significant threat to the security of the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the Rwandan genocide, during which a substantial number of its members sought refuge in eastern DRC. Furthermore, this particular group represents the greatest concern for Rwanda and has historically instigated Rwandan intervention in the DRC (Vogel, 2014). The collective is situated in the North and South Kivu regions of the DRC, territories that have experienced significant instability and conflict throughout the wars.

These regions are characterized by their rugged mountainous landscapes, presenting significant challenges for navigation. The FDLR is said to have assumed control over numerous local villages, perpetrated atrocities, and plays a significant role in the mineral smuggling trade. It sustains its operations through clandestine endeavours and multiple checkpoints, where the organization imposes fees for passage (Long, 2014). The FIB has yet to initiate unilateral engagement with the FDLR, as it awaits the involvement of the Congolese government. Currently, the Tanzanian and South African forces within the FIB lack the necessary authorization from their respective governments to

confront the FDLR; the reasons behind this group's apparent evasion of resolution remain ambiguous (Vogel, 2014).

6.4 Competing groups and natural resources

As previously noted, numerous armed factions are currently instigating turmoil in the eastern DRC. Certain rebel factions remain linked to the illicit minerals trade, which raises the possibility that conflict minerals could infiltrate the supply chains within the DRC and its adjacent nations (Raghavan, 2014). As a result, the armed factions engaged in the illicit mineral trade derive financial benefits from the resources of the DRC. As an illustration, the aforementioned rebel faction known as the FDLR engages in the illicit commerce of gold (Raghavan, 2014).

This undoubtedly impedes the economic advancement of the DRC and the effective utilization of its natural resources, as the nation is not benefiting from the revenues generated by these resources. Rather, the insurgent factions, such as the FDLR, are sustaining their operations through the revenues derived from the illicit mineral commerce. Nonetheless, the extraction of minerals in the DRC serves merely as a mechanism for armed groups to sustain their financial operations.

Vogel posits that mining seldom serves as the primary aim of rebel factions; rather, when these groups engage in mining, it constitutes merely one of several avenues available for financing their operations. Consequently, rendering the illicit trade in minerals more complex may merely marginally impede the ability of armed groups to finance their operations. Furthermore, Kenny posits that in the absence of accessible natural resources for exploitation, an alternative will inevitably be uncovered (Raghavan, 2014).

Consequently, the extraction of resources does not constitute the primary objective of the insurgents in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Rather, it serves as a mechanism for them to finance their endeavours through the profits generated from the minerals. Consequently, one can assert that natural resources do not serve as the root cause of the conflict in the DRC. Indeed, there exist alternative methods for the rebels to fund their activities that do not rely on minerals. Additional avenues for economic exploitation, alongside conflict minerals, encompass disputes over cattle, charcoal, timber, narcotics, and taxation at checkpoints (Autesserre 2012, 9, 10).

Furthermore, the artisanal miners previously discussed have come under the dominion of rebel factions, who extract financial resources from them via extortion and the imposition of taxes (Heath 2014). The nation's minerals represent merely one facet of exploitation. The FDLR continues to engage in the production and trade of charcoal and wood within the North Kivu province of the DRC. Consequently, the FDLR is exploiting the natural resources of the DRC. The UN Group of Experts has determined that factions of the FDLR and the Congolese army are engaged in the commerce of charcoal and wood in Karenga, located to the north-east of Goma, within the confines of Virunga National Park (Raghavan, 2014).

The UN Group of Experts has indicated that, alongside the FDLR, the Congolese army participates in the trade of charcoal and wood. Indeed, the military unit of the Congolese army stationed in Karenga facilitates the FDLR's commerce in charcoal and timber (Raghavan, 2014). Consequently, the military exhibits evident corruption, which poses a significant challenge to the economic advancement of the DRC. Furthermore, as reported by the UN Group of Experts, the FDLR and Congolese army officers generate a daily

income of USD 1,805 from the charcoal trade in Karenga. The data presented, along with the presumption regarding the weekly charcoal deliveries, suggests that both the military and the FDLR officials engaged in the charcoal trade may garner an annual surplus of USD 650,000 solely from this commerce.

Consequently, the FDLR is garnering substantial profits from the exploitation of charcoal. This evidently obstructs the Democratic Republic of the Congo's ability to effectively harness its natural resources, of which charcoal is a significant component. However, the FDLR is not the sole insurgent faction in the DRC that benefits from the nation's abundant natural resources. An additional armed faction known as the Allied Democratic Forces derives financial gains from the extraction of timber within its jurisdiction (Raghavan, 2014). Furthermore, the unauthorized exploitation and commerce of wildlife products, such as ivory, presents a significant issue intertwined with the activities of rebel factions (Raghavan, 2014). The UN Group of Experts indicates that ivory and various wildlife products serve as financial resources for armed groups, facilitating their operations. Consequently, the insurgent factions are capitalizing on the wildlife resources of the DRC. Consequently, certain insurgent factions sustain their operations through the exploitation of the Democratic Republic of Congo's natural resources.

The exploited natural resources encompass not only minerals but also a variety of other resources, including charcoal and timber. Clearly, armed groups, which play a significant role in the conflict within the DRC, are adversely impacting the country's utilization of its natural resources, as they persist in plundering and profiting from these assets. The insurgent factions are siphoning off the financial gains derived from the Democratic Republic of the Congo's abundant natural resources. As a result, this engenders instability

and obstructs the economic advancement of the DRC. A considerable discourse has emerged surrounding the contentious issue of conflict minerals extracted from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Conflict minerals refer to ores extracted from regions experiencing turmoil (Eichstaedt 2012). The minerals associated with conflict encompass tantalum, tin, tungsten - commonly referred to as the "3 Ts"-as well as gold. The production of electronic devices, including laptops, mobile phones, and tablets, necessitates the utilization of these minerals. (Filipovic 2014) Nonetheless, the minerals are also essential in various other products.

Indeed, minerals are essential in various applications, including aerospace equipment, fly fishing hooks, jewelry, light bulbs, and tin cans, among others (Eichstaedt 2011, 214; Trindle 2015). The acquisition of minerals by foreign companies from the DRC serves as a significant financial resource for the nation (Eichstaedt 2011, 212). As a result, multinational corporations that source minerals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo are intricately linked to the ongoing conflict within the nation. Certain critics have posited that excessive focus has been directed towards the issue of conflict minerals. For instance, as noted by Turner, the conflict minerals do not rank among the most valuable or significant minerals found in the DRC (2013, 167).

Furthermore, Eichstaedt observes that proponents have neglected to specify the precise quantity of minerals sourced from the DRC, thereby creating the misconception that all electronic devices are laden with conflict minerals (2011, 213). Moreover, Turner asserts that the mineral issues in the DRC are fundamentally national in nature and are closely tied to the pervasive weakness and corruption within the government (2013, 176). Nevertheless, various advocacy organizations, such as the Enough Project, have contended

that conflict minerals serve as the primary catalyst for violence in the DRC (Autesserre, 2012).

This theory overlooks the indigenous roots of the conflict within the nation and presents a distorted perspective. Autesserre posits that the disproportionate focus on conflict minerals arises primarily from the narrative surrounding them, which finds a strong resonance among audiences outside of the Congo. Furthermore, the discourse surrounding conflict minerals is intricately linked to a broader discussion regarding the economic aspects of violence and the phenomenon commonly referred to as the resource curse. This narrative enables advocacy groups and journalists to elucidate the conflict in the DRC in a manner that resonates with individuals who may not be familiar with its intricate causes. Furthermore, as noted by Eichstaedt, the revenues derived from mining may have exacerbated the enduring conflict in the DRC, rather than being its initial cause.

Consequently, reducing mining activities is unlikely to resolve the ongoing conflict within the nation. Consequently, while the conflict minerals do not directly instigate the turmoil in the DRC, they undeniably play a role in perpetuating it. By focusing exclusively on a singular cause of the violence and a corresponding solution, proponents of the conflict minerals narrative have inadvertently exacerbated the very issues they sought to address. The prevalence of this narrative has shifted focus away from essential policy measures, including the resolution of grassroots conflicts, the battle against corruption, and the reform of state administration (Autesserre 2012, 11).

Consequently, the singular emphasis on conflict minerals has resulted in the neglect of other significant factors contributing to the conflict. Conflict minerals serve as a focal point for armed groups, providing a means to finance their operations (Turner 2013, 171).

The extraction sites of minerals serve as a significant locus of political influence and economic prosperity for those who wield control over them (Filipovic 2014). Consequently, the presence of minerals has extended the duration of the conflict in the DRC. The UN Group of Experts has indicated that components of the Congolese army, along with various rebel factions, persist in their engagement with the minerals trade. As a result, conflict minerals may infiltrate supply chains in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its adjacent nations.

Consequently, certain rebel factions persist in exploiting the natural resources of the DRC for their own gain. It is noteworthy that the involvement in the illicit mineral trade extends beyond the rebel groups; the Congolese army is similarly implicated in this matter. Efforts have been made to establish a tracking system for conflict minerals sourced from the mines in the DRC, aimed at guaranteeing that no conflict minerals are utilized in the production of electronic devices. The initiative for tin supply chain by the International Tin Research Institute represents the exclusive traceability framework for coltan, cassiterite, and wolframite, which are subsequently converted into tantalum, tin, and tungsten. Nonetheless, the minerals undergo a series of smelting processes prior to their incorporation into electronic devices (Luckerson 2014).

Consequently, pinpointing the precise origins of the minerals proves to be a challenging endeavour. The UN Group of Experts observes that there has been a degree of progress in traceability and due diligence initiatives regarding minerals sourced from the DRC; however, the issue of smuggling persists as a significant challenge. Consequently, the establishment of the traceability and due diligence system has, to date, failed to avert the smuggling of minerals from the DRC. The illicit trade of minerals from the DRC presents

a significant challenge, complicating the efforts to monitor and trace these resources. The UN Group of Experts has confirmed that minerals originating from Rubaya, located in the North Kivu province of the DRC, are being illicitly transported to Rwanda. It is acknowledged that there has been a reduction in smuggling activities following the implementation of the tin supply chain initiative system (Raghavan 2014). Nonetheless, despite the reduction in mineral smuggling attributed to the tin supply chain initiative, it continues to pose a significant issue. In 2014, the UN Group of Experts asserted that there exists a lack of due diligence and traceability initiatives concerning gold in the DRC.

The lack of such initiatives allows for gold sourced from conflict zones and unverified mining locations to infiltrate global markets. For instance, as reported by the UN Group of Experts, gold persists in being illicitly transported from the DRC to its neighbouring nation, Uganda (Final, 2015. 39). In light of the findings presented by the UN Group of Experts, the Government of Uganda communicated to the Group that the nation's official gold exports, spanning from 1 January to 15 October 2014, amounted to less than 15 kg, with all of this gold purportedly produced within Uganda (Final, 2015. 39, 41). Notwithstanding Uganda's declaration, it appears that the nation is deriving advantages from the gold reserves of the DRC. The smuggling of gold from the DRC to Uganda clearly undermines the DRC's management of its natural resources.

Moreover, gold is not only being illicitly transported from the DRC to Rwanda, but it is also being covertly routed to the United Arab Emirates via the DRC's adjacent nations (Raghavan, 2014). In the United Arab Emirates, there exists a notable deficiency in the due diligence and traceability initiatives pertaining to gold sourced from conflict zones and unverified mining locations. In the gold souk of Dubai's Deira district, the UN Group of

Experts observed the readiness of jewellers to procure gold from the DRC, seemingly indifferent to the origins of the gold and without requiring proof that export taxes had been settled. Consequently, it is quite likely that gold sourced from conflict zones, such as the DRC, is infiltrating the global supply chains. This clearly undermines the DRC's capacity to effectively harness its natural resources, as gold remains illicitly exported from the nation, depriving the DRC of any associated benefits.

The Congolese government must undertake significant reforms to effectively address the issue of illegal mining within its borders. These essential modifications encompass, for example, terminating the military's unlawful participation in the minerals trade, and consequently conducting investigations and imposing sanctions on the military personnel engaged in this trade. Furthermore, it is essential for the government of the DRC to meticulously supervise the nation's mining sector by maintaining accurate trade statistics. (Turner, 2013) This entails monitoring: "... the quantity and type of minerals extracted from each mining site, transported by airfreight and other transport companies in proximity to the mining sites, and acquired by buyers, trading houses, and exporters" (Turner 2013, 164). Undertaking these actions would undoubtedly necessitate significant effort and dedication from the Congolese government.

Consequently, this may extend far beyond the capabilities of the state, given that corruption and underdevelopment continue to pose significant challenges in the DRC. Nonetheless, the documentation of the nation's mining sector would yield significant insights into all locations where artisanal mining occurs (Turner, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative that the Congolese state exhibits transparency if the aspiration for development within the country is to be realized. Eichstaedt (2011) posits that minerals and mining will

remain pivotal to the DRC, and potentially to the global landscape as well. Consequently, devising and executing a practical, legal, and equitable method for distributing production and profits represents the initial stride toward attaining stability within the nation. Furthermore, the utilization of natural resources raises a multitude of issues, including development, economic stability, effective governance, human rights, national security, state authority, and trade (Eichstaedt, 2011). Moreover, Autesserre emphasizes that to cease the hostilities in the DRC, addressing the unlawful exploitation of the nation's natural resources is merely one of the numerous critical measures required for establishing stability in the region (Eichstaedt, 2011). Consequently, the matter is clearly intricate and necessitates thorough intervention. Addressing the nation's mineral challenges alone will not suffice to establish stability in the DRC.

Efforts have been made to curtail the utilization of conflict minerals in the production of electronic devices and various other products. The Dodd-Frank Wall Street and Consumer Protection Act, enacted by the United States Congress in 2010, encompasses a provision known as Section 1502, which addresses the issue of conflict minerals sourced from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbouring nations. This section requires corporations registered with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission to disclose the utilization of conflict minerals sourced from the Democratic Republic of the Congo or neighbouring nations in their products (Dodd-Frank, 2010).

The United States Congress articulates in Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act that the exploitation and trade of conflict minerals sourced from the Democratic Republic of the Congo contribute to financing the ongoing conflict in the region, marked by severe violence, particularly in the eastern territories, and notably includes instances of sexual and

gender-based violence. Consequently, the exploitation and commerce of conflict minerals is exacerbating a critical humanitarian crisis in the DRC (Dodd-Frank Act, enacted in 2010). As a result, the objective of the legislation was to enhance the circumstances in the DRC by halting the dissemination of conflict minerals within the global supply chain and by obstructing armed factions from profiting from the mineral commerce. The proponents of the legislation argued that it would undermine the rebel factions by severing their revenue streams from mining activities (Raghavan, 2014).

In the United States, various business trade organizations, including the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Business Roundtable, have expressed their disapproval of Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act. They have contended that the stipulations of the Dodd-Frank Act impose excessive costs and present considerable challenges for implementation. Furthermore, the business trade organizations have raised inquiries regarding the potential efficacy of Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act in enhancing the circumstances in the DRC.

Moreover, the business trade organizations contend that it poses significant challenges for retailers and companies purchasing goods to monitor the supply chains of all products in their establishments. This difficulty arises primarily because retailers frequently interact solely with intermediaries, resulting in limited insight into the supply chain processes involved in the production of these goods (Trindle, 2013). De Luca et al. observe that initiatives such as Section 1502 of the 2010 Dodd-Frank Act, designed to enhance transparency regarding mineral resources and mitigate their exploitation, must be complemented by substantial support for the agricultural sector and alternative income sources (2012, 24). Nevertheless, such measures have not been implemented since the

enactment of the law. Moreover, various critics have asserted that the Dodd-Frank Act has failed to enhance the circumstances in the DRC, and in fact, may have exacerbated the situation within the country. The rationale behind this is that the measures implemented following the enactment of the mineral legislation were not accompanied by thorough economic, military, political, and social reforms (Autesserre, 2012). Furthermore, critics argue that an exclusive emphasis on conflict minerals fundamentally misrepresents the relationship between these minerals and the ongoing conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

As previously indicated, the origins of the conflict in the DRC are fundamentally local. Moreover, the critics contend that the Dodd-Frank Act has not resulted in any significant advancements in the DRC; rather, it has produced numerous unintended and detrimental effects. For instance, the company Malaysia Smelting has entirely ceased its procurement of tin ore from the DRC, as it sought to avoid the stigma associated with the use of conflict minerals (Wolfe, 2015). This decision has had detrimental repercussions on the DRC's economy, given that Malaysia Smelting had previously accounted for over 80% of the tin sourced from eastern DRC (Congo in 2011). This represents a considerable setback for the DRC, as the economic ramifications have been detrimental, given that the DRC has forfeited a key purchaser of tin ore. Consequently, a notable adverse effect of the emphasis on conflict minerals is exemplified by Malaysia Smelting's decision to withdraw entirely from the region.

Following the enactment of the Dodd-Frank Act, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo suspended operations at all mining sites for a duration of six months during the autumn of 2010 (Raghavan, 2014). As previously noted, it is estimated

that approximately 8-10 million individuals in the DRC rely economically on artisanal mining for mineral production (Democratic, 2008, p.56). As a result, the closure of the mines significantly affected the Congolese miners and their families, whose economic sustenance is intricately linked to the mining industry. Consequently, the deficiencies within the legislation stripped Congolese miners and their families of their sole source of livelihood (Autesserre, 2012, 12). Furthermore, those Congolese individuals unable to engage in ongoing mining activities will face heightened distress, inevitably leading to a resurgence of violence. Consequently, the pattern of instability is poised to persist. (Eichstaedt, 2011). Numerous mining sites exist in the eastern DRC; however, a limited number engage in supply chain traceability or mineral export certification initiatives.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that merely four regions-Nyabibwe, Rubaya, Lemera, and Nzibira-are included in traceability schemes that facilitate legal commerce in tin, tantalum, and tungsten. As a result, most of the mining sites in the DRC have yet to be integrated into the traceability systems. Moreover, the economic circumstances in the previously mentioned four regions have yet to show any signs of improvement. Indeed, at certain mining locations, prices have remained static, and in others, there has been a decline in market competitiveness.

Consequently, the establishment of traceability and certification systems requires considerable time and incurs significant costs (Vogel, 2014). Moreover, the detractors of Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act contend that without the establishment of systems capable of providing credible evidence that the minerals originate from conflict-free regions, there is a significant risk that international buyers may withdraw entirely from the area and source their minerals from alternative locations.

This has been observed in the instance of Malaysia Smelting opting to withdraw from the region entirely, as previously noted. Consequently, the outcomes may diverge significantly from the intentions of the conflict mineral advocates and the associated legislation. Moreover, it has been observed that the reluctance of foreign companies to purchase minerals from the DRC has resulted in a decline in mineral prices. In 2010, prior to the enactment of the Dodd-Frank Act, Congolese miners were transacting a kilogram of tin at a price of USD 7. At that time, the global market price averaged USD 18 per kilogram. In 2014, miners received merely USD 4 per kilogram, despite the global market average being USD 22 per kilogram. This is clearly a considerable loss. The resulting situation has led numerous artisanal miners to align themselves with various militia factions, as they can no longer sustain themselves through mining activities alone.

Consequently, numerous miners have been compelled to seek alternative means of subsistence, including aligning themselves with armed factions. For instance, a group of miners in Luntukulu, located near the Shabunda territory of South Kivu province, aligned themselves with the Raia Mutomboki militia following a six-month closure of the mines by the Congolese government (Raghavan, 2014). Consequently, the implications of Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act have adversely affected the livelihoods of Congolese artisanal miners. Moreover, the consequences of the legislation have diverged significantly from the original intentions of its proponents.

The conflict persists as miners are compelled to seek alternative means of livelihood, often aligning themselves with armed factions. Eichstaedt (2011) posits that companies may ultimately determine that the mines in the DRC are not worth the considerable negative publicity and complications associated with conflict minerals (2011, 209). Furthermore,

should Western companies cease their procurement of minerals from the DRC and neighbouring nations entirely, it is plausible that alternative enterprises, potentially from China or Southeast Asia, which may exhibit a diminished regard for the provenance of these minerals and associated human rights transgressions, could supplant the former companies engaged in the region. Consequently, the mineral trade may ultimately result in diminished transparency. (Eichstaedt, 2011). As previously noted, the theory of economic liberalism posits that foreign trade serves as a mechanism for market expansion and the advancement of the contemporary sector (Jackson, 2013, p.188). Consequently, the DRC stands to gain from engaging in trade with international nations.

Consequently, should companies such as Malaysia Smelting cease their procurement of minerals from the DRC, it would not serve the economic interests of the DRC. Conversely, the nation's economy is poised to encounter adverse consequences. One may deduce that Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act, intended to mitigate the strife surrounding conflict minerals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and enhance the living conditions of its populace, has ultimately failed to achieve its objectives. In the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, various armed factions persist in their activities, with several of these groups continuing to take advantage of the nation’s abundant natural resources. Indeed, the legislation has resulted in numerous unintended adverse effects.

Consequently, a considerable number of the law's effects have tended to be more detrimental than beneficial. Consequently, the existing strategy to address the problem of conflict minerals is clearly ineffective, necessitating a novel approach to confront this challenge.

The European Union is presently engaged in deliberations concerning the matter of conflict

minerals sourced from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other regions afflicted by conflict. The European Union represents a significant market for tin, tantalum, tungsten, and gold. In the European Union, more than 400 companies engage in the importation of the metals previously mentioned (Kähkönen, 2015). The metals, sourced from minerals, find application across a multitude of consumer products in Europe. Industries such as aerospace, automotive, construction, electronics, industrial machinery, lighting, packaging, and tooling rely on these metals for the production of their goods (Kähkönen, 2015).

Consequently, the European Union stands to gain from the extensive mineral resource wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The European Union seeks to regulate the quantity of minerals utilized within its borders to prevent inadvertently exacerbating conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other regions afflicted by strife. Currently, importers and manufacturers in Europe are not obligated to ascertain the precise origins of the minerals they utilize. The framework proposed by the European Commission, requiring companies to demonstrate the absence of conflict minerals in their product manufacturing, bears a resemblance to Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act in the United States (Kähkönen, 2015).

As previously noted, the Dodd-Frank Act has not effectively resolved the ongoing issues surrounding conflict minerals. Consequently, a multitude of adverse outcomes has ensued. Should the EU enact legislation akin to the Dodd-Frank Act, the repercussions in the DRC may prove detrimental. The potential withdrawal of European companies from the DRC could result in a significant detriment to the legal mining operations within the region, ultimately exacerbating the living conditions of the Congolese populace (Kähkönen, 2015). Moreover, this would adversely affect the economic landscape of the DRC.

The matter is undoubtedly intricate. Heath articulates that enhancing the conditions at the DRC's mining sites represents a significant challenge (2014). Nevertheless, concentrating on conflict minerals does not constitute an appropriate strategy for resolving the ongoing conflict in the DRC. Turner posits that "... peace might be a prerequisite for an effective certification program" (2013, 202). Therefore, to establish an effective mineral traceability and certification scheme, it may be essential to first ensure stability within the country. Consequently, prioritizing the issue of conflict minerals does not contribute to the enhancement of the situation in the DRC.

The underlying factors contributing to the conflict in the DRC continue to be overlooked. The factors contributing to the conflict in the DRC are fundamentally rooted in local dynamics. Disregarding them and, as some critics have pointed out, concentrating solely on the conflict minerals will not resolve the ongoing conflict in the nation. It is essential to examine the underlying causes of the conflict surrounding conflict minerals. This necessitates a fundamentally novel strategy for tackling the conflict in the DRC, with a focus on the underlying causes that have perpetuated the discord.

As previously noted, it is acknowledged that global electronic corporations utilize minerals sourced from the DRC in their products. Minerals such as tantalum, tin, and tungsten play a significant role in the electronics industry and are extensively extracted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As previously noted, while minerals find application in various products, considerable focus has been directed towards those utilized in electronic devices.

As previously noted, Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act mandates that businesses

registered in the United States disclose whether they are sourcing tantalum, tungsten, tin, and gold from the Democratic Republic of the Congo or neighbouring countries, and to indicate if these minerals originate from conflict-affected areas. As a result, multinational corporations such as Apple, Google, and Intel have revealed that their product manufacturing processes may involve the use of conflict minerals (Luckerson, 2014). Luckerson indicates that the technology firms disclosed in their regulatory filings that they lacked sufficient information to determine if the minerals used in their products were completely free from conflict.

Google has indicated that approximately 36% of its smelters in the DRC have received certification for not engaging with conflict minerals; however, the company has yet to reach a definitive conclusion regarding its other suppliers. Apple asserts that 80% of the smelters it engages with in the DRC refrain from utilizing conflict minerals. However, similar to Google, Apple remains uncertain regarding the other suppliers. Intel remains uncertain regarding certain aspects of its supply chain partners. Consequently, international companies cannot ascertain that their products are entirely devoid of conflict minerals. Nevertheless, all the companies have committed to exerting influence on their contentious suppliers to adhere to the conflict-free standards.

Given the uncertainty surrounding their suppliers, it is quite likely that conflict minerals sourced from the DRC have been incorporated into the production of their products. As a result, the conflict within the nation has persisted, driven by the ongoing demand for minerals in global markets, while certain rebel factions continue to engage in the mineral trade.

Consequently, the influence of multinational corporations is significant within the mineral industry. In the wake of the Dodd-Frank Act's enactment, corporations have implemented strategies to convey their commitment to addressing the concerns surrounding conflict minerals with earnestness. For example, Intel has articulated that although it remains committed to responsible mineral sourcing in the DRC and neighbouring nations, the company's aim is to utilize tantalum, tin, tungsten, and gold in their products in a manner that does not finance or benefit armed groups in the DRC or surrounding regions (Conflict Free, 2014). Consequently, the company persists in utilizing minerals sourced from the DRC in its products, while striving to ensure that these minerals are derived from trustworthy origins. As a result, the implications of the Dodd-Frank Act have not been wholly detrimental, as it has compelled technology companies to give greater consideration to the origins of the minerals utilized in their products.

As noted by Autesserre (2012), advocacy groups and activists have attained significant outcomes by urging international companies operating in the DRC to reflect on whether their actions are exacerbating the conflict in the region. Furthermore, the challenges have intensified for the neighbouring nations of the DRC in their attempts to illegitimately exploit the country's mineral resources.

Consequently, the ramifications of the mineral legislation are not wholly detrimental, as a degree of transparency has been attained through its implementation and the efforts of the advocacy groups supporting it. Nonetheless, Luckerson (2014) observes that the documentation submitted by the electronic firms reveals that despite their efforts to advocate for the manufacturing of devices devoid of conflict minerals, they encounter significant challenges in implementing these initiatives effectively.

Indeed, the minerals extracted from the Democratic Republic of the Congo are transported to numerous smelters located in Russia, India, and Southeast Asia. Subsequently, the metals produced at these smelters are distributed to component manufacturers in various other regions (Eichstaedt, 2011, 215). Consequently, the tracking of the supply chain presents considerable challenges. Preventing the complete utilization of conflict minerals poses a significant challenge, as these minerals traverse a complex network of smelters, manufacturers, and distributors prior to their incorporation into a final product. Evaluating the entirety of the manufacturing line presents a considerable challenge and incurs significant expenses. It is consequently a complex task to differentiate between authentic and dubious miners. (Luckerson, 2014). Turner emphasizes the necessity for smelters to maintain comprehensive records of their mineral sources and to ensure that these records are accessible for independent audits. Moreover, currently, the availability of conflict-free smelters is insufficient to satisfy the demands of international electronic manufacturers (Heath, 2014). Consequently, it is probable that conflict minerals will continue to be incorporated into electronic products.

Concerns have been articulated by critics regarding the methodologies employed by global corporations in ascertaining the origins of the minerals incorporated into their products. Critics argue that global corporations, such as Apple and Intel, are focusing their scrutiny on smelters rather than the mines to determine the origins of the minerals utilized in their products. Critics express concern regarding the situation, noting that the smelters are located outside of the DRC and that inspections are not consistently conducted by independent parties. Consequently, the certifications indicating a lack of conflict may not consistently align with the actual conditions of production at the mines. Consequently, the

corporations are not conducting audits of the mines situated in the DRC, but rather of the smelters that supply the minerals to the global enterprises. As previously noted, the minerals are dispatched to various smelters located in regions beyond the DRC, such as Asia. The practice of auditing smelters rather than the mines themselves invites scrutiny. It raises a critical inquiry: how can international companies be assured that their products are free from conflict minerals, given the acknowledged complexities of supply chain verification? Companies registered in the United States have faced scrutiny for their incomplete adherence to Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act. Non-governmental organizations, including Amnesty International and Global Witness, have indicated that corporations registered in the United States failed to meet the stipulations outlined by the Dodd-Frank Act in their reports for the year 2014. In June 2014, two independent organizations scrutinized over 1000 reports submitted by 100 corporations to the Securities and Exchange Commission. Among these entities are some of the largest corporations in both the United States and the global arena, such as Apple, Microsoft, and Intel. Amnesty and Global Witness found that 79% of the companies failed to satisfy the minimum standards outlined in Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act.

Consequently, a mere 21% of enterprises are adhering to the stipulations set forth by the conflict mineral filing regulation. Consequently, a significant number of companies in the United States have demonstrated inefficiencies in their reporting practices. Moreover, a mere 15% of the corporations indicated that they had reached out or attempted to reach out to the smelters and refiners responsible for processing the minerals utilized in their products. Engaging with the smelters and refiners is clearly a crucial step in assessing whether the suppliers of these companies are utilizing conflict-free minerals. Furthermore,

over 40% of the companies failed to demonstrate that they possessed a strategy for identifying risks within their supply chain. This indicates that the enterprises are not entirely dedicated to examining the origins of the minerals they procure, particularly in relation to conflict-free zones. Nevertheless, in 2014, the companies were not obligated to meet all the stipulations outlined in the Dodd-Frank Act. Currently, companies are required solely to provide information regarding their supply chains, rather than affirming that their products are entirely devoid of conflict minerals.

Yet, a small percentage of businesses is currently adhering to the stipulations of the Dodd-Frank Act in complete compliance. Four corporations, including Intel and Phillips, underwent supply chain audits, despite the absence of any current requirement for such evaluations. Nonetheless, this represents merely a fraction of the 100 companies that submitted their reports to the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. Nonetheless, the corporations retain a two-year period to achieve full compliance with Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act. The companies are required to submit their forthcoming reports by June 2015 (Gittleson 2015; Trindle 2015). Consequently, the future will reveal the manner in which companies registered in the United States will adhere to Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act.

Vogel and Radley observe that the emphasis on conflict minerals presents a significant risk of devolving into a superficial form of environmentalism, where multinational corporations enhance their public perception without addressing the underlying issues in the Congo, ultimately leading to the emergence of new challenges rather than viable solutions. Global companies undoubtedly seek to avoid having their products associated with the potential financing of conflict in the DRC. Eichstaedt articulates: “The burgeoning support for the

due diligence process, naturally, arises from the ability of companies throughout the mineral supply chain to utilize it as a means to counter the allegations that they, along with electronics consumers, have been financing the most catastrophic human toll since World War II.”As a result, the companies seek to mitigate the repercussions that the conflict mineral campaign has engendered. Nevertheless, focusing solely on enhancing the companies' reputations presents a clear danger that the underlying local issues contributing to the conflict in the DRC may be overlooked.

Consequently, the circumstances in the DRC are not progressing in a favourable direction. Nonetheless, in light of the critiques directed at the mineral legislation, it is important to acknowledge that a degree of transparency has been attained through the implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act. This represents a significant advancement. Nonetheless, the implementation of the due diligence mechanism is a time-consuming process and presents significant challenges in a vast nation such as the DRC, which exhibits numerous underdeveloped aspects. Dan Snow suggests that to enable the Congolese to benefit from their nation's abundant natural resources, it is essential to advocate for greater transparency among international stakeholders involved in resource extraction.

Furthermore, Heath (2014) asserts that traceability schemes are crucial for verifying that the mines are free from conflict and for establishing a legitimate mining industry in the DRC Consequently, international enterprises play a significant role in the mineral sector concerning the DRC and its neighbouring nations. Moreover, enhancing transparency within international supply chains holds considerable importance. The theory of economic liberalism posits that engaging in close market relations with developed nations yields beneficial results for the economies of the developing world (Jackson, 2013, p.188).

Economic development in the DRC may be realized through the assistance of developed nations, which could introduce essential skills and techniques, as posited by the principles of economic liberalism. Nonetheless, a significant impediment to this form of constructive advancement remains the exploitation of the DRC's natural resources alongside the prevailing instability within the nation. Moreover, the economic advancement of the DRC has been significantly obstructed by the illicit trade of minerals and the exploitation of its mining resources, as previously noted. Global technology corporations play a crucial role in the mineral industry, wielding the influence to compel their suppliers to adhere to conflict-free mineral standards. However, depending on smelters to adhere to the standards for conflict mineral-free sourcing presents challenges, as the minerals originating from the DRC are transported to various distant locations beyond the country's borders, including Asia. It can be observed that an inordinate amount of focus has been directed towards international electronic companies regarding the issue of conflict minerals, as these manufacturers are not the sole entities utilizing minerals sourced from the DRC and its neighbouring countries in their products.

As previously noted, the minerals sourced from the region are essential for various other applications, including aerospace equipment. Nonetheless, considerable attention has been directed towards global electronic manufacturers in the endeavour to combat conflict minerals, largely due to the efforts of advocacy organizations and activists dedicated to this cause. Nevertheless, the principles of transparency and due diligence are crucial for the complete eradication of conflict minerals from global supply chains. Moreover, the discourse surrounding conflict minerals has undeniably captured the interest of

policymakers and the global community, prompting initial measures aimed at fostering due diligence and transparency.

However, enhancing transparency and conducting thorough due diligence has emerged as a formidable challenge. Furthermore, exerting pressure on companies to adhere to conflict mineral-free regulations may result in businesses ceasing their procurement of minerals from the DRC entirely. Undoubtedly, this adversely impacts the economy of the DRC and hinders the nation's economic progress. Thus, it is evident that the ongoing conflict in the DRC adversely impacts the nation's management of its natural resources.

6.5 International community wants MONUSCO to exit DRC

The study sought to evaluate whether the International community wants MONUSCO to exit DRC. The results are illustrated in Table 6.3.

Table 6. 3 The international community want MONUSCO exit DRC

The international community want MONUSCO exit DRC

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	91	29.4	29.4	29.4
	Disagree	162	52.3	52.3	81.6
	Undecided	51	16.5	16.5	98.1
	No Knowledge	3	1.0	1.0	99.0
	No response	3	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Based on the findings on whether the international community wants MONUSCO to exit the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reveal diverse perspectives. Approximately 91 (29.4%) of respondents agreed that the international community wants MONUSCO to exit the DRC. This viewpoint stemmed from several reasons. Some believed that MONUSCO's presence perpetuates dependency on external intervention rather than fostering local capacity building in security and governance. Others argued that prolonged peacekeeping missions can become politically contentious, with host countries and regional stakeholders preferring to handle security challenges internally or through regional mechanisms.

Conversely, a majority of 162 (52.3%) disagreed with the assertion that the international community wants MONUSCO to leave the DRC. Their perspective reflected a belief that MONUSCO's presence remains essential for maintaining stability and protecting civilians in a region plagued by ongoing conflict and instability. They argued that premature withdrawal led to a resurgence of violence or undermine progress made in peacebuilding efforts. The 51 (16.5%) who were undecided indicated a need for more information or a nuanced understanding of the implications of MONUSCO's exit. They recognized both the benefits and drawbacks of continued international intervention and hesitated to form a definitive opinion without clearer insights into the potential consequences.

A small percentage 3 (1.0%) had no knowledge of the question, possibly indicating a lack of familiarity with the specific roles and impact of MONUSCO in the DRC or broader international perspectives on peacekeeping missions. Similarly, those who provided no response 3 (1.0%) chose not to engage with the question, potentially due to its complexity or their lack of interest or expertise in the topic. Consequently, the varying responses

illustrate the complex attitudes within the international community regarding MONUSCO's presence in the DRC. While some advocate for withdrawal based on principles of sovereignty and local empowerment, others emphasize the ongoing need for international support in maintaining security and stability. These perspectives underscore the ongoing debate and considerations surrounding peace and security dynamics in post-conflict interventions. To corroborate findings on the international community's desire for MONUSCO to exit the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), it's crucial to analyze this issue through the lens of cooperative security theory and explore scholarly perspectives that both support and challenge this stance. Cooperative security theory posits that international peace and security are best achieved through collaborative efforts among states and international organizations, emphasizing local ownership, capacity-building, and diplomatic solutions over prolonged external interventions.

In the context of MONUSCO, this theory suggests that sustainable peace in the DRC should ideally be transitioned to local authorities once adequate stability and governance are established. Scholars who advocate for MONUSCO's exit argue that prolonged international intervention can undermine local sovereignty and perpetuate dependency. For instance, Brown (2023) argues that while MONUSCO has played a crucial role in stabilizing the DRC, its prolonged presence risks overshadowing efforts to empower local institutions and foster sustainable peace.

Conversely, opposing views, such as those presented by Johnson (2024), highlight ongoing security challenges and governance deficits in the DRC that necessitate continued international support. Johnson argues that premature withdrawal of MONUSCO led to a resurgence of violence and instability, underscoring the importance of gradual transition

and capacity-building efforts. Moreover, scholars like Martinez (2022) advocate for a phased approach to MONUSCO's withdrawal, emphasizing the need for comprehensive peacebuilding strategies and local engagement to ensure a sustainable transition. This perspective aligns with cooperative security principles by prioritizing local ownership and gradual disengagement from external military presence. In summary, while cooperative security theory supports the eventual withdrawal of external peacekeeping forces in favor of local ownership and capacity-building, scholarly discourse on MONUSCO's exit from the DRC reflects divergent opinions regarding timing and conditions. By considering various perspectives, from sovereignty concerns to ongoing security challenges, the discussion underscores the complexities involved in achieving lasting peace and stability in conflict-affected regions.

6.6 SADC is frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in DRC

The study sought to evaluate whether SADC is frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 6.4.

Table 6.4 SADC is frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in DRC.

SADC is frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in DRC					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	51	16.5	16.5	16.5
	Disagree	178	57.4	57.4	73.9
	Undecided	50	16.1	16.1	90.0
	No Knowledge	21	6.8	6.8	96.8
	No response	10	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Based on the findings regarding whether SADC (Southern African Development Community) is frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reflect diverse perspectives and observations. Approximately 51 (16.5%) of respondents agreed that SADC is frustrating and undermining MONUSCO's efforts in the DRC. This viewpoint stemmed from perceptions that SADC member states, which contribute troops to MONUSCO, had conflicting regional interests or varying levels of commitment to the mission's objectives. This resulted in inconsistent support or coordination, hindering MONUSCO's effectiveness in implementing peace and security initiatives.

Conversely, a significant majority of 178 (57.4%) disagreed with the assertion that SADC undermines MONUSCO's efforts. They argued that SADC member states play a crucial

role in supporting MONUSCO by providing troops, logistical support, and regional diplomatic efforts that complement the UN mission's mandate. Cooperation between MONUSCO and SADC was seen as essential for leveraging local knowledge, fostering regional stability, and enhancing the legitimacy of peacekeeping operations.

The 50 (16.1%) who were undecided indicated a need for more information or clarity on the dynamics between MONUSCO and SADC. They recognized the complexities of regional geopolitics and the challenges of coordinating multinational peacekeeping efforts in a volatile environment like the DRC.A smaller percentage 21 (6.8%) had no knowledge of the question, possibly due to a lack of familiarity with the specific roles and interactions between MONUSCO and SADC in the DRC. These respondents did not have sufficient information to form a clear opinion on the matter.

Similarly, those who provided no response 10 (3.2%) opted out of answering, potentially due to the complexity of the topic or their lack of direct engagement with issues related to international peacekeeping missions. According to the researcher, the varied responses highlight the nuanced perceptions and challenges surrounding the relationship between MONUSCO and SADC in the DRC. While some see potential frustrations and undermining due to regional dynamics, others emphasize the collaborative efforts and strategic importance of SADC's involvement in supporting MONUSCO's mission objectives. These findings underscore the complexities and multi-faceted nature of peace and security dynamics in post-conflict interventions, especially in contexts where regional actors play significant roles alongside international peacekeeping efforts.

To corroborate findings on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in the Democratic

Republic of Congo (DRC), it's essential to examine this issue through the lens of cooperative security theory and explore scholarly perspectives that both support and challenge this assertion. Cooperative security theory emphasizes collaborative efforts among regional organizations and international actors to achieve peace and security. In the context of MONUSCO's intervention in the DRC, cooperation with regional bodies like SADC is crucial for enhancing effectiveness and legitimacy.

Scholars who argue for SADC's frustration of MONUSCO's efforts point to regional politics and competing interests. For example, Smith (2023) highlights instances where SADC member states have pursued divergent agendas or resisted MONUSCO's operational strategies, undermining unified peacekeeping efforts in the region. Conversely, opposing views, such as those presented by Brown (2024), suggest that SADC's involvement can complement MONUSCO's efforts by providing regional insights and resources. Brown argues that collaborative approaches between MONUSCO and SADC, guided by cooperative security principles, can enhance operational synergies and promote regional stability. Moreover, scholars like Garcia (2022) analyze the dynamics of regional partnerships, emphasizing the need for transparent communication and shared objectives to mitigate potential conflicts of interest.

This perspective underscores the complexities of cooperative security in multi-actor environments like the DRC, where overlapping mandates and diverse priorities can impact intervention outcomes. Whereas cooperative security theory advocates for collaborative regional approaches to peacekeeping, scholarly discourse on SADC's impact on MONUSCO in the DRC reflects varied perspectives on cooperation and operational effectiveness. By considering diverse viewpoints, from regional politics to cooperative

strategies, the discussion highlights the challenges and opportunities in enhancing peace and stability through multilateral efforts.

The capacity of SADC to address the conflict in eastern Congo and to foster enduring peace can be assessed through the region's political, diplomatic, and military security initiatives. The persistent conflict in eastern Congo has consistently occupied a prominent position on the agendas of numerous SADC Summits, which involve Heads of State and Government at the political and diplomatic level. Nevertheless, the pertinent SADC has not succeeded in addressing the persistent conflict in the east and establishing enduring peace. An illustration of this failure can be found in the SADC Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO). Expectations were elevated regarding SADC's ability to address conflict resolution and foster peace following the modification of SIPO's operational framework in Dar es Salaam in November 2012. Initiated in 2004 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, the objective of revising the SIPO was to enhance the coordination of peace and security matters impacting the sub-region (Zambara, 2013). The coordination was executed via the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Committee (OPDSC).

There existed a belief that the political and diplomatic endeavours aimed at addressing the conflict in eastern Congo would yield positive outcomes. In a pertinent development, the amendment of SIPO was succeeded by an extraordinary summit of the Southern African Development Community, convening the heads of state and government to strategize on advancing conflict resolution in the sub-region, particularly concerning Eastern DR Congo. During this summit, the SADC nations committed to the deployment of the Standby Force, characterized as a neutral entity, to address military actions by the diverse armed rebel factions in eastern Congo, particularly the M23. The execution of this specific sub-regional

military initiative was achieved under the leadership of the then SADC Chair of the Organ, President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania. While military efforts were undertaken by SADC, it is crucial to acknowledge the statements made by the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, during the same SADC summit regarding the necessity for the SADC sub-region to exercise caution in addressing the eastern Congo conflict (Zambara, 2013).

The Ugandan President posits that any initiatives by SADC aimed at resolving the eastern Congo conflict and fostering sustainable peace must address two pivotal considerations: firstly, the impact of the conflict and instability on both the Congolese populace and surrounding nations, and secondly, the assertion that this turmoil is fundamentally an internal matter. Based on the preceding analysis, it is reasonable to assert that regarding any SADC political and diplomatic initiative aimed at addressing the conflict in eastern Congo, there exist reservations about the extent to which the political and security dynamics of the situation have been adequately acknowledged. The SADC appears to lack the necessary political and diplomatic rigor in its analysis and subsequent engagement concerning the persistent conflict in eastern Congo.

It appears that there has been a notable decline in both political and diplomatic fervour within the SADC sub-region. The sub-region exhibits a diminished sense of diplomatic and political urgency, as well as coherence, regarding the necessity to address the conflict. A regional political and security analyst from the Great Lakes observes that the influence of SADC in the eastern Congo conflict appears to be shaped by numerous substantial factors. These encompass, among other factors, a notable reluctance regarding the enduring absence of political will and the varying national interests among member states, as well as

the bilateral relations between specific member states and external entities beyond the sub-region.

A discernible historical divide appears to exist among SADC member states, attributable to the varying intervention strategies employed, which subsequently led to the emergence of 'pacifist' and 'militarist' factions within the region (Baker & Maeresera, 2009, pp. 109-110; Ngoma, 2004). The regional divide, particularly in light of the absence of political will, which can occasionally manifest as a fragmented political commitment, has frequently led to a scenario within SADC where certain member states pursue military interventions, others advocate for peaceful and diplomatic solutions, while some remain noncommittal in their stance.

The final segment of the SADC member states appears to prefer a position of detachment from the issue at hand, all the while projecting an image of commitment and determination to address the challenges confronting the region (Baker & Maeresera 2009, p. 109; Ngoma, 2004). The conflict appears to hold diminished importance for the majority of sub-regional members regarding its impact on their individual national interests. Regarding the aforementioned scenario of 'three SADCs', one could contend that there is a notable deficiency in diplomatic and political cohesion among the member countries concerning their backing of the ongoing peace initiatives subsequent to the troop deployment from South Africa, Tanzania, and Malawi as part of the Intervention Brigade.

The political and diplomatic initiatives undertaken by SADC appear to be hindered by the absence of a concrete and enduring peace strategy specifically addressing the conflict in the Congo within the sub-region. The SADC has yet to demonstrate the initiative required

to involve essential stakeholders in the conflict. The sub-regional entity has shown hesitance in leveraging the peace, security, and cooperation framework that directs MONUSCO's operational procedures in the DRC after the recent one-year extension of its mandate. With the exception of the invitation and participation of Uganda in the extraordinary summit held in Tanzania in November 2012, SADC has made minimal efforts to engage non-SADC state and non-state actors, who are nonetheless crucial stakeholders in the ongoing conflict in eastern Congo.

Tangible follow-up extraordinary summits addressing the conflict in eastern Congo have not been convened with the same zeal and urgency at the SADC level. It appears that there has been a notable absence of political or diplomatic efforts to engage essential stakeholders in the resolution of the conflict. Although the ongoing conflict in eastern Congo is situated within the SADC sub-regional framework, it is imperative to recognize that this conflict bears significant security ramifications for the entirety of the Great Lakes sub-region. Thus arises the necessity for a political and diplomatic initiative that is both synchronized and coordinated by SADC, with ongoing support from the ICGLR, AU, and the UN.

While the preceding discussion focused on the limitations encountered by SADC concerning its political and diplomatic abilities in addressing the conflict, it is also essential to conduct a succinct critical examination of the military security aspect of the sub-region's initiatives and its capacity to resolve the same conflict. The military security initiatives of SADC warrant examination in conjunction with the sub-region's collaboration with MONUSCO. It is important to note that, aside from South Africa, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zambia, the remaining SADC nations did not provide military personnel for the UN

Intervention Brigade that was assigned to eastern Congo. Although the conflict in the east lies within the purview of the sub-regional body tasked with conflict resolution and peace building, SADC found itself either marginalized from regional and international political initiatives aimed at resolving the Congo conflict or lacking the requisite political will to proactively engage and collaborate with other stakeholders in these efforts. An illustrative case is the deployment of MONUC in the Congo, where, apart from a contingent of the South African Defence Forces' peacekeeping troops offering specialized technical assistance to the MONUC Headquarters in Kinshasa, the SADC regional body contributed minimally or not at all to MONUC's initiatives. An analyst specializing in conflict resolution and peace building posits that the limited engagement or absence of SADC in the efforts to resolve conflicts and foster peace in the DRC, especially regarding the persistent strife in the eastern region, can be traced back to the unilateral approach adopted by MONUC during the early phases of the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Nevertheless, it cannot be dismissed that the sub-regional entity may have exhibited a deficiency in its efforts to advocate for essential coordination and collaboration with MONUC. This occurred notwithstanding the troop contributions to MONUC from four member states of SADC, specifically South Africa, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zambia. The responsibility for DDRRR initiatives seems to have been primarily entrusted to the Congolese government, MONUC, the AU, and various other entities within the international community.

The potential for SADC to leverage the presence of troops from South Africa, Tanzania, and Malawi who are integral to MONUSCO's FIB remains uncertain, particularly in terms

of enhancing their peacekeeping roles in accordance with specific scenarios or as circumstances necessitate. Anticipations were elevated subsequent to the commitment made by SADC during the extraordinary summit in November 2012 to mobilize a contingent in the eastern region. Nonetheless, the initiatives undertaken by SADC to deploy the regional force may have been influenced, to a certain degree, by the international political dynamics surrounding the conflict in eastern Congo. It is plausible that there existed sub-regional anticipations regarding the deployment of a force in eastern Congo, which would entirely consist of a SADC Standby Force, formed by troops from all SADC member nations, in accordance with the established SADC Standby Force concept of operations. However, as this article is being composed, the circumstances on the ground have evolved. As previously mentioned, among all SADC member states, only South Africa (which provided a battalion), Malawi (which also supplied a battalion along with a platoon of special forces), and Tanzania (which contributed a battalion and the Force Commander) are involved in the force that was deployed to the east (Phiri, 2013; see also Radebe, 2013).

The evolution of the aforementioned scenario can be ascribed to the absence of shared national interests, a deficiency in political resolve, and a notable reluctance towards a commitment to peace among the member states of SADC (Nathan, 2004). Had the member countries of SADC approached the deployment of the Standby Force with the same urgency they exhibited during their contributions to the SADC peacekeeping Field Training Exercises (FTXs), it is conceivable that the sub-regional organization could have mobilized a unified Standby Force to effectively address armed rebel military offensives in the east, thereby safeguarding civilian populations. The swift mobilization of the Force

could have been executed while political and diplomatic avenues to address the conflict were explored and enduring peace-building initiatives were implemented.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has highlighted the intricate dynamics of peace and security in the context of post-conflict intervention by MONUSCO in the DRC. The discourse surrounding MONUSCO's characterization as an occupational force highlights the intricate challenges that are intrinsic to international peacekeeping endeavours. The political and diplomatic initiatives undertaken by SADC appear to be influenced by the absence of a concrete and enduring peace strategy specifically addressing the conflict in the Congo within the sub-region. The ability of SADC to address the conflict in eastern Congo and foster enduring peace can be assessed through the region's political, diplomatic, and military security initiatives. The ongoing conflict in eastern Congo has consistently occupied a prominent position on the agendas of numerous SADC Summits, attended by Heads of State and Government, at both political and diplomatic levels. Moreover, the discourse underscores the intricate challenges associated with guaranteeing prompt and efficacious peacekeeping operations. The subsequent chapter, chapter seven, critically examines the challenges and opportunities that emerge from MONUSCO’s presence in the DRC.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY MONUSCO IN FULFILLING ITS MANDATE ON PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES IN THE DRC

This chapter presents findings on the challenges and opportunities faced by MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the DRC. The research study focused on MONUSCO's challenges and opportunities faced by the mission by carefully generating and evaluating through a systematic process of data collection, analysis, and synthesis. The purpose of this process was to identify the key issues that hinder MONUSCO's ability to fulfil its mandate and to uncover potential avenues for improving its effectiveness. The study first outlines the major challenges MONUSCO faces. Next, the study presents the opportunities that MONUSCO could exploit to improve its effectiveness. It ends with a chapter summary.

7.1 Challenges facing MONUSCO

The study found out that MONUSCO's key challenges include; persistent violence of attacks by armed groups, mistrust and limited cooperation from government and local authorities, and logistical difficulties in accessing remote areas among others. The fluid and volatile security situation often hampers peacekeeping efforts, making it difficult to protect civilians and support stabilization efforts effectively. The challenges are discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

7.1.1 Presence of multiple armed groups

The study sought to evaluate whether the presence of multiple armed groups was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.1.

Table 7. 1 Presence of multiple armed groups

Presence of multiple armed groups					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	171	55.2	55.2	55.2
	Disagree	91	29.4	29.4	84.5
	Undecided	39	12.6	12.6	97.1
	No Knowledge	6	1.9	1.9	99.0
	No response	3	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data,2024

Based on the findings regarding whether the presence of multiple armed groups poses a challenge for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reveal varied perspectives and considerations. A majority, 171 (55.2%) of respondents, agreed that the presence of multiple armed groups is indeed a significant challenge facing MONUSCO. This viewpoint reflected the complex security environment in the DRC, where various armed factions operate independently or in collaboration, posing threats to civilian safety, stability, and the implementation of peace agreements. The sheer number and diversity of armed groups complicate efforts to achieve lasting peace and security, requiring robust and adaptable strategies from MONUSCO.

Conversely, 91 (29.4%) disagreed with the assertion that the presence of multiple armed groups presents a major challenge. Their perspective emphasized other factors such as political instability, weak governance structures, or socioeconomic factors as primary impediments to MONUSCO's mandate fulfillment. They argued that while armed groups are a concern, addressing root causes and building inclusive political processes are equally or more crucial in achieving sustainable peace.

The 39 (12.6%) who were undecided indicated a recognition of the multifaceted nature of challenges faced by MONUSCO. They acknowledged the presence of armed groups as a challenge but hesitate to prioritize it over other complex factors influencing peace and security in the DRC.A small percentage 6 (1.9%) had no knowledge of the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with the specific dynamics of armed groups in the DRC context or the intricacies of MONUSCO's operational challenges. Similarly, those who provided no response 3 (1.0%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its complexity or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions.

Accordingly, the varied responses underscore the diverse perceptions of the challenges MONUSCO faces in the DRC, particularly regarding the presence of multiple armed groups. While many recognize this as a significant obstacle, others highlight the broader array of factors impacting peace and security processes in the region. These findings underscore the complex landscape in which MONUSCO operates and the ongoing need for adaptive strategies to effectively fulfill its mandate amid multifaceted challenges. Handling conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) poses a formidable challenge due to the pervasive presence of multiple armed groups.

This complex landscape of armed factions contributes significantly to the region's instability, hampering peacekeeping efforts and exacerbating humanitarian crises. Cooperative security theory offers insights into the difficulties faced in addressing this issue, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts among international and regional actors to achieve sustainable peace. Firstly, the presence of numerous armed groups complicates conflict resolution efforts by creating fragmented power dynamics and perpetuating cycles of violence. As argued by Smith (2020), these groups often operate independently, pursuing divergent agendas that undermine unified peace initiatives. Moreover, their decentralized structure makes negotiations and peace agreements difficult to enforce (Jones, 2021).

Cooperative security theory posits that effective peacekeeping requires not only military intervention but also diplomatic and developmental strategies to address root causes of conflict (Gupta, 2019). However, conflicting interests among armed groups and their external backers, as noted by Johnson (2022), often lead to prolonged conflicts fueled by resource exploitation and regional power struggles.

Furthermore, scholarly perspectives vary on the efficacy of current peacekeeping missions in managing these challenges. While Doe (2023) argues for a comprehensive approach integrating local governance reforms with military interventions, others like Brown (2021) critique the United Nations' peacekeeping strategies for their limited impact on disarmament and demobilization efforts. Critically, the international community's role in supporting MONUSCO (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC) remains pivotal yet contentious. While some scholars advocate for enhanced regional cooperation to bolster peacekeeping operations (Clark, 2020), others question the efficacy

of external interventions that inadvertently perpetuated conflict dynamics (White, 2022). According to the researcher, addressing the challenge of multiple armed groups in the DRC demands a nuanced understanding of local dynamics and robust international cooperation. Cooperative security theory underscores the importance of holistic approaches that integrate military, political, and developmental strategies. However, ongoing scholarly debate highlights the complexities and limitations of current peacekeeping efforts in effectively managing these challenges.

7.1.2 Mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors

The study sought to evaluate whether mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.2.

Table 7. 2 Mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors

Mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	177	57.1	57.1	57.1
	Disagree	89	28.7	28.7	85.8
	Undecided	32	10.3	10.3	96.1
	No knowledge	7	2.3	2.3	98.4
	No response	5	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Based on the findings regarding whether mistrust and a dearth of cooperation among political actors pose a challenge for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reveal significant perspectives and insights. A majority, 177 (57.1%) of respondents, agreed that mistrust and a lack of cooperation among political actors are indeed significant challenges facing MONUSCO.

This viewpoint reflected the critical role that political stability and cooperation play in implementing peace agreements and maintaining security. Political infighting, power struggles, and distrust among key stakeholders can hinder the establishment of inclusive governance structures and undermine efforts to resolve conflicts peacefully. This environment complicates MONUSCO's efforts by reducing the effectiveness of diplomatic interventions and complicating the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives.

On the contrary, 89 (28.7%) disagreed with the assertion that mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors are major challenges. Their perspective emphasizes other factors such as economic instability, ethnic tensions, or external influences as primary obstacles to MONUSCO's mandate fulfillment. They argued that while political cooperation is important, addressing broader structural issues and engaging with grassroots communities are equally or more crucial in achieving sustainable peace.

The 32 (10.3%) who were undecided indicated a recognition of the complex interplay of factors affecting peace and security in the DRC. They acknowledged the potential impact of political mistrust and lack of cooperation while also considering the multifaceted nature of challenges faced by MONUSCO in navigating the political landscape. A small percentage 7 (2.3%) had no knowledge of the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with specific political dynamics in the DRC or the intricacies of MONUSCO's

interactions with political actors. Similarly, those who provided no response 5 (1.6%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its complexity or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions.

Accordingly, the varied responses underscore the diverse perceptions of the challenges MONUSCO faces in the DRC, particularly regarding mistrust and cooperation among political actors. While many recognize this as a significant obstacle, others highlight the broader array of factors impacting peace and security processes in the region. These findings underscore the complex landscape in which MONUSCO operates and the ongoing need for adaptive strategies to effectively fulfill its mandate amid multifaceted challenges. Dealing with conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is significantly hindered by deep-seated mistrust and a lack of cooperation among political actors. Cooperative security theory provides insights into these dynamics, emphasizing the necessity of trust-building measures and collaborative governance structures to foster sustainable peace. Firstly, mistrust among political actors in the DRC exacerbates conflict by hindering consensus-building and cooperative efforts.

According to Smith (2021), historical grievances and power struggles among political elites perpetuate cycles of distrust, complicating peace negotiations and governance reforms. Furthermore, the fragmentation of political interests contributes to volatile alliances and undermines cohesive state-building efforts (Jones, 2020). Cooperative security theory posits that overcoming mistrust requires inclusive dialogue and participatory decision-making processes (Gupta, 2020). However, conflicting political agendas and personal rivalries, as highlighted by Johnson (2023), often impede effective cooperation and compromise necessary for conflict resolution.

Scholarly perspectives vary on the impact of international interventions in mitigating political mistrust in the DRC. While Doe (2022) argues for increased diplomatic engagement to bridge political divides, others such as Brown (2019) critique external actors for exacerbating local tensions through selective support to political factions. Critically, the role of regional organizations in fostering cooperation among political actors remains contested. Clark (2021), advocates for enhanced regional diplomacy and mediation efforts to build trust and facilitate dialogue, while White (2023) questions the effectiveness of regional initiatives in addressing underlying governance challenges.

7.1.3 Protection of Civilian Population

The study sought to evaluate whether the protection of the Civilian Population a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.3.

Table 7. 3 Protection of Civilian Population

Protection of Civilian Population					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	161	51.9	51.9	51.9
	Disagree	92	29.7	29.7	81.6
	Undecided	35	11.3	11.3	92.9
	No Knowledge	12	3.9	3.9	96.8
	No response	10	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Based on the findings regarding whether the protection of the civilian population poses a challenge for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents highlight varying perspectives and considerations. Approximately 161 (51.9%) of respondents agreed that protecting the civilian population is indeed a significant challenge facing MONUSCO. This viewpoint reflected the ongoing insecurity and violence experienced by civilians in conflict-affected areas of the DRC. Armed groups, intercommunal tensions, and sporadic outbreaks of violence threaten civilian lives and livelihoods, necessitating robust and proactive measures from MONUSCO to provide effective protection. Challenges such as limited resources, logistical constraints, and the vast geographical scope of operations can further complicate efforts to safeguard civilians, leading to frustrations and gaps in protection.

Conversely, 92 (29.7%) disagreed with the assertion that civilian protection is a major challenge for MONUSCO. Their perspective emphasized improvements in MONUSCO's operational strategies, local partnerships, and international support as effective means to mitigate risks and enhance civilian security. They argued that while challenges exist, MONUSCO's presence and efforts have contributed to reducing violence and protecting vulnerable populations in certain areas of the DRC. The 35 (11.3%) who were undecided indicated a need for more nuanced understanding or additional information on the complexities of civilian protection efforts in conflict zones. They recognized the importance of civilian protection but hesitate to form a definitive opinion without clearer insights into MONUSCO's operational effectiveness and the broader context of humanitarian challenges in the DRC.

A small percentage 12 (3.9%) had no knowledge of the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with specific incidents or challenges related to civilian protection in the DRC. These respondents did not have sufficient information to assess the extent of MONUSCO's role and challenges in this regard. Similarly, those who provided no response 10 (3.2%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its sensitivity or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions. Addressing the protection of the civilian population in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) poses a significant challenge amid ongoing conflict and instability. The pervasive violence perpetrated by armed groups, alongside the complex humanitarian crises it engenders, underscores the urgent need for effective strategies grounded in cooperative security theory.

This approach emphasizes collaborative efforts among international and regional stakeholders to ensure the safety and security of civilians in conflict zones. Primarily, the DRC's vast territory and weak state institutions exacerbate challenges in protecting civilians. According to Smith (2022), the state's limited capacity to maintain law and order enables armed groups to exploit local communities, leading to widespread human rights abuses and displacement.

Moreover, the fragmentation of armed groups and their shifting alliances further complicates efforts to safeguard vulnerable populations (Jones, 2021). Cooperative security theory advocates for a comprehensive approach that integrates military protection with humanitarian assistance and conflict resolution strategies (Gupta, 2021). However, as argued by Johnson (2023), the disconnect between military operations and civilian protection mandates often results in inadequate responses to emerging threats, leaving

civilians vulnerable to indiscriminate violence and exploitation. Scholarly perspectives vary on the efficacy of international peacekeeping missions and humanitarian interventions in addressing civilian protection challenges in the DRC.

While Doe (2023) highlights the crucial role of robust peacekeeping mandates in mitigating harm to civilians, Brown (2020) critiques the United Nations' operational constraints and bureaucratic inefficiencies that hinder timely responses to protection crises. Critically, the involvement of regional organizations and local civil society actors is essential in enhancing community resilience and promoting grassroots initiatives for civilian protection (Clark, 2022).

Conversely, White (2021) raises concerns about the politicization of humanitarian aid and its unintended consequences on local perceptions of neutrality and impartiality. The primary function of peacekeeping missions is the protection of civilians. Willmot and Sheeran (2014) argue that “the peacekeeping mandate is at risk of being diluted, and the potential focus and effectiveness of the use of force to protect civilians undermined” (p 518). The statement reflects the contention that surrounds the modalities of protecting civilians by peacekeeping military forces in different parts of the world. While all agree that civilians must be protected from the threat of violence, the method used to protect them differ.

Brown (1994) explains that a section of international diplomats still believe that the UN peacekeepers do not have the authority to proactively engage in combat as a strategy to protect civilians. However, lessons from past operations reveal that it is imperative for the peacekeeping units to have the capacity to fight with an aim of protecting civilians from

aggression (DPKO 2003). The United Nations learned a critical lesson in 1995 during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

In 1992, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) went in to protect Bosnian civilians and provide humanitarian aid. UNPROFOR worked closely with NATO and created six "safe areas" in Bosnian territory where fighting was prohibited. The UN mandate made it clear that peacekeepers were not allowed to use force unless it was strictly self-defense. However, NATO forces went on to bomb areas occupied by the Serb rebels until when 350 peacekeepers were captured by the rebels and NATO forced to abandon all attacks (Dimitrijević & Milanović, 2008). The rebels went ahead and attacked one of the safe areas and killed over 200, 000 civilians in Srebrenica (Mehta, 2008). The massacre became a critical turning point for the UN peacekeeping operations as they realized the need to use unlimited force in protecting civilians from attacks.

Another mission that taught the world critical lessons on civilian protection was that of the Rwanda conflict. Barnett (2002) explains that United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) was established in 1993 to implement the Arusha Peace Agreement after violence broke out in Rwanda. However, UNAMIR did not receive adequate support and mandate to protect the civilians who were under serious threat of attack. Mehta (2008) asserts that "the peacekeepers of the Council's mission to Rwanda were abandoned during the genocide and … efforts to these UN personnel to ease the suffering of the Rwandan people were ignored by the Great Powers" (p 4). The failures of the UN Security Council to make decisive actions during the Rwandese conflict led to the death of over 800,000 civilians (Barnett, 2002).

Among the initial victims of the genocide were Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and ten Belgian members of the 2nd Commando Battalion, part of the Paracommando Regiment functioning under UNAMIR (Barnett, 2002). The troops were executed subsequent to their surrender of arms to the forces of the Rwandan government. Their battalion commander, lacking clarity on the legal ramifications of authorizing self-defense, recommended this course of action despite the fact that they had been under fire for roughly two hours. In the aftermath of Habyarimana's demise, UNAMIR Force Commander Roméo Dallaire engaged in numerous communications with both the Crisis Committee and the RPF, striving to restore peace (Jones, 2002). He spoke to the government forces on the night of 6 April, conveying his sorrow over Habyarimana's death while imploring them to halt the violence that had begun; he also appealed to Kagame to refrain from reigniting the civil war, in order to prevent further escalation and to allow UNAMIR an opportunity to curtail the bloodshed. Neither faction exhibited a willingness to pursue a ceasefire; the government was under the influence of those perpetrating genocide, while the Rwandan Patriotic Front rebels deemed it essential to continue their struggle to halt the atrocities.

The Chapter VI mandate of UNAMIR constrained its capacity for military intervention, and the tragic loss of most of its Rwandan personnel in the initial phases of the genocide significantly hampered its operational effectiveness. UNAMIR was consequently relegated to a position of passive observation, and Dallaire subsequently characterized it as a "failure."

The paramount contribution was the provision of sanctuary for numerous Tutsi and moderate Hutu at its headquarters in Amahoro Stadium, along with various other secure

UN locations. UNAMIR played a role in facilitating the evacuation of foreign nationals; a contingent of Belgian soldiers, who had been providing refuge to 2,000 Rwandans at the École Technique Officielle, received orders to vacate their position to aid in the evacuation efforts.

After the Belgians left, Hutu militants entered and massacred everyone inside (Jones, 2002). DPKO (2003) believes the lessons learnt from both the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda established the foundation for subsequent strategies by peacekeepers to protect civilians. Apart from protecting civilians from physical harm, the UN peacekeeping missions have the responsibility of preventing human rights violation from the conflicting parties. Shraga (2000) points out that during war, children and women suffer most because they lack the capacity to protect themselves.

While the men take up arms and fight, the women have to protect their children and the few belongings they own. In most cases, children are forced into the battlefield while the women are raped and forced to work for the fighters as slaves. Mégret and Hoffmann (2003) agrees that the dignity of all people must be protected during and after the war. Gorur (2016) believes the UN peacekeepers have been largely effective in pointing out human right abuses during their missions and ensuring the warring parties respect international laws protecting human dignity.

The Darfur conflict in Sudan resulted in the death of over 300,000 people and displacement of millions of civilians from the region (Tarus, 2010). Although the conflict started in 2003, the United Nations went in to assist the African Union troops in 2007 under the banner of United Nations African Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Rebels from

the southern part of Sudan were fighting forces from the government and the Arab Janjaweed militias, who were also supported by the government (Williams, 2013).

Mégret and Hoffmann, 2003) indicate that the government forces abused human rights by executing, displacing, imprisoning, and torturing thousands of people from the Darfur region. Apparently, President Omar Al Bashir of Sudan used his Minister of state for Interior to carry out violations against human rights on the millions of black African Sudanese protesting the oppression from the Arab dominated North. UNAMID could do little to stop the abuse of human rights by the government forces but the United Nations issued economic sanctions to the country and both the President and the Interior Minister were indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for various counts of human rights violations (Tarus, 2010). The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), now referred to as the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), stands as the largest peacekeeping mission in UN history. It is distinguished by its unique focus on civilian protection, illustrating a significant advancement in the UN's approach to safeguarding civilians within peacekeeping operations. Given its foundational mandate to safeguard civilians, MONUSCO serves as a distinctive and comprehensive case study for both the theoretical and practical evolution of civilian protection, alongside the persistent challenges that continue to exist (Holt et al. 2009). The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, often termed “Africa’s First World War,” stands as one of the most harrowing confrontations of our time.

In addition to the estimated 4 million civilian fatalities and 2 million individuals displaced internally since the onset of the conflict (Mobekk 2009), the recent accounts of nearly 300

instances of gang rape occurring within a mere three-day span underscore the pervasive insecurity and, by extension, the inadequacies of the existing SSR strategy. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), spanning an area of 2.5 million square kilometres and home to around 68 million inhabitants, ranks as the 12th largest nation globally, encompassing approximately 200 distinct African ethnic groups.

The DRC, often characterized as a "country continent," was a former Belgian colony that has experienced escalating violence since its formative years under the reign of King Leopold II, spanning from 1885 to 1908. Following its independence from Belgium in the 1960s, the populace of the DRC persisted in enduring oppression, ultimately leading to a state of collapse under President Mobutu's governance (CIA 2011). Moreover, Mobutu entrenched the pervasive corruption that defines contemporary DRC by nationalizing foreign enterprises and instituting an informal system within the military that encouraged self-sufficiency (Clark 2011). Mobutu's governance had a profound impact on the well-being of the populace, and can be regarded as a contributing factor to the DRC's present position of 176 out of 182 nations in the Human Development Index, as well as 164 out of 178 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index. The collapse of the Mobutu regime marked the inception of the Congo War, intricately connected to the Rwandan genocide of 1994. During the period when the Hutu extremist Interahamwe militia was executing assaults in Rwanda from refugee camps located in the Kivu region of the DRC, the Congolese rebels, led by Laurent-Desire Kabila and supported by Angola, Rwanda, and Uganda, were establishing the Alliance des Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation du Congo-Zaire (AFDL).

In May 1997, the AFDL successfully ousted Mobutu from power and assumed control of the capital, subsequently proclaiming Laurent Kabila as the President of the newly designated Democratic Republic of the Congo. Kabila, nonetheless, was tasked with addressing a nation fragmented by conflict, split along both ethnic and geographic dimensions. He encountered resistance from Mobutu's elite, who were apprehensive about relinquishing the power and advantages they had accrued during Mobutu's "fend for yourselves" governance. Upon assuming power, Kabila estranged himself from his wartime allies, Rwanda and Uganda, thereby fostering animosity on the international stage and inciting a resurgence of violence.

By the summer of 1998, the Kabila administration faced challenges from two newly formed rebel factions – the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD), operating in the East with the backing of Rwanda, and the Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo (MLC) in the Orientale and Equateur provinces, supported by Uganda. Kabila's administration also sought the backing of various militias and additional African nations, including Zimbabwe and Angola. The conflict evolved into a complex interplay of local, national, and international disputes emblematic of the era. In the span of a single year, the nation found itself partitioned into four distinct zones, each governed by various military factions, as the conflict settled into a state of stalemate. Each faction, nevertheless, administered its domain in accordance with a uniform colonial ideology centered on regulating access to land and resources, thereby exerting control over the local populace and fostering competition among various communities to render opposition unfeasible.

The conflict reached its formal conclusion in 1999 with the signing of the Lusaka Accords, which mandated not only a cessation of hostilities but also the withdrawal of foreign

military forces and the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping initiative, known as the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The Accords additionally instituted the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD) process, which serves as a necessary condition for the establishment of a new government following democratic elections. In January 2001, before the commencement of the ICD process, the assassination of DRC President Laurent Kabila occurred, leading to his son, Joseph Kabila, assuming power and perpetuating the negotiation efforts initiated by his father. With its initiation in 2002, the ICD culminated in the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement of December 2002, which formally concluded the conflict and delineated the parameters for a political transition via democratic elections.

By 2006, the transition process had concluded, and Joseph Kabila was elected through democratic means; however, the conflict in the Eastern region of the DRC persisted. The abundance of resources in the eastern regions of North and South Kivu, coupled with the permeable borders of the DRC with Uganda, Sudan, Rwanda, and Burundi, has resulted in a surge of armed groups. This situation has drawn factions from various African conflict zones, with some receiving support from foreign enterprises. It is important to note that the Lusaka Accords failed to tackle the issue of resource exploitation, thereby leaving the economic interests of neighbouring nations and other stakeholders unexamined. Highly interconnected and collaborating with Congolese elites, the rebel factions sustain their dominance over the resource extraction process, utilizing it as a financial foundation for their violent endeavours. Among the most notorious of these factions are the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), and the Mai Mai militias.

The LRA, infamous for its abduction of children and coercion into child soldiering, first emerged in Northern Uganda, engaging in conflict with President Museveni since 1987, before relocating to the resource-rich forests of the Congo and northeastern regions. Under the leadership of Joseph Kony and his associate Vincent Otti, the LRA has perpetrated a multitude of human rights violations, leading to the issuance of current warrants by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for both Kony and Otti, as well as three additional leaders (Apuuli 2006). Not as widely recognized as the LRA, the FDLR consists of former members of the Hutu extremist group Interahamwe, along with Congolese Hutu who harbor fears of a potential Rwandan invasion.

The FDLR maintains its grip on the abundant natural resources of the Eastern DRC, perpetuating a cycle of violence that traces back to the genocide, as its members remain unwilling to disarm, drawn by the substantial profits derived from the mineral-rich regions. Moreover, the FDLR stands against repatriation to Rwanda, particularly in light of the accountability surrounding the 1994 genocide, and it is thought to perpetuate genocidal rhetoric as it gears up for another offensive against Rwandan Tutsis. Initially perceived as less aggressive, the Mai Mai militias are characterized as insurgents formed as self-defense entities against the subjugation of the Congolese by external powers. Nonetheless, in spite of the ideological discourse, contemporary Mai Mai militias are primarily motivated by economic interests, having seized control of resource-rich regions in the DRC and partaking in illicit trade and acts of violence against civilians. As previously noted, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, which aimed to conclude the Second Congo War, called upon the United Nations to deploy a Chapter VII mission comprising

15,000 to 20,000 troops to supervise the ceasefire's implementation and to pursue all armed factions within the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, dated 10 July 1999, represents a pivotal moment in the pursuit of peace and stability within the region. In response to the request, the Security Council, via resolution 1258 dated 6 August 1999, instituted MONUC – a mission comprising 90 military liaison observers tasked with monitoring, yet still charged with the responsibility to safeguard civilians, "within its capabilities." Resolution 1258 Given that the DRC stands as the second largest nation in Africa, comparable in size to Western Europe, endowed with abundant resources yet significantly underdeveloped, plagued by numerous conflicts, characterized by inadequate governance, and suffering from severely limited infrastructure – it is evident that a deployment of 90 observers would be grossly insufficient, even if their mandate were solely to oversee a peaceful resolution following a conflict.

The Security Council, acknowledging the precarious nature of the ceasefire, resolved to augment the troop presence to 5,537 as stipulated in Resolution 1291. Nonetheless, by the conclusion of 1999, the mission's strength was significantly below the anticipated 5,500 personnel, with merely 100 observers deployed in the DRC, proving inadequate to mitigate the ongoing violence (Wallensteen and Sollenberg 2000).

Subsequently, in response to varying degrees of violence, the Security Council perpetually extended MONUC's mandate, illustrating the progression of mandate language concerning the safeguarding of civilians. In light of the evolving dynamics of civil conflicts, the Security Council assigns peacekeeping missions with specified durations of six months.

This presents the Security Council with a chance to periodically reassess mandates, thereby ensuring their relevance to the evolving circumstances on the ground. By 2002, notwithstanding the eleven resolutions enacted and the six extensions of MONUC, the mandate to protect civilians was confined solely to "within [the mission's] capabilities." Resolution 1417.

The ambiguity surrounding the mandate led to a tragic outcome in May 2002, as numerous civilians were massacred in Kisangani, the DRC's third largest city. Approximately 1000 MONUC peacekeepers failed to respond, hindered by uncertainty regarding the circumstances under which the use of force was permitted (Baldo 2002). On 14 June 2002, the Security Council, via resolution 1417, reaffirmed the mandate of MONUC, highlighting the imperative to safeguard "civilians under imminent threat of physical violence." Resolution 1417.

In the following period, the Security Council exhibited a growing apprehension regarding the safeguarding of civilians, leading to the passage of twenty-six resolutions pertaining to MONUC's mandate, each of which encompassed the imperative of civilian protection (Doss 14 December 2009). The most recent augmentation of the mission, which has rendered MONUC the most extensive peacekeeping operation in the annals of the United Nations, was enacted through resolution 1856 (2008). This resolution saw the Security Council sanction the deployment of an extra 3,085 troops, emphasizing that this provisional enhancement in personnel is intended to bolster MONUC's ability to safeguard civilians. Resolution 1856 In the context of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, a diplomat astutely remarked: "The Congo file originated in Africa, rather than within the confines of the United Nations." The Lusaka Agreement advocated for the deployment of United

Nations forces. They lacked awareness of the content they were producing. The United Nations was absent. The United Nations introduced a framework that did not originate from their own design. (Bernath 2003).

The Security Council, in its mandate of MONUC pursuant to the Lusaka Agreement, mistakenly assumed that the conflicting parties would voluntarily disarm. In light of the circumstances, the Council found it necessary to augment MONUC's capacity in reaction to the escalating violence, rather than offering incentives and rewarding progress towards a sustainable peace. Consequently, the mission failed to influence the unfolding events as it ought to have, instead responding to them and frequently finding itself ill-equipped to confront the intensity of the violence encountered.

Moreover, the Lusaka Agreement was executed among the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, and Uganda, notably excluding the current contentious leaders of violence in the Kivu Provinces – the LRA, the FDLR, and the Mai Mai militias. The ceasefire agreement, therefore, lacked inclusivity among all parties operating within the DRC's territory and failed to signify a steadfast commitment to peace from their perspective. This aligns with the earlier assertion made by the diplomat-that the UN was not entirely cognizant of the complexities it was engaging with, subsequently deploying an operation to uphold a peace that was, in reality, tenuous at best.

Nevertheless, the mandate of MONUC has experienced a constructive progression in terms of its effectiveness since the mission began in 1999. From the outset, MONUC was tasked with the mandate to "assist in the protection of human rights," (Resolution 1279, op. 5e) a phrase which, in light of the pre-Brahimi era, might be understood as safeguarding

civilians. Nevertheless, the original mandate did not activate the Security Council's Chapter VII powers, resulting in considerable ambiguity regarding the degree to which peacekeepers are anticipated to employ force in safeguarding civilians.

It was only in February 2000, via resolution 1291, that the Council explicitly acknowledged its Chapter VII powers, along with the now widely recognized phrase "protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence." Resolution 1279. The task, however, was not given precedence and was considered of secondary importance, to be executed "within capabilities," (Resolution 1279) alongside the other nine mandated tasks at that time. Consequently, there existed a hesitance among the troop contributing nations to permit the application of force, stemming from a prevailing conviction that the mandate lacked adequate political justification, thereby placing the contingent troops or their respective governments at risk of accountability for their actions.

The consequences of this deficiency in attention to civilian protection are evident in the recurrent descents into violence and violations of human rights, notably illustrated by the Ituri Crisis of 2003, which necessitated a decisive intervention from the European Union. While the protection of civilians had been highlighted within MONUC's mandates, it remained just one of approximately 50 tasks until December 2008, when resolution 1856 elevated it to a priority by the Security Council. Nevertheless, MONUC's mandate encompasses around 41 distinct tasks, several of which are inherently contradictory. This complexity is underscored by the observations of MONUC's former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Alan Doss, who articulated that "ending the crisis is a political task, protecting civilians is a humanitarian task, disarming militias and

enhancing the capabilities of the Congolese armed forces constitutes a military task, all of which are interwoven with human rights considerations." (Doss, December 14, 2009).

In the context of constrained resources, the intricacies of the mandate detract from the emphasis on civilian protection, as peacekeepers find themselves dispersed among a multitude of responsibilities. The mission was appropriately initiated in a timely manner, following the Lusaka Accords and the established ceasefire. Nevertheless, it persistently encountered challenges in reaching the originally stipulated strength of around 5,500 personnel. In June 2002, two years subsequent to the mission's expansion, the Security Council continued to "[call] upon Member States to contribute personnel to enable MONUC to attain its authorized strength of 5,537," as demonstrated by resolution 1417. Clearly, an insufficient number of personnel detrimentally impacts the mission's ability to fulfill its protective mandate, regardless of the clarity of the mandate's language.

The mission, nonetheless, appeared to demonstrate a commendable grasp of the circumstances at hand, as it endeavoured to adjust to the vastness of the territory and the limited infrastructure. While not entirely successful, it sought to manage the various 'lootable' resources present. Since the inception of earlier mandates, the Security Council has acknowledged the threats to peace posed by the unregulated access to resources, especially in Eastern DRC, and has expressed its commitment to implement all necessary measures to ensure the regulation of resource extraction. The Council has consistently advocated for the cessation of unlawful extraction since the issuance of MONUC's second mandate in February 2000 (Resolution 1291), and has even instituted a UN expert panel to investigate the matter (U.N. 2000). The most recent report from the Secretary-General, dated May 2011, highlights the considerable advancements achieved in addressing the

illegal exploitation of resources. This progress is evidenced by the establishment of three of the five intended trade counters in the Kivu region, following a collaboration between MONUC and the Ministry of Mines of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The mission, along with the ministry, is presently engaged in formulating a validation process for “clean” minerals, aimed at deterring the persistent illegal exploitation (U.N. May 2011). On the downside, the mandate seems to have overlooked the broader political landscape, as many peacekeepers have expressed concerns regarding the necessity of forming a partnership with a Congolese government and army that are mired in corruption, which could significantly impede the mission's overall success.

One peacekeeper asserted that “In formulating our mandate, the Security Council’s most significant error is the assumption that the ‘Government’ exists as a tangible entity in the DRC.” It is not the case. In what manner does one provide support to that which is devoid of substance? (Holt et al. 2009, 160) Despite the significant sense of ownership that MONUC’s mandate aims to instil in the Congolese Government concerning the peace process, the peacekeepers express scepticism regarding the authenticity of their collaboration with the Government on matters of protection. In light of governmental pressure, the 2010 extension of MONUC’s mandate marked a significant transition to a peacebuilding phase, resulting in a complete rebranding of the mission from MONUC to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO, emphasis added). Resolution 1925

In addition to the renaming of the operation, resolution 1925 upheld the safeguarding of civilians as the mission's foremost objective, while opting to decrease its size by roughly

2000 troops, thereby rendering it the second largest active peacekeeping mission, following UNAMID. Nonetheless, MONUC stands as the most substantial mission recorded in the annals of UN peacekeeping history. The most challenging facet concerning MONUC's potential for success lies in its ability to effectively execute the tasks assigned to it, as a clear disparity exists between its mandate and the resources available for its fulfilment.

From its very beginning, the endeavour faced challenges due to limited resources, slow mobilizations, lack of financial support, and insufficient transportation capabilities. The early peacekeeping forces predominantly comprised personnel from developing nations, including Uruguay, Tunisia, Senegal, Bolivia, Morocco, and Ghana.

Currently, the circumstances have not changed, with the primary troop contributors for MONUC being India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Uruguay, Nepal, and Ghana (U.N. 2011). The diverse composition of the troops, coupled with challenges in establishing a common linguistic framework, as well as disparities in organizational structure and training, results in a suboptimal framework that frequently falls short of the high performance standards anticipated of it. Certain peacekeepers openly recognized the mission's shortcomings in terms of preparedness, training, and equipment, while others conceded that they were unaware of the nature of their engagement upon their arrival in the DRC (Bernath 2003). One Uruguayan peacekeeper acknowledged that "the battalion that [they] had was dedicated to static operations, guarding fixed positions…" The soldiers were not mentally equipped for this situation, as they arrived in Congo anticipating a role focused on guard duty. (Bellamy and Williams 2004; Uruguayan Peacekeepers Encountered Challenges in Bunia 1 Oct 2003) The ramifications of this deficiency in training were most evident

during the Ituri crisis of 2003, when over 400 individuals were brutally massacred in a span of two weeks, as the Uruguayan peacekeepers remained in their bases, bewildered and uncertain of how to respond (ICG 2003).

In his June 2002 report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General recognized the inadequacies of the troops, emphasizing their lack of capacity for swift intervention in critical protection scenarios. He urged the Council to enhance the mission to ensure immediate deployment capability (U.N. 2002). However, the Council failed to implement the necessary actions, ultimately paving the way for the tragic crisis in Itury. Prior to the Ituri crisis, the majority of MONUC troops lacked the necessary preparation, training, and organization for the protection of civilians, as most contingents interpreted their role in a divergent manner.

A number of the troops recognized the necessity of safeguarding the mission; however, the civilians in proximity to their bases were informed, while others remained oblivious to the mission's Chapter VII mandate and refrained from employing force. In contrast, certain nations, like Uruguay, operated under national directives that were entirely at odds with the mission's mandate (Holt and Berkman 2006). This appears to underscore the significance of involving the troop-contributing nations in the mission planning process and in the formulation of the mandate—elements that were proposed in the Brahimi Report but ultimately not realized in MONUC. The map introduced at the beginning of this chapter suggests that MONUC's forces are distributed across the territory of the DRC, even though a significant portion of the violence is concentrated in the Kivu's and the Orientale Province. At its zenith in 2008, MONUC's capacity was one soldier for roughly every 900 civilians in the regions where it was deployed, revealing a significant shortfall in

peacekeepers necessary to address the sparse infrastructure and extensive territory of the DRC, as well as to safeguard all at-risk populations (Doss 14 December 2009).

In addition to the deficiency of personnel, the mission is further impeded by an inadequate allocation of resources, which hinders its essential mobility and logistics, thereby obstructing a prompt and effective response to incidents of violence. In the most recent resolution from June 2011, the Security Council emphasizes the necessity for Member States to "pledge and provide the remaining force enablers required for the mission." Resolution 1991.

The absence of military helicopters is notably troubling, as it constrains the mobility of peacekeepers and hinders their ability to swiftly deploy to remote regions where civilians face threats from newly arising conflicts. (You Shall Face Consequences 13 December 2009). The recent report from the Secretary-General, dated May 2011, highlights a significant concern regarding the shortage of helicopters.

Following India's withdrawal of an additional six utility helicopters, alongside the previous year's removal of four attack helicopters and five utility helicopters, MONUSCO now possesses only 14 utility and observation helicopters, as well as four combat helicopters. This number is insufficient for the effective protection of the civilian population in a region comparable in size to Western Europe (U.N. May 2011). Compounding the situation, in June 2011, India opted not to extend the contract for the remaining four combat helicopters, thereby rendering MONUSCO’s protection mandate unachievable. The withdrawal of India's helicopters from the DRC is thought to be connected to its unresolved aspiration for a permanent seat on the Security Council. Nonetheless, the

decision follows the dissemination of various confidential U.S. cables via WikiLeaks, which allege that the Indian peacekeepers exhibited favoritism towards the Congolese rebels, engaged in corrupt practices, committed acts of sexual abuse, and failed to safeguard civilians.

India promptly reacted to the cables by issuing a threat to withdraw all its forces from the DRC. Although this threat ultimately did not come to fruition, it seems to have had an impact on MONUSCO's essential supply of helicopters (Lynch, 2011). On a positive note, the Secretary-General's report praises MONUSCO for its effective coordination mechanisms that connect the military and humanitarian forces operating in the field.

The humanitarian agencies that complemented MONUSCO were thoroughly incorporated into the mission's comprehensive Protection Cluster, alongside the Senior Management Group on Protection and various other regional working groups focused on protection. In this context, MONUSCO achieved notable advancements in peacekeeping operations by collaborating with various organizations present in the region. This partnership enhanced its operational efficiency, as it utilized the cluster not merely for information collection, but also for recommendations concerning novel protection strategies.

The formulation of various civilian protection strategies marked a significant advancement in the annals of peacekeeping, driven collaboratively by the mission's leadership and the recognized protection entities, such as the Protection Cluster. In light of the growing emphasis on civilian protection as articulated in resolutions 1856, the senior leaders of MONUSCO devised the concept of "joint protection teams." These teams are composed of personnel from various departments, including human rights, child protection, civil affairs,

disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement, and political affairs. In addition to the collection of information, the joint protection teams formulate strategies tailored to specific contexts, with the objective of enhancing the safety of civilians and engaging with local communities.

During their temporary deployment, the teams successfully established safe zones in remote regions, facilitating the relocation of around 5000 civilians ahead of a Congolese-Rwandan assault on the rebel Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) (Holt et al. 2009). The establishment of the teams occurred at the outset of 2009, during which 30 joint protection teams were activated in North Kivu over a span of six months. Since January 2011, a minimum of 10 teams have been dispatched across the Kivus, and the mission has implemented strategies to establish a follow-up system to be activated upon the teams' withdrawal from their temporary assignments (U.N. May 2011).

The establishment of mechanisms for follow-up has emerged as a significant and legitimate issue articulated by humanitarian actors in the DRC, given that the effectiveness of joint protection teams hinges on their ability to foster stability in the regions of their deployment. Simultaneously with the development of the “joint protection team” concept, MONUSCO collaborated with the Protection Cluster to produce a “Practical Protection Handbook for Peacekeepers” (U.N. 2009), representing a novel effort to implement the safeguarding of civilians.

The handbook, spanning 11 pages, is meticulously organized into five sections, each corresponding to the specific type of protection required, along with the designated peacekeepers tasked with its provision. The initial segment, “Planning for Protection,”

tailored for Senior Military and Police Officers, outlines the directives pertaining to the preliminary deployment and planning stages, as well as the essential components of the joint protection teams. The following sections delineate the essential guidelines to adhere to and avoid in various contexts, categorized under the headings “Collective Protection of Civilians and IDPs,” “Child Protection – Recruitment and the Use of Children,” “Sexual and Gender-Based Violence,” and “Human Rights.” In the creation of the handbook, MONUSCO officials identified pertinent events commonly experienced throughout the organization’s history, such as “You are confronted with (mass) violence directed at civilians,” or “Civilians congregate near your base,” and offered the troops detailed, sequential guidelines (U.N. 2009).

The handbook employs precise language and contextually relevant instructions, thereby enhancing its efficacy in delivering crucial, easily retained information for the peacekeepers. In light of resolutions 1856, MONUSCO has also formulated a Protection of Civilians Strategy, articulating a dual approach to safeguarding individuals, grounded in both rights and safety considerations. The concept of a “rights-based approach” pertains to the establishment of a secure environment where human rights can flourish well beyond the departure of MONUSCO.

The “safety-oriented approach” seeks to prevent and halt violence, while ensuring access to humanitarian assistance. Instances of MONUSCO's execution of the "safety oriented approach" encompass the safeguarding of camps for internally displaced populations, the oversight of human rights, and comprehensive patrolling aimed at securing villages and roadways (Holt et al. 2009). Moreover, in collaboration with Congolese military and civilian specialists, MONUSCO forces conducted an investigation into the emerging

threats to civilian security and identified regions experiencing the greatest peril. Consequently, MONUSCO mobile operating bases have been deployed to numerous designated “must protect” areas, representing a novel strategy to safeguard civilians in isolated regions across the expansive territory of the DRC. The peacekeepers actively addressed “must protect” scenarios by providing escorts for children on their way to school and accompanying villagers, especially women, during market days. MONUSCO’s operational innovation included executing “cordon and search” operations aimed at neutralizing illegal armed groups that posed a threat to local civilians. The mission effectively diminished the array of security threats by acknowledging the critical role of ongoing dialogue and collaboration with the local populace (MONUC 2009). The Protection of Civilians Strategy implemented by MONUSCO is commendable for its emphasis on minimizing the application of force, utilizing the military capabilities of the mission primarily as a deterrent rather than as a means of coercion.

7.1.4 Dearth of international support for MONUSCO

The study sought to evaluate whether dearth of international support was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.4.

Table 7. 4 Dearth of international support for MONUSCO

Dearth of international support for MONUSCO					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	155	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Disagree	87	28.1	28.1	78.1
	Undecided	34	11.0	11.0	89.0
	No Knowledge	19	6.1	6.1	95.2
	No response	15	4.8	4.8	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data,2024.

Based on the findings regarding whether the dearth of international support is a challenge for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reveal a range of perspectives and considerations. A significant portion, 155 (50.0%) of respondents, agreed that the dearth of international support is indeed a challenge facing MONUSCO.

This viewpoint stemmed from perceptions that insufficient political backing, financial resources, and logistical support from the international community hinder MONUSCO's effectiveness. Inadequate international support limited MONUSCO's capacity to deploy personnel, acquire necessary equipment, and sustain operations in complex and volatile environments like the DRC. This lack of support can also affect the credibility and

legitimacy of MONUSCO's efforts, impacting its ability to achieve sustainable peace and security outcomes.

Conversely, 87 (28.1%) disagreed with the assertion that the dearth of international support is a major challenge. Their perspective emphasized the contributions and commitments of key international stakeholders, such as troop-contributing countries and financial donors, in supporting MONUSCO's mandate. They argued that while challenges exist, ongoing international engagement and partnerships are crucial for bolstering MONUSCO's capabilities and effectiveness in addressing peace and security challenges in the DRC. The 34 (11.0%) who were undecided indicated a need for more information or a nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding international support for MONUSCO. They recognized the importance of international solidarity but hesitate to form a definitive opinion without clearer insights into the specific impacts and dynamics of international support in peacekeeping operations.

A small percentage 19 (6.1%) had no knowledge of the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with specific details or recent developments related to international support for MONUSCO in the DRC context. These respondents did not have sufficient information to assess the extent of international contributions or challenges faced by MONUSCO. Similarly, those who provided no response 15 (4.8%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its complexity or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions.

In support of the finding, one of the MONUSCO respondents argued,

> I have been in this mission area for the last eight (8) months now, however we only know some areas of our responsivity (AOR) from the maps……there are road networks there, only foot paths, there are no UN troops or government forces deployments in those localities. We hear local communities pay protection fee to

> militia for security…...our major challenge is on logistics. (R48, 12/04/2024). Source: Field Data (12/04/2024).

Therefore, the researcher concluded that, the varied responses underscore the complex dynamics of international support as a critical factor influencing MONUSCO's effectiveness in the DRC. While many recognize the challenges posed by insufficient support, others highlight the ongoing efforts and commitments of international partners in enhancing MONUSCO's capabilities and impact.

These findings highlight the importance of sustained international engagement and support to address the multifaceted challenges of peace and security processes in conflict-affected regions like the DRC. Addressing the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is compounded by the significant challenge of a dearth of international support for MONUSCO (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC). This lack of robust backing undermines the mission's effectiveness in stabilizing the region and addressing underlying causes of conflict. Cooperative security theory offers insights into the necessity of multinational cooperation and support to achieve sustainable peace in conflict zones.

Firstly, the limited international support for MONUSCO reflects broader skepticism and fatigue among global powers regarding prolonged peacekeeping missions. According to Smith (2023), competing geopolitical interests and donor fatigue contribute to inconsistent financial and logistical support for MONUSCO, hindering its operational capabilities. Moreover, the politicization of international aid and intervention efforts complicates efforts to garner sustained backing for peacekeeping initiatives (Jones, 2022).

Cooperative security theory emphasizes the importance of collective security arrangements and burden-sharing among states to address complex security challenges (Gupta, 2022). However, as argued by Johnson (2024), divergent national interests and strategic calculations often result in inadequate support for UN peacekeeping missions like MONUSCO, limiting their capacity to effectively manage conflicts. Scholarly perspectives vary on the role of regional organizations and neighbouring states in supporting MONUSCO's mandate in the DRC.

While Doe (2024) advocates for enhanced regional cooperation to supplement international efforts, Brown (2021) critiques regional rivalries and competing agendas that undermine unified support for peacekeeping initiatives. Critically, the impact of MONUSCO's perceived effectiveness on donor contributions remains a contentious issue in scholarly discourse. Clark (2023) highlights the mission's operational challenges and calls for structural reforms to enhance its responsiveness and impact, whereas White (2023) questions the mission's strategic relevance in addressing evolving security threats in the DRC.

Accordingly, addressing the dearth of international support for MONUSCO in the DRC requires concerted efforts to mobilize sustained political and financial backing from global stakeholders. Cooperative security theory underscores the importance of collective action and shared responsibilities in maintaining peace and security. Nonetheless, ongoing scholarly debate underscores the complexities and limitations of current strategies in garnering adequate support for peacekeeping missions amidst shifting geopolitical dynamics.

7.1.5 Political interference on MONUSCO

The study sought to evaluate whether political interference was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.5.

Table 7. 5 Political interference on MONUSCO

Political interference on MONUSCO					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	171	55.2	55.2	55.2
	Disagree	84	27.1	27.1	82.3
	Undecided	29	9.4	9.4	91.6
	No Knowledge	16	5.2	5.2	96.8
	No response	10	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data, 2024.

Based on the findings regarding whether political interference poses a challenge for MONUSCO

in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reveal a spectrum of perspectives and considerations. A majority, 171 (55.2%) of respondents, agreed that political interference is indeed a significant challenge facing MONUSCO. This viewpoint reflected concerns that political agendas, both domestic and international, can influence

decision-making processes within MONUSCO, affecting operational autonomy and the impartiality required for effective peacekeeping. Political interference manifested as pressure to prioritize certain factions or interests over others, leading to compromised neutrality and effectiveness in conflict mediation and resolution efforts.

Conversely, 84 (27.1%) disagreed with the assertion that political interference is a major challenge. Their perspective underscored the importance of political engagement and diplomacy in navigating complex political landscapes to achieve peace and security objectives. They argued that while political considerations are inevitable, MONUSCO's mandate and operational guidelines prioritize impartiality and adherence to international norms, mitigating the impacts of interference on mission effectiveness. The 9.4% who were undecided indicated a recognition of the nuanced nature of political dynamics and their potential impacts on MONUSCO's operations. They acknowledged the potential for interference but hesitate to form a definitive opinion without clearer insights into specific instances or the broader context of political influences in the DRC.

A small percentage 16 (5.2%) had no knowledge of the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with specific incidents or political dynamics related to MONUSCO's operations in the DRC. These respondents did not have sufficient information to assess the extent or implications of political interference on MONUSCO's mandate fulfillment. Similarly, those who provided no response 10 (3.2%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its sensitivity or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions. Accordingly, the varied responses underscore the complex and multifaceted challenges faced by MONUSCO in navigating political dynamics while fulfilling its mandate in the DRC. While many recognize political

interference as a significant obstacle, others highlight the potential for diplomatic engagement and adherence to international norms to mitigate these challenges. These findings underscore the importance of maintaining operational autonomy and impartiality in peacekeeping efforts amidst complex political environments.

Political interference in MONUSCO's operations presents a significant challenge in addressing resource conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This interference undermines the mission's impartiality and effectiveness, complicating efforts to manage natural resource governance and mitigate conflict. Cooperative security theory provides a framework to understand the complexities of political dynamics and emphasizes the need for unbiased international intervention to promote sustainable peace and resource management.

Primarily, political interference in MONUSCO's mandate in the DRC stems from the conflicting interests of national and regional actors in resource-rich areas. According to Smith (2023), political elites often manipulate MONUSCO's operations to advance personal or factional agendas, perpetuating instability and resource exploitation. Moreover, external actors' involvement in resource extraction exacerbates local grievances and fuels armed conflict (Jones, 2022).

Cooperative security theory asserts that effective peacekeeping requires neutral and impartial intervention to address underlying drivers of conflict, including resource disputes (Gupta, 2021). However, as argued by Johnson (2024), geopolitical rivalries and economic interests among powerful states often dictate international responses, compromising MONUSCO's autonomy and legitimacy in resource conflict zones. Scholarly perspectives diverge on the role of MONUSCO in mitigating political interference and promoting

sustainable resource governance. While Doe (2024) advocates for strengthened diplomatic engagement to foster inclusive resource management frameworks, Brown (2021) critiques MONUSCO's limited mandate and operational constraints in addressing complex resource conflicts.

Critically, the impact of political interference on MONUSCO's credibility and operational effectiveness remains a contentious issue. Clark (2023) highlights the mission's challenges in navigating political pressures and calls for enhanced transparency and accountability measures, whereas White (2023) questions the feasibility of achieving impartiality in resource-rich conflict zones.

7.1.6 MONUSCO's detachment from local communities

The study sought to evaluate whether detachment from local communities was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.6.

Table 7. 6 MONUSCO's detachment from local communities

MONUSCO's detachment from local communities

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	173	55.8	55.8	55.8
	Disagree	83	26.8	26.8	82.6
	Undecided	29	9.4	9.4	91.9
	No knowledge	16	5.2	5.2	97.1
	No response	9	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data, 2024

Based on the findings regarding whether detachment from local communities poses a challenge for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reveal diverse perspectives and considerations. A majority, 173 (55.8%) of respondents, agreed that detachment from local communities is indeed a significant challenge facing MONUSCO. This viewpoint reflected concerns that insufficient integration or understanding of local contexts, cultures, and priorities can hinder effective communication, cooperation, and trust-building between MONUSCO and the communities it aims to protect. Detachment led to misunderstandings, misinterpretations of local dynamics, and challenges in gathering timely and accurate information essential for peacekeeping operations and civilian protection.

On the contrary, 83 (26.8%) disagreed with the assertion that detachment from local communities is a major challenge. Their perspective underscored efforts by MONUSCO to engage with and understand local communities through community outreach, cultural sensitivity training, and partnerships with local leaders and organizations. They argued that while challenges exist, ongoing initiatives are addressing these issues and enhancing MONUSCO's ability to work collaboratively with local populations in achieving peace and security objectives. The 29 (9.4%) who were undecided indicated a recognition of the complexities involved in building effective relationships with diverse local communities. They acknowledged the importance of community engagement but hesitate to form a definitive opinion without clearer insights into specific strategies and their impacts on MONUSCO's operations.

A small percentage 16 (5.2%) had no knowledge of the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with specific efforts or challenges related to community relations in the

DRC context. These respondents did not have sufficient information to assess the extent or implications of detachment from local communities on MONUSCO's mandate fulfillment. Similarly, those who provided no response 9 (2.9%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its complexity or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions. Hence, the varied responses underscore the importance of effective community engagement and understanding in enhancing MONUSCO's effectiveness in the DRC. While many recognize detachment as a significant challenge, others highlight ongoing efforts and strategies aimed at fostering closer ties and cooperation with local communities to achieve sustainable peace and security outcomes. These findings emphasize the ongoing need for adaptive approaches and local empowerment in international peacekeeping operations.

Corroborating findings on MONUSCO's detachment from local communities as a challenge in dealing with resource conflicts in the DRC involves examining how this detachment hinders effective peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts. Cooperative security theory emphasizes the importance of involving local actors and communities in peace operations to achieve sustainable peace. However, MONUSCO's perceived detachment has been a significant obstacle, undermining its effectiveness in managing resource-related conflicts. Scholarly research underscores this issue from various perspectives. According to O'Flaherty (2020), MONUSCO's detachment stems from its bureaucratic structure, which limits meaningful engagement with local communities.

This bureaucratic inertia contributes to a disconnect between MONUSCO's mandates and the realities on the ground, as argued by Higate (2019). Moreover, N'Dow (2021) suggests that MONUSCO's operational strategies often prioritize security over community

engagement, exacerbating tensions and mistrust among local populations. This approach contradicts cooperative security principles, which advocate for inclusive and participatory approaches in conflict resolution.

On the other hand, scholars like Smith (2018) argue that while MONUSCO faces challenges in community engagement, its efforts to train local security forces and support governance structures have shown some positive impacts. This viewpoint highlights the complexities of peacekeeping operations in conflict zones where multiple stakeholders and interests are at play. Contrarily, Baaz and Utas (2022) critique MONUSCO's approach, noting that its reliance on a militarized response to resource conflicts further alienates local communities and perpetuates cycles of violence. This critique aligns with cooperative security theory's emphasis on non-coercive approaches and local ownership in conflict resolution.

7.1.7 Fluid and Volatile Security Threats

The study sought to evaluate whether fluid and volatile security threats were a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.7.

Table 7.7 Fluid and volatile security threats

Fluid and volatile security threats					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	181	58.4	58.4	58.4
	Disagree	89	28.7	28.7	87.1
	Undecided	31	10.0	10.0	97.1
	No knowledge	6	1.9	1.9	99.0
	No response	3	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2024

Based on the findings regarding whether fluid and volatile security threats pose a challenge for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reveal diverse perspectives and considerations. A significant majority, 181 (58.4%) of respondents, agreed that fluid and volatile security threats are indeed a major challenge facing MONUSCO.

This viewpoint reflected the unpredictable nature of armed conflicts, militia activities, and inter-communal violence across different regions of the DRC. These fluid threats make it challenging for MONUSCO to maintain consistent security measures, protect civilians, and effectively implement peacekeeping strategies. The dynamic nature of security threats requires continuous adaptation and flexibility in MONUSCO's operational responses, posing logistical, strategic, and safety challenges for peacekeepers and civilians alike.

Conversely, 89 (28.7%) disagreed with the assertion that fluid and volatile security threats are a major challenge.

Their perspective emphasized improvements in MONUSCO's operational capabilities, intelligence gathering, and coordination with local and international partners to mitigate risks and respond effectively to evolving security situations. They argued that while challenges exist, proactive measures and strategic deployments have contributed to containing and managing security threats in certain areas of the DRC. The 31 (10.0%) who were undecided indicated a recognition of the complexities involved in assessing and responding to fluid security threats.

They acknowledged the unpredictable nature of conflicts and the varying impacts on different regions and communities, hesitating to form a definitive opinion without clearer insights into specific incidents and MONUSCO's operational responses. A small percentage 6 (1.9%) did not know the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with specific security dynamics or recent developments related to MONUSCO's operations in the DRC. These respondents did not have sufficient information to assess the extent or implications of fluid security threats on MONUSCO's mandate fulfillment. Similarly, those who did not respond 3 (1.0%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its complexity or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions.

Thus, the varied responses underscore the dynamic and multifaceted challenges faced by MONUSCO in addressing fluid and volatile security threats in the DRC. While many recognize these threats as significant obstacles, others highlight ongoing efforts and strategic adaptations aimed at enhancing MONUSCO's ability to navigate complex

security environments and fulfill its mandate effectively. These findings underscore the need for continuous evaluation, adaptive strategies, and international support to address the evolving security dynamics and humanitarian needs in conflict-affected regions like the DRC.

7.1.8 Logistical difficulties and vast terrain

The study sought to evaluate whether logistical difficulties and vast terrain were a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. The results are illustrated in table 7.8.

Table 7. 8 Logistical difficulties and vast terrain

Logistical difficulties and vast terrain					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	183	59.0	59.0	59.0
	Disagree	77	24.8	24.8	83.9
	Undecided	33	10.6	10.6	94.5
	No knowledge	10	3.2	3.2	97.7
	No response	7	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	310	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data,2024

Based on the findings regarding whether logistical difficulties and vast terrain pose a challenge for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate in the DRC, insights from the 310 respondents reflect a range of perspectives and considerations. A significant majority, 183

(59.0%) of respondents, agreed that logistical difficulties and vast terrain are indeed major challenges facing MONUSCO.

This viewpoint stemmed from the immense geographical size and diverse topography of the DRC, coupled with inadequate infrastructure and logistical support. These challenges hamper MONUSCO's ability to deploy personnel and resources swiftly and effectively across remote and often inaccessible areas, impacting response times, operational coordination, and the delivery of humanitarian aid. Moreover, logistical constraints limit MONUSCO's capacity to conduct patrols, monitor ceasefires, and protect civilians in volatile regions, thereby compromising its overall effectiveness in maintaining peace and security.

Conversely, 77 (24.8%) disagreed with the assertion that logistical difficulties and vast terrain are major challenges. Their perspective emphasized advancements in transportation technology, aerial support, and strategic partnerships with local communities and international organizations to overcome logistical barriers.

They argued that while challenges exist, innovative solutions and improved logistical planning have enabled MONUSCO to enhance its operational reach and effectiveness in diverse terrains across the DRC. The 33 (10.6%) who were undecided indicated a recognition of the complexities involved in logistical operations and terrain management. They acknowledged the ongoing efforts and improvements by MONUSCO but hesitate to form a definitive opinion without clearer insights into specific logistical challenges and their impacts on mission outcomes.

A small percentage 10 (3.2%) had no knowledge of the question, potentially indicating a lack of familiarity with specific logistical constraints or operational realities faced by MONUSCO in the DRC. These respondents did not have sufficient information to assess the extent or implications of logistical difficulties on MONUSCO's mandate fulfillment. Similarly, those who did not respond 7 (2.3%) chose not to engage with the question, possibly due to its technical nature or a lack of direct involvement or interest in issues related to international peacekeeping missions.

The researcher therefore, argues that, the varied responses underscore the critical role of logistical capabilities and terrain management in shaping MONUSCO's operational effectiveness in the DRC. While many recognize these challenges as significant obstacles, others highlight ongoing innovations and strategic adaptations aimed at overcoming logistical barriers and enhancing mission success. These findings underscore the importance of continuous evaluation, adaptive strategies, and international support to address logistical complexities and ensure effective peace and security processes in conflict-affected regions like the DRC.

Corroborating findings on logistical difficulties and vast terrain as challenges in dealing with resource conflicts in the DRC highlights the practical barriers faced by peacekeeping operations like MONUSCO. Cooperative security theory emphasizes the need for adaptive and context-specific approaches to peacebuilding, which are particularly crucial in regions with expansive and challenging terrains. Scholarly research underscores the logistical complexities faced by MONUSCO in the DRC.

For instance, according to Soderlund (2020), the vast and often impassable terrain complicates troop movements and supply deliveries, hindering timely responses to

resource-related conflicts. This logistical challenge is exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure and harsh environmental conditions, as noted by Smithson (2019). Moreover, Le Billon (2021) argues that these logistical difficulties contribute to operational inefficiencies and delays in addressing resource conflicts. The sheer size of the DRC requires innovative strategies for transportation and communication, which are essential for effective peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts.

On the other hand, scholars like Dufour (2018) highlight instances where MONUSCO has leveraged local partnerships and technology to overcome logistical barriers. This perspective acknowledges the complexities but also underscores potential solutions through adaptive strategies and community engagement. Conversely, Hoffman and Turk (2022) critique MONUSCO's logistical strategies, arguing that reliance on aerial support and external supply chains often fails to meet local needs and priorities. This critique aligns with cooperative security theory's emphasis on local ownership and sustainable resource management as crucial elements in conflict resolution.

This synthesis draws on diverse scholarly viewpoints to highlight both consensus and dissent regarding MONUSCO's logistical strategies, reflecting ongoing debates on improving operational effectiveness in complex environments like the DRC. Addressing these challenges requires continuous innovation and collaboration with local stakeholders, emphasizing the imperative of integrating local knowledge and resources into peacekeeping efforts.

7.1.9 Lack of Political good will by the DRC government

A recent study examining MONUSCO's challenges in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) identified a critical barrier: the lack of political goodwill from the DRC government. This finding underscores a fundamental impediment to the mission's effectiveness in promoting stability and peacebuilding efforts in the region. The DRC government's insufficient commitment to collaborative peace initiatives has been highlighted in various analyses. Researchers point to political fragmentation within the ruling coalition, conflicting priorities among key political stakeholders, and a historical distrust of international interventions as contributing factors. These dynamics often result in inconsistent support for MONUSCO's mandates, including efforts to disarm and demobilize armed groups, facilitate political dialogue, and promote inclusive governance.

Moreover, the study highlights instances where the DRC government's engagement with MONUSCO has been marred by accusations of obstructionism or reluctance to implement agreed-upon peace agreements. This lack of political will complicates efforts to address underlying drivers of conflict, such as resource disputes, ethnic tensions, and governance failures, which perpetuate cycles of violence and instability. Thus, there is the urgent need for sustained diplomatic engagement and pressure to foster greater political commitment from the DRC government. This includes leveraging multilateral platforms, such as the United Nations Security Council and regional organizations, to hold accountable those responsible for obstructing peace processes and to encourage constructive dialogue towards sustainable peace in the DRC.

7.1.10 Weak governance institutions

A comprehensive study on MONUSCO's challenges in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has highlighted the significant obstacle posed by weak governance institutions within the country. This finding underscores the critical role of effective governance in sustaining peace and stability, which remains elusive in many parts of the DRC due to systemic deficiencies and institutional fragility.

The study identifies several key issues affecting governance in the DRC, including pervasive corruption, lack of capacity in public administration, and inadequate infrastructure to deliver essential services. These weaknesses undermine the state's ability to assert authority, provide security, and meet the needs of its citizens, exacerbating socio-political tensions and perpetuating cycles of conflict. Moreover, researchers point out that weak governance institutions contribute to broader challenges such as illicit resource exploitation, impunity for human rights abuses, and insufficient rule of law enforcement. These issues not only fuel insecurity but also undermine efforts to achieve sustainable peace through inclusive political processes and socio-economic development.

International observers emphasize the critical need for MONUSCO to address governance deficits as part of its peacebuilding strategy, including capacity-building initiatives, anti-corruption measures, and support for institutional reforms. Efforts to strengthen governance institutions are seen as essential for creating an enabling environment where peace agreements can be implemented effectively and where communities can trust in state institutions to uphold their rights and deliver justice.

Moreover, ineffective governance has been exacerbated by the presence of corruption. Corruption is a significant factor contributing to numerous coup d'états in post-independence Africa. The pursuit of political cleanliness necessitated a transformation in governance, and inevitably, this journey was marked by the presence of violence. The subsequent domino effect resulting from the success of this coup d'état was that neighbouring states commenced exerting demands and pressures on their governments to eradicate corruption and guarantee that the governmental apparatus was sufficiently robust to facilitate the equitable distribution of state resources through the principles of good governance. Corruption and poor governance occupy a prominent position on the index of war onset within conflict research datasets. The Corruption Perception Index, Afrobarometer, Transparency International, and World Governance Indicators have conducted significant studies aimed at measuring and evaluating the prevalence and impact of corruption in Africa, particularly in relation to state fragility and the dynamics of foreign direct investment and aid (Ndzamangwi, 2022). Ndzamangwi (2022) indicates that a comprehensive examination of these institutions consistently reveals that African states, at the conclusion of any evaluative report, are situated in high-risk zones of corruption as reflected in the perception indexes.

When corruption and poor governance take hold in a nation, the safety of its populace is jeopardized, the educational institutions essential for nurturing and preparing future generations are overlooked, and the healthcare system deteriorates significantly. Due to the absence of a robust health infrastructure, often attributed to corruption, African leaders frequently resort to medical tourism, seeking treatment in reputable hospitals overseas when they encounter health issues.

The discussion surrounding state failure, corruption, and the principles of good governance is a significant factor contributing to the persistent conflicts within African nations' borders. The civil conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Uganda during the 1980s, as well as in Rwanda in 1994, were precipitated by issues of poor governance and pervasive corruption. The various conflicts and other factors contributing to instability in Africa demonstrate that the continent is experiencing a significant shortfall in terms of state stability, development, and effective governance.

For a nation to attain significant development, the presence of a stable political framework is paramount, as it influences all other dimensions of national existence within the state. Corruption and poor governance lead to political instability, thereby undermining the state's ability and that of individual entrepreneurs to foster a dynamic economy. An impaired economy results in diminished levels of development and an increase in poverty within the state (Ndzamangwi, 2022).

7.1.11 Conflict of resources

A recent study examining MONUSCO's challenges in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has underscored the critical role of resource conflicts as a key factor perpetuating the country's ongoing instability. This finding highlights how competition over natural resources, including minerals like coltan and gold, exacerbates local and regional conflicts, undermines governance, and fuels armed violence. The study identifies resource-driven conflicts as complex, multifaceted issues deeply intertwined with political, economic, and social

dynamics in the DRC. Competing claims over lucrative resources often result in violence between armed groups seeking control over mining sites and trade routes.

These conflicts not only displace communities but also perpetuate cycles of poverty and deepen mistrust among ethnic and regional groups. Moreover, researchers emphasize that resource exploitation under conditions of weak governance and regulatory oversight contributes to illicit economies, corruption, and the funding of armed groups, further complicating efforts to achieve sustainable peace.

The lack of transparent and accountable resource management exacerbates grievances and perpetuates cycles of conflict, challenging MONUSCO's efforts to promote stability and support peacebuilding initiatives. International observers stress the importance of addressing root causes of resource conflicts through inclusive governance reforms, economic diversification, and initiatives to promote responsible resource management. Effective regulation and oversight of natural resource sectors are seen as crucial steps towards reducing incentives for armed violence and fostering conditions conducive to lasting peace in the DRC.

Matthew *et al* (2009) observe that in certain conflicts, resources like oil and minerals have served as catalysts for the conflict by supplying arms and mercenaries to the warring factions. For example, the conflict in Sudan during the early 2000s was primarily focused in the areas rich in oil resources. The southern Sudanese rebels resisted the exploitation and discrimination enacted by the Khartoum government, particularly concerning the revenues derived from oil exports (Le Billon, 2012). Consequently, the United Nations was compelled to regulate the influence of oil in the Darfur conflict by implementing economic

sanctions aimed at preventing the Sudanese government from exploiting this valuable resource.

The data collected by the UN peacekeepers in the field contributed significantly to the implementation of the sanctions. Similar dynamics are observed in the conflicts of West Africa, where insurgents have leveraged revenues obtained from diamond smuggling to finance their operations. Jensen and Lonergan (2013) elucidate that the turmoil in Angola, Liberia, and Sierra Leone was exacerbated by the revenues generated from illicit diamond transactions. During the early 1990s, Jonas Savimbi of Angola employed The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to engage in conflict against the government following his defeat in the 1992 presidential elections (Le Billon, 2001). UNITA depended on the revenues generated from illicit oil production and diamonds to sustain its operations in opposition to the government. In 1993, the UN Security Council enacted resolution 864, which forbade commerce with the Angolan rebel factions (Ferreira, 2006). The peacekeepers were tasked with the responsibility of preventing any external entities from purchasing oil or diamonds from the rebel factions in return for weaponry. In 1998, the financial sanctions aimed at the rebel factions were intensified, mandating that all diamonds sourced from Angola possess a Certificate of Origin to thwart the rebels' utilization of this resource for armament purposes (Paris, 2004). Ferreira (2006) posits that the economic sanctions levied against UNITA played a crucial role in halting the conflict in Angola. A similar strategy was employed to diminish the financial capabilities of insurgents in both Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The International Criminal Court prosecuted former Liberian President Charles Taylor for his role in employing civilians as slaves in the extraction of "blood" diamonds, which were

instrumental in perpetuating the conflict within the nation. The United Nations peacekeepers guaranteed that all areas previously exploited by rebels for diamond mining were under the jurisdiction of government authorities, thereby preventing illegal mining and the associated arms trade (Matthew, Brown, & Jensen, 2009). Governments that deploy troops to UN peacekeeping missions perceive resource control as not merely a high-risk endeavour, but also as a potential diversion from, or even detrimental to, the core political and humanitarian objectives of peacekeepers.

Effective peacekeeping, which may involve military operations in sectors such as mining or logging, is therefore improbable, partly due to the potential for casualties among civilians and UN personnel (Shraga, 2000). Nonetheless, in certain instances, the deployment of UN troops in resource-abundant regions has been perceived as essential. In instances where such initiatives have been pursued, they have at times encountered resolute opposition from armed factions, and the regions abundant in resources have frequently been the final territories to fall under the jurisdiction of the United Nations. Carnahan (2007) posits that a critical concern is whether intervention will significantly facilitate a more rapid resolution to the conflict, while simultaneously avoiding detrimental repercussions in the future, such as the erosion of livelihoods or potential exploitation by rebel factions. When the access of armed groups to conflict resources is restricted, they may resort to targeting local populations, either to secure funding through extortion and illicit taxation or out of a desire for retribution—circumstances for which the UN could be held partially accountable.

Another perspective on this issue exists: Weinstein (2006) has discovered that rebel groups arising in resource-abundant settings often perpetrate more severe abuses against civilians.

This behavior seems to be linked to a group of “consumers” rather than “investors”—individuals who are attracted to the rebellion by immediate, opportunistic economic goals rather than by enduring political aspirations (Le Billon, 2012). In the immediate context, military interventions by the UN in resource sectors may heighten the potential for abuses perpetrated by rebel factions against civilian communities.

However, over an extended period, these interventions not only diminish the operational capabilities of rebel groups but also steer their focus towards political aims—thus promoting negotiations over mere survival and profit-making endeavours. Consequently, intervention must be meticulously evaluated from various viewpoints, encompassing ethical, military, political, and economic dimensions.

7.1.12 Fear of Oligarchs

A recent study on MONUSCO's challenges in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) highlights the significant impact of oligarchs - wealthy business people with substantial political influence - on the mission's effectiveness. The study underscores how the power and influence of these oligarchs create complex obstacles to achieving sustainable peace and stability.

Oligarchs in the DRC wield considerable control over key economic sectors, including mining and agriculture, and often have extensive connections within political and security circles. Their economic power enables them to exert influence over local and national governance, which can lead to the prioritization of their interests over broader public needs. This concentration of wealth and influence frequently results in the perpetuation of

conflict, as these oligarchs support or finance armed groups to protect their economic assets and political power.

Furthermore, the study points out that the fear of oligarchs among both local populations and government officials can lead to a reluctance to implement reforms or challenge the status quo. This dynamic complicates MONUSCO's efforts to promote governance reforms, support the rule of law, and facilitate inclusive political dialogue. The presence of powerful oligarchs also undermines efforts to address corruption and illicit economic activities, which are critical for establishing lasting peace. The researcher emphasizes that addressing the influence of oligarchs requires a multifaceted approach, including targeted anti-corruption measures, support for economic reforms, and efforts to strengthen democratic institutions. By tackling these underlying issues, MONUSCO can enhance its ability to contribute to a more equitable and stable environment in the DRC.

7.2 Opportunities emerging from MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the DRC

7.2.1 Enhanced Community Engagement

MONUSCO has the opportunity to strengthen its relationships with local communities through community outreach programs, dialogue initiatives, and partnerships with local leaders and civil society organizations. This engagement fosters trust, enhances local support for peace initiatives, and improves information-sharing crucial for effective conflict management. Enhanced community engagement stands as a pivotal opportunity for MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), crucial for fostering trust, building local support for peace initiatives, and improving conflict management strategies. Community engagement initiatives, such as outreach programs, dialogue sessions, and

partnerships with local leaders and civil society organizations, are integral to MONUSCO's mandate to protect civilians and promote stability in the region. Research supports the effectiveness of community engagement in peacekeeping missions.

For instance, a study by the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations found that proactive community engagement not only enhances security but also strengthens relationships between peacekeepers and local populations, thereby improving the overall effectiveness of peace operations (UN, 2020). In the context of the DRC, where decades of conflict have eroded trust in external interventions, MONUSCO's efforts to engage with local communities have shown promising results. According to a report by the International Peace Institute, sustained community engagement by MONUSCO has contributed to improved local perceptions of peacekeepers, increased willingness of communities to share information on security threats, and enhanced cooperation in implementing peacebuilding activities (IPI, 2021).

Moreover, partnerships with local civil society organizations have been instrumental in MONUSCO's ability to access remote and conflict-affected areas, facilitate humanitarian assistance, and mediate local disputes. These partnerships not only amplify MONUSCO's operational reach but also ensure that interventions are grounded in local needs and priorities (UNDP, 2022).

7.2.2 Capacity Building and Training

MONUSCO can contribute to long-term peace and stability by investing in capacity building and training programs for local security forces, government institutions, and community leaders. By improving local capacities in conflict prevention, resolution, and

governance, MONUSCO empowers local actors to take a more active role in maintaining security and addressing root causes of conflict. Investing in capacity building and training programs is a critical strategy for MONUSCO to contribute to long-term peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). By enhancing the capabilities of local security forces, government institutions, and community leaders, MONUSCO aims to empower these actors in conflict prevention, resolution, and governance, thereby fostering sustainable peace processes.

Scholarly literature underscores the importance of capacity building in peacekeeping missions. According to Bellamy *et al*. (2020), effective capacity building enhances the operational effectiveness of peacekeepers by improving local institutions' ability to manage security challenges independently. This approach not only strengthens the legitimacy of peace operations but also supports state-building efforts crucial for long-term stability (Bellamy *et al*., 2020).

In the context of the DRC, MONUSCO's capacity building initiatives have shown promising results. For instance, training programs for the Congolese National Police (PNC) have focused on enhancing their capabilities in law enforcement, human rights protection, and community policing (UN, 2021). Such initiatives not only improve the professionalism and accountability of local security forces but also build trust and cooperation between security providers and communities, essential for effective peacekeeping (UN, 2021).

Furthermore, capacity building extends to strengthening governance structures and empowering local leaders to participate meaningfully in peacebuilding processes. MONUSCO's support for local governance reforms and institutional development has

aimed at promoting inclusive decision-making and conflict resolution mechanisms (UNDP, 2021). These efforts are crucial for addressing the root causes of conflict, such as marginalization and governance deficits, which perpetuate instability in the DRC (UNDP, 2021).

7.2.3 Support for Political Dialogue and Reconciliation

MONUSCO plays a pivotal role in facilitating political dialogue, mediation efforts, and reconciliation processes among conflicting parties in the DRC. By leveraging its neutral stance and international credibility, MONUSCO can encourage inclusive political participation and foster agreements that promote sustainable peace and stability. Support for political dialogue and reconciliation stands as a crucial role for MONUSCO in promoting sustainable peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Through its facilitation of political dialogue, mediation efforts, and reconciliation processes, MONUSCO leverages its neutral stance and international credibility to encourage inclusive political participation and foster agreements among conflicting parties.

Scholarly literature underscores the significance of political dialogue in peacebuilding contexts. According to Richmond (2018), effective political dialogue facilitates the resolution of deep-rooted conflicts by addressing grievances, building trust between parties, and creating pathways for inclusive governance. MONUSCO's involvement in political dialogue processes aligns with these principles, aiming to mitigate tensions, promote understanding, and establish frameworks for peaceful coexistence (Richmond, 2018). In the DRC, MONUSCO's support for political dialogue has yielded notable outcomes. The mission has facilitated negotiations between the government, armed groups,

and civil society to address underlying causes of conflict, such as resource disputes and ethnic tensions (UN, 2020).

By providing a neutral platform for dialogue and mediation, MONUSCO enhances the legitimacy of peace processes and encourages stakeholders to engage in constructive negotiations towards sustainable peace agreements (UN, 2020). Furthermore, MONUSCO's efforts in reconciliation processes contribute to healing societal divisions and promoting social cohesion. Through initiatives that promote truth-telling, justice, and community reconciliation, MONUSCO addresses historical grievances and fosters a climate conducive to long-term peace (IPI, 2021).

7.2.4 Advocacy for Human Rights and Protection

MONUSCO's presence provides an opportunity to advocate for human rights protection and accountability for violations. By monitoring and reporting on human rights abuses, supporting justice mechanisms, and providing protection for vulnerable populations, MONUSCO contributes to creating a safer environment and upholding international humanitarian standards. Advocacy for human rights and protection forms a critical aspect of MONUSCO's mandate in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where the mission plays a pivotal role in monitoring, reporting on human rights abuses, and supporting justice mechanisms.

By advocating for human rights protection and accountability, MONUSCO aims to create a safer environment and uphold international humanitarian standards in the region. Scholarly literature underscores the importance of human rights advocacy in peacekeeping operations. According to the United Nations (2021), monitoring and reporting on human

rights violations are essential for early warning, prevention of atrocities, and promoting accountability. MONUSCO's human rights monitoring efforts contribute to documenting abuses, supporting local justice systems, and advocating for victims' rights (UN, 2021). In the DRC context, MONUSCO's advocacy for human rights has led to tangible impacts. The mission's reports and investigations have shed light on violations such as sexual violence, child recruitment, and attacks against civilians, prompting national and international responses to address these issues (UN, 2021). Moreover, MONUSCO's support for local justice mechanisms, including capacity building for judicial institutions and legal aid programs, enhances access to justice for affected populations (UNDP, 2020). Furthermore, MONUSCO's protection mandates extend to providing physical security and humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. By deploying peacekeepers to protect civilians, conducting patrols in high-risk areas, and facilitating humanitarian access, MONUSCO mitigates immediate threats and contributes to stabilizing conflict-affected communities (UN, 2021).

7.2.5 Coordination with Regional and International Partners

MONUSCO can strengthen its effectiveness by enhancing coordination and cooperation with regional organizations (such as the African Union and regional economic communities) and international partners (including UN agencies, donor countries, and NGOs). This collaboration facilitates resource mobilization, expertise sharing, and joint efforts in addressing cross-border security threats and promoting regional stability. Enhancing coordination with regional and international partners is instrumental for MONUSCO in maximizing its effectiveness and impact in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). By collaborating closely with organizations such as the African Union

(AU), regional economic communities, UN agencies, donor countries, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), MONUSCO can leverage diverse resources, expertise, and perspectives to address complex security challenges and promote regional stability. Scholarly literature emphasizes the benefits of coordination and collaboration in peacekeeping operations.

According to a study by the International Peace Institute (IPI), effective coordination among international and regional actors enhances the coherence of peacebuilding efforts, improves resource allocation, and strengthens political support for missions like MONUSCO (IPI, 2020). This synergy fosters a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to addressing security threats and promoting peace. In practice, MONUSCO's coordination efforts have yielded significant outcomes. For instance, joint operations and information-sharing mechanisms with the AU and regional organizations have facilitated responses to cross-border security threats, including the movement of armed groups and illicit flows of resources (UN, 2021). Moreover, partnerships with UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNHCR have enhanced humanitarian assistance delivery and protection services for vulnerable populations affected by conflict (UN, 2021).

Furthermore, MONUSCO's collaboration with donor countries and NGOs has supported initiatives ranging from development projects to capacity building for local institutions. These partnerships not only augment MONUSCO's operational capabilities but also foster sustainable peacebuilding by addressing socio-economic drivers of conflict and promoting inclusive governance (UNDP, 2021; OCHA, 2020).

7.2.6 International Conference on Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)

MONUSCO's efforts to foster peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) stand to benefit significantly from its collaboration with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and its Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM). This partnership represents a strategic opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of MONUSCO's peace and stabilization mandates through joint initiatives and coordinated efforts. The ICGLR, a regional organization dedicated to promoting peace and security in the Great Lakes region, provides a crucial platform for multi-lateral cooperation. Its Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM) is particularly valuable as it offers a structured framework for monitoring and verifying compliance with peace agreements, including the disarmament and demobilization of armed groups. By working closely with the EJVM, MONUSCO can leverage its resources and expertise to bolster these efforts, ensuring more effective implementation of peace and security measures. The EJVM's role in overseeing cross-border security issues and monitoring violations contributes to a more comprehensive approach to conflict resolution. This collaboration allows MONUSCO to benefit from regional insights and support, enhancing its ability to address complex security challenges and build local capacities for peacekeeping and governance.

Additionally, integrating the EJVM's monitoring capabilities with MONUSCO's operational strategies can help address gaps in information and coordination, leading to more targeted and effective interventions. By aligning its efforts with the ICGLR and the EJVM, MONUSCO can strengthen regional cooperation, improve accountability, and promote sustainable peace in the DRC.

7.2.7 Political dialogue and reconciliation

MONUSCO's mandate in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) includes a crucial opportunity to facilitate political dialogue and reconciliation, which are essential for achieving long-term peace and stability. The mission's role in supporting these efforts is pivotal given the DRC's history of conflict and political fragmentation. The study reveals that MONUSCO's engagement in political dialogue offers a valuable platform for mediating between conflicting parties and fostering inclusive discussions. By leveraging its neutral stance and international support, MONUSCO can help bridge divides between various political factions, ethnic groups, and civil society organizations. This mediation role is vital in creating a conducive environment for dialogue, where grievances can be addressed, and consensus can be built.

Additionally, MONUSCO's involvement in reconciliation processes helps address historical injustices and promote social cohesion. Through supporting transitional justice mechanisms, such as truth and reconciliation commissions, MONUSCO can aid in documenting human rights abuses and facilitating reparative measures. These efforts are crucial in rebuilding trust among communities and establishing a foundation for sustainable peace. The mission's capacity to provide technical assistance and support for electoral processes also contributes to political stability.

By ensuring that elections are conducted fairly and transparently, MONUSCO can help prevent political crises and promote democratic governance. Therefore, MONUSCO's role in political dialogue and reconciliation is integral to addressing the root causes of conflict and fostering a stable and inclusive political environment in the DRC. This approach

enhances the mission’s ability to support comprehensive peacebuilding efforts and contribute to the country’s long-term stability.

7.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has evaluated a number of challenges including but not limited to mistrust and dearth of cooperation, protection of the civilian population, weak governance institutions, lack of political goodwill, and conflict of resources as well as fear of oligarchs. This chapter acknowledges that while navigating the complexities of multi-stakeholder collaboration, MONUSCO's coordination with regional and international partners remains essential for achieving lasting peace in the DRC. By harnessing collective strengths and resources, MONUSCO contributes to building resilient institutions, promoting regional stability, and fostering a conducive environment for sustainable development. The interrogation of this chapter leads to the last chapter based on the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations for the study. The summary, conclusions and recommendations are derived from the specific objectives.

8.1 Summary of findings

In view of specific objective one, the study makes the following summary: conflict intervention institutional frameworks employed by the UN (MONUSCO) in the DR Congo. Out of 310 respondents, 111 (35.8%) agreed that conflict in DRC requires external intervention, 180 (58.06%) disagreed with the inquiry, 11 (3.6%) were undecided, 5 (1.6%) had no knowledge, and 3 (0.9%) had no response. The study found out that out of 310 respondents, 171 (55.2%) agreed that rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO, 69 (22.3%) disagreed with the inquiry, 51 (16.5%) were undecided, and 9 (2.9%) did not know whether the rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO or not. Besides, 10 (3.2%) had no response. The Study sought to find out MONUSCO's institutional frameworks. Out of 310 respondents, 105 (33.9%) agreed that MONUSCO's institutional frameworks were clear, 175 (56.5%) averred that they were not clear, 15 (4.8%) were undecided, 10 (3.2%) had no knowledge and 3 (1.6%) had no response on MONUSCO's institutional frameworks.

On whether DRC’s multiple membership in the regional organization posed a challenge for MONUSCO. Out of 310 respondents 57 (18.39%) stated that multiple membership for DRC was a challenge 189 (60.97%) were of the contrary opinion, they disagreed with the

inquiry. Besides, 50 (16.1%) were undecided 8 (2.6%) had no knowledge and 6 (1.9%) had no response to the inquiry. The study sought to find out whether Rwanda and Uganda are obstacles to MONUSCO. Out of 310 respondents, 173 (55.81%) agreed that Rwanda and Uganda are obstacles to MONUSCO, 81 (26.13%) disagreed 39 (12.58%) were undecided, 9 (2.9%) had no knowledge of Rwanda and Uganda as obstacles to MONUSCO, and 8 (2.6%) had no response to the inquiry.

In light of specific objective two, the study makes the following summary: As such, this study sought to assess whether MONUSCO has well-trained soldiers in handling the DRC conflict. The study, therefore, found out that, out of 310 respondents, 171 (56.16%) agreed to the inquiry, that MONUSCO has well-trained soldiers to handle the conflict, 83 (26.77%) disagreed to the inquiry, 42 (13.55%) were undecided, 10 (3.23%) had no knowledge, and 4 (1.29%) had no response. The capacity and capability of MONUSCO to handle the DRC conflict is dependent upon whether MONUSCO is reactive or proactive. This study, therefore, sought to assess whether MONUSCO is reactive or proactive in handling DRC conflict. Out of 310 respondents, 167 (53.9%) agreed that MONUSCO is reactive and not proactive, 89 (28.7%) disagreed to this inquiry, 39 (12.6%) were undecided, 11 (3.5%) had no knowledge and 4 (1.3%) had no response to give. The study sought to assess whether MONUSCO is well-equipped to deal with conflicts in DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 167 (56.45%) agreed that MONUSCO is well equipped to deal with conflict in the DRC, 89 (26.45%) disagreed, 39 (12.26%) were undecided, 11 (2.58%) had no knowledge and 4 (1.29%) had no response to give.

On MONUSCO's mandate and peace and security in the DRC, Out of 310 respondents, 157 (50.6%) agreed to understand MONUSCO's capacity in peace and security in the

DRC, 96 (31%) disagreed, 37 (11.9%) were undecided, 13 (4.2%) did not know, and 7 (2.3%) had no response to give. The study sought to assess MONUSCO's Peace initiatives and peace efforts in the DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 159 (51.3%) agreed to understand MONUSCO's capacity peace initiatives and peace efforts in the DRC, 94 (30.3%) disagreed, 40 (12.9%) were undecided 10 (3.2%) did not know, 7 (2.3%) had no response to give. The study sought to assess whether MONUSCO is ineffective because of its prolonged stay in the DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 181 (58.4%) agreed that MONUSCO is ineffective in the DRC, 77 (24.8%) disagreed, 41 (13.2%) were undecided, 7 (2.3%) did not know, 4 (1.3%) had no response to give. The study sought to assess whether MONUSCO is required to exit to realize peace in the DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 211 (68.1%) agreed that MONUSCO should exit for peace to be realized in the DRC, 71 (22.9%) disagreed, 18 (5.8%) were undecided, 6 (1.9%) did not know, and 4 (1.3%) had no response to give. Concerning specific objective three, the study makes the following summary: The study sought to interrogate whether MONUSCO is an occupational or interventional force. Out of 310 respondents, 187 (60.32%) agreed that MONUSCO is occupational and not an interventional force, 73 (23.55%) disagreed with the inquiry, 35 (11.29%) were undecided, 11 (3.55%) did not know the question, and 4 (1.29%) had no response.

On whether the Government forces can handle the conflict in the DRC without MONUSCO, out of 310 respondents, 148 (47.7%) agreed that the government forces could handle the conflict in the DRC without MONUSCO, 73 (23.5%) disagreed with the inquiry, 47 (15.2%) were undecided, 33 (10.6%) did not know the question, and 9 (2.9%) had no response.

On whether MONUSCO Force FIB (QRF) is ineffective due to the long chain of command within the UN security system. Out of 310 respondents, 163 (53.9%) agreed that MONUSCO is ineffective due to the long chain of command within the UN security system, 87 (28.1%) disagreed with the inquiry, 41 (13.2%) were undecided, 11 (3.5%) did not know the question, and 4 (1.3%) had no response. The study sought to evaluate whether the International community wants MONUSCO to exit DRC. Of 310 respondents, 91 (29.4%) agreed that the International community wants MONUSCO to exit DRC, 162 (52.3%) disagreed with the inquiry, 51 (16.5%) were undecided, 3 (1.0%) did not know the question, and 3 (1.0%) had no response.

On whether SADC is frustrating and undermining the efforts of MONUSCO in its intervention in DRC, out of 310 respondents, 51 (16.5%) agreed that SADC is frustrating and undermining efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in DRC, 178 (57.4%) disagreed with the inquiry, 50 (16.1%) were undecided, 21 (6.8%) had no knowledge of the question, and 10 (3.2%) had no response.

In light of specific objective four, the study makes the following summary: The study sought to interrogate whether the presence of multiple armed groups was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 171 (55.2%) agreed that the presence of multiple armed groups facing MONUSCO in DRC, 91 (29.4%) disagreed with the inquiry, and 39 (12.6%) were undecided, 6 (1.9%) had no knowledge and 3 (1.0%) had no response. The study also sought to find whether mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. Out of 310 respondents 177 (57.1%) agreed that mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, 89 (28.7%) disagreed with the inquiry, 32 (10.3%)

were undecided, 7 (2.3%) had no knowledge of the question, and 5 (1.6%) had no response. The study sought to interrogate whether the protection of the Civilian Population is a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. Out of 310 respondents 161 (51.9%) agreed that protection of the Civilian Population is a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, 92 (29.7%) disagreed with the inquiry, 35 (11.3%) were undecided, 12 (3.9%) did not know the question, and 10 (3.2%) had no response. The study sought to evaluate whether a dearth of international support was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 155 (50.0%) agreed that the dearth of international support a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, 87 (28.1%) disagreed with the inquiry, 34 (11.0%) were undecided, 19 (6.1%) had no knowledge of the question and 15 (4.8%) had no response. The study sought to interrogate whether political interference was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 171 (55.2%) agreed that political interference was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, 84 (27.1%) disagreed with the inquiry, 29 (9.4%) were undecided, 16 (5.2%) had no knowledge of the question, and 10 (3.2%) had no response.

On whether detachment from local communities was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, out of 310 respondents, 173 (55.8%) agreed that detachment from local communities was a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, 83 (26.8%) disagreed with the inquiry, 29 (9.4%) were undecided, 16 (5.2%) had no knowledge of the question, and 9 (2.9%) had no response.

The study sought to interrogate whether fluid and volatile security threats were a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 181 (58.4%) agreed that fluid and volatile security threats were a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, 89 (28.7%)

disagreed with the inquiry, 31 (10.0%) were undecided, 6 (1.9%) did not know the question, and 3 (1.0%) had no response. The study sought to interrogate whether logistical difficulties and vast terrain were a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC. Out of 310 respondents, 183 (59.0%) agreed that Logistical difficulties and vast terrain were a challenge facing MONUSCO in DRC, 77 (24.8%) disagreed with the inquiry, 33 (10.6%) were undecided, 10 (3.2%) had no knowledge of the question and 7 (2.3%) had no response.

In light of the opportunities, the study makes the following summary:

In the context of the DRC, where decades of conflict have eroded trust in external interventions, MONUSCO's efforts to engage with local communities have shown promising results. MONUSCO can contribute to long-term peace and stability by investing in capacity building and training programs for local security forces, government institutions, and community leaders. By improving local capacities in conflict prevention, resolution, and governance, MONUSCO empowers local actors to take a more active role in maintaining security and addressing root causes of conflict. MONUSCO plays a pivotal role in facilitating political dialogue, mediation efforts, and reconciliation processes among conflicting parties in the DRC. By leveraging its neutral stance and international credibility, MONUSCO can encourage inclusive political participation and foster agreements that promote sustainable peace and stability.

Besides, by monitoring and reporting on human rights abuses, supporting justice mechanisms, and providing protection for vulnerable populations, MONUSCO contributes to creating a safer environment and upholding international humanitarian standards. Enhancing coordination with regional and international partners is instrumental for

MONUSCO in maximizing its effectiveness and impact in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). MONUSCO's efforts to foster peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) stand to benefit significantly from its collaboration with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and its Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM).

8.2 Conclusions

With reference to specific objective one, the study concludes that Rwanda and Uganda have undermined MONUSCO's institutional frameworks. Consequently, both countries have stymied MONUSCO's efforts on effective peace and security processes. Hence, the implications of these findings highlight the regional power dynamics struggle and illegal exploitation of DRC's mineral resources, where Rwanda and Uganda both seek to project power and secure their national interests, thus, perpetuating instability in the DRC.

With specific reference to objective two, the study concludes that MONUSCO should exit the DRC in order to achieve peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). However, it is also essential to consider the timing and modalities of MONUSCO's exit from the DRC, where cooperative security principles advocate for a gradual transition that enhances local capacities and promotes self-sustaining peacebuilding initiatives.

With regard to specific objective three, the study concludes that MONUSCO'S presence in the DRC is both occupational and inconsequential. Therefore, MONUSCO has failed to intervene effectively in DRC and restore peace and security to a large extent.

In light of specific objective four, the study concludes that mistrust and dearth of cooperation, non-guaranteed protection of the civilian population, weak governance

institutions, lack of political goodwill, and chiefly conflict of resources, are the major problems facing MONUSCO in achieving its mandate in the DRC. This study acknowledges that while navigating the complexities of multi-stakeholder collaboration, MONUSCO's coordination with regional and international partners remains essential for achieving lasting peace in the DRC.

The overall conclusion of this study is that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) has had a significant yet mixed impact on the country's peace and security processes. While the mission has played a crucial role in stabilizing certain conflict-affected areas, reducing violence, and facilitating peace agreements, its long-term effectiveness has been limited by several challenges. These include the persistence of armed groups, the complexity of local and regional geopolitical dynamics, and the limited capacity of the Congolese government to maintain security independently.

8.3 Recommendations

In light of specific objective one, the study recommends that there is need to enhance Governance Structures in order to support the DRC government in strengthening state institutions, including judiciary and law enforcement agencies, to effectively manage resources and resolve disputes. Besides, there is need to encourage transparency and accountability in governance to rebuild trust between the government and local communities. In doing so, the facilitation of dialogue between the DRC government, opposition parties, civil society, and local communities will be able to address grievances and build a consensus on national priorities. Furthermore, this will galvanize the existing

institutional frameworks toward initiatives aimed at decentralization to ensure local communities have a greater say in their governance and resource management.

In light of specific objective two, the study recommends that MONUSCO's Operational Capacity be boosted to enhance its mandate to include more robust peace enforcement measures, including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs for ex-combatants. Besides, there is need to provide MONUSCO with the necessary resources and modern equipment to improve its rapid response capabilities and protect civilians effectively. Additionally, to enhance its capacity, regional cooperation and diplomacy are imperative. This is possible through fostering regional cooperation by involving the African Union (AU) and regional bodies like the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to mediate and resolve cross-border tensions. Consequently, applying diplomatic pressure on neighboring countries, especially Rwanda and Uganda, to cease any support to armed groups and engage in peaceful negotiations will bolster MONUSCO’s mandate in the Eastern DRC.

In view of specific objective three, the study recommends that there is need to bolster peace and security in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), whereby MONUSCO adopts a multi-faceted approach. First, enhancing real-time intelligence collection and sharing is crucial for preemptive action against threats. Collaboration with local communities will improve grassroots intelligence, fostering trust and cooperation. Second, the Force Intervention Brigade must be equipped with advanced technology and training to increase its rapid response effectiveness. Lastly, MONUSCO should support the DRC government's efforts to strengthen state institutions, promoting governance reforms and

security sector improvements. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of strategies based on ground realities will ensure MONUSCO's interventions remain effective and responsive to the evolving security landscape.

In light of specific objective four, the study recommends that, there is need to strengthen Judicial Mechanisms. In the same vein, supporting the establishment of local and international judicial mechanisms to investigate and prosecute war crimes and human rights abuses, by ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable is imperative. Quintessentially, there is need to encourage truth and reconciliation processes to address past injustices and promote healing within communities. This will be dependent on international coordination and monitoring among international actors who will ensure that international efforts are well-coordinated and aligned with the DRC's national priorities, avoiding duplication and enhancing the effectiveness of interventions. Besides, backing regional peace initiatives and frameworks, such as the Nairobi Declaration and the Luanda Summit, to foster lasting peace and stability in the Great Lakes region will aid in addressing the challenges highlighted in this study.

8.4 Suggestions for further research

The research study highlights the necessity of conducting a comparative analysis of MONUSCO's institutional frameworks with those of other United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions, emphasizing that this is critical for understanding the factors that influence the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. This comparison would involve examining several key areas, such as command structures, mandates, rules of engagement, and coordination mechanisms, all of which play a pivotal role in the success or limitations

of a mission. Command structures are the hierarchical systems that determine how authority is distributed and how decisions are made within a peacekeeping mission. MONUSCO's command structure has faced challenges due to the vast size of the DRC, the decentralized nature of conflict zones, and coordination issues between military and civilian components. A comparative analysis with other UN missions, such as the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), would help identify best practices and areas for improvement. Understanding how different missions manage command at strategic, operational, and tactical levels would offer insights into optimizing MONUSCO's framework.

Each UN peacekeeping mission operates under a specific mandate, which defines its scope, objectives, and limitations. MONUSCO's mandate has evolved from a traditional peacekeeping role to a more robust peace enforcement mission, with a focus on protecting civilians, neutralizing armed groups, and supporting stabilization efforts. However, the complexity of MONUSCO's mandate - balancing peacekeeping with offensive military operations - has posed significant challenges. By comparing MONUSCO's mandate with those of missions like the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) or the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), researchers could assess how the scope of mandates influences operational success. The rules of engagement (ROE) outline when and how peacekeepers can use force, playing a crucial role in shaping the mission's response to threats. MONUSCO's ROE are unique because they allow for offensive operations, including the use of force to neutralize armed groups, particularly through its Force Intervention Brigade (FIB). This is in contrast to many traditional peacekeeping missions where the use of force

is typically limited to self-defence or the protection of civilians. A comparative analysis with other UN missions, particularly those that have adopted a similar robust approach (like MINUSMA), could provide valuable lessons.

Effective coordination between various actors; military, police, civilian components, humanitarian organizations, and local authorities is essential for the success of any peacekeeping mission. MONUSCO, like many other UN missions, operates in a complex environment where multiple stakeholders are involved in peacebuilding, stabilization, and development. Coordination failures can lead to inefficiencies, duplication of efforts, and, in some cases, mistrust between partners. Comparing MONUSCO's coordination mechanisms with those of other missions, such as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) or UNMISS, would provide insights into how missions manage inter-agency and inter-organizational collaboration. Ultimately, this comparative analysis would not only provide a clearer understanding of what institutional frameworks work best in different conflict settings but also offer actionable recommendations to optimize MONUSCO's operations and contribute more effectively to peace and security in the DRC.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

(To be used by the researcher to introduce himself to the respondents before conducting key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and before administering survey questionnaires)

My name is Robert Koome Kimathi, a Ph.D. Candidate from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) undertaking research on **"Leverage on International conflict intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo peace and security processes with specific reference to MUNUSCO."** The study results would be used for academic purposes only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The Government of Kenya has given me permission to undertake field survey and you are one of the people I have selected for interview.

Please give me your consent to ask you certain questions regarding conflict in the DR Congo (North and South Kivus and Ituri province) and intervention by MONUSCO.

Thank you.

APPENDIX II: CONSENT FORM

(To be used by the researcher to seek and obtain consent of the respondents prior)

Part A: Introduction by the Researcher

Greetings! My name is Robert Koome Kimathi, a Ph.D. Candidate from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology undertaking research on **"Leverage on International conflict intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo peace and security processes with specific reference to MUNUSCO.''** The study results would be used for academic purposes only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The Government of Kenya has given me permission to undertake field survey and you are one of the people I have selected for interview. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, discontinue participation, or skip any questions you do not wish to answer at any time without any penalty or loss. You may not receive any direct benefits from participating in this research. Please note that any query regarding this research should be directed to me. I kindly request you to sign this Consent Form and participate in this interview.

Robert Koome Kimathi

Reg. No. CPC/LH/04 -70654/2021

Phone No. 0738634433

Part B: Consent by Respondent

I certify that I have read and understood the contents of this form and hereby agree to participate in this study.

Signature: …… **Date:** ……

APPENDIX III: KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR KEY UN AND DRC GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH INFORMATION DEEMED VALUABLE TO THE STUDY

Key informants will be: MONUSCO Force Commander or assigned officer, ADF rebel Commander or assigned rebel representative, M23 rebel Commander or assigned rebel representative, DRC Ministers (Defence, Justice, Domestic Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Transports and Communication, Human Rights), Defence Chief, Police Chief, heads of international NGOs such as Acted, Action Aid, Aid Against Hunger, Agence Française de Développement, Congo Research Group, Coopi, Danish Refugee Council, Medecins sans frontières, Eastern Congo Initiative, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children among others.

SECTION A: CONFLICT INTERVENTION INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS EMPLOYED BY UNITED NATIONS (MONUSCO)

Main Research Question: What are the conflict intervention institutional frameworks employed by the United Nations in the DR Congo?

1. Why has the UN (MONUSCO) not been able to bring peace to the DRC?

2. Is MONUSCO an occupational force in the DRC?

3. What is the perception of the DRC people/Government on conflict Intervention by the UN?

4. What adjustments need to be done to MONUSCO for effective conflict intervention in DRC now and in future?

SECTION B:

CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY AVAILABLE WITHIN THE UN (MONUSCO) IN CONFLICT INTERVENTION IN THE DRC

1. What capabilities and capacities are available within the UN in conflict intervention in the DRC?

2. What capability and capacity gaps are experienced by the UN in conflict intervention in the DRC?

3. Answer TRUE or FALSE: MONUSCO has the capacity and capability to stabilize and bring peace in the DRC.

SECTION C: THE POST-CONFLICT INTERVENTION DYNAMICS

1. What is impairing conflict intervention in the DRC by MONUSCO?

2. What conflict intervention strategies are working for MONUSCO in efforts to bring peace and stability in the DRC?

3. How does MONUSCO deal with post-conflict intervention dynamics?

4. What is your perception on post conflict intervention activities by MONUSCO?

SECTION D: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY MONUSCO IN FULFILLING ITS MANDATE ON PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES IN THE DRC?

1. **Operational Challenges and Opportunities:**

- What are MONUSCO challenges and opportunities in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the DRC?

2. **Security Concerns:**

- What are the primary security threats faced by MONUSCO personnel in their efforts to bring peace and security in the DRC?
- How does the presence of multiple armed groups in the DRC complicate MONUSCO's efforts to maintain peace and security?

3. **Political Dynamics:**

- What challenges does MONUSCO face in gaining the trust and cooperation of various political actors, including government officials, opposition groups, and local authorities?

4. **Civilian Protection:**

- What measures does MONUSCO take to protect civilians to include IDPs, refugees in conflict-affected areas, and what obstacles does it encounter in fulfilling this aspect of its mandate?

5. **Regional Dynamics:**

How do regional factors, such as cross-border conflicts, the presence of foreign armed groups, and regional power dynamics, influence MONUSCO's operations in the DRC?

6. **Resource Constraints:**

What limitations does MONUSCO face in terms of funding, personnel, and equipment, and how do these constraints impact its ability to fulfil its mandate effectively?

7. **Community Engagement:**

How does MONUSCO engage with local communities in the DRC to build trust, promote dialogue, and address the root causes of conflict?

APPENDIX IV: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide for Expert and National Groups with Information Deemed Valuable for The Study

Two national groups will be identified from among local groups, such as victims of the conflict, specifically internally displaced persons, and rebel groups, such as M23, FDLR, and ADF in conflict zones of the DRC. Similarly, two expert groups will be reached: one being an assortment of staffers of international NGOs such as Acted, Action Aid, Aid Against Hunger, Agence Française de Développement, Congo Research Group, Coopi, Danish Refugee Council, Medecins sans frontières, Eastern Congo Initiative, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children among others, and the other being of government officers/staffers in the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo assorted Ministries: Domestic Affairs, Human Rights, Defence, Foreign Affairs, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Finance and Budget, Communication and Information, Defence, Police.

SECTION A: CONFLICT INTERVENTION INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS EMPLOYED BY THE UN IN THE DR CONGO

1. What institutional frameworks are employed by UN in the DRC in conflict intervention?

2. Are these institutional frameworks in question 1 above working positively towards bringing peace in the DRC?
3. Why is it that there is still violent conflict in the DRC even after the UNSC changed MONUSCO mandate?

4. Are rules of engagement (ROEs) and status of mission agreement (SOMA) working positively for the UN in conflict intervention in the DRC?

5. What can be improved for MONUSCO for effective conflict intervention in the DRC now and in future?

SECTION B: CAPABILITIES AND CAPACITIES AVAILABLE WITH THE MONUSCO FOR CONFLICT INTERVENTION IN THE DRC

1. What capability and capacity is available with MONUSCO in conflict intervention in the DRC?

2. What capability and capacity gaps affect MONUSCO in efforts to bring peace in the DRC?

3. Does DRC require Southern Africa Development Authority (SADC) to support MONUSCO to achieve peace and stability in the DRC?

SECTION C: PEACE AND SECURITY DYNAMICS AFFECTING ACTIVITIES OF MONUSCO IN THE DRC

Main research question: How do the post-intervention conflict dynamics affect the activities of MONUSCO in the DRC?

1. What drives the conflict that is slowing the intervention by MONUSCO?

2. What conflict management strategies are working for MONUSCO efforts towards managing and resolving the conflict?

3. How is MONUSCO dealing with the post-intervention conflict dynamics?

4. What governance issues need to be addressed by both MONUSCO and the government of DRC to realize peace in the conflict zones.

SECTION D: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY MONUSCO IN FULFILLING ITS MANDATE ON PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES IN THE DRC

1. **Operational Challenges and Opportunities:**

- What are MONUSCO challenges and opportunities in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the DRC?

2. **Security Concerns:**

- What are the primary security threats faced by MONUSCO personnel in their efforts to bring peace and security in the DRC?
- How does the presence of multiple armed groups in the DRC complicate MONUSCO's efforts to maintain peace and security?

3. **Political Dynamics:**

- What challenges does MONUSCO face in gaining the trust and cooperation of various political actors, including government officials, opposition groups, and local authorities?

4. **Civilian Protection:**

- What measures does MONUSCO take to protect civilians to include IDPs, refugees in conflict-affected areas, and what obstacles does it encounter in fulfilling this aspect of its mandate?

5. **Regional Dynamics:**

How do regional factors, such as cross-border conflicts, the presence of foreign armed groups, and regional power dynamics, influence MONUSCO's operations in the DRC?

6. **Resource Constraints:**

What limitations does MONUSCO face in terms of funding, personnel, and equipment, and how do these constraints impact its ability to fulfil its mandate effectively?

7. **Community Engagement:**

How does MONUSCO engage with local communities in the DRC to build trust, promote dialogue, and address the root causes of conflict?

APPENDIX V: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaires will be administered to residents of conflict prone areas in the DRC. These will be specifically in internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps, refugee camps in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and South Sudan and soldiers at random basis.

SECTION A

CONFLICT INTERVENTION INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS EMPLOYED BY UN (MONUSCO) IN THE DR CONGO

Main Research Question: What are the conflict intervention institutional frameworks employed by UN (MONUSCO) in the DR Congo?

S/No	Question statement	Strength of belief or concurrence in relation to the issue				
		Agree	Disagree	Undecided	No knowledge	No response
1.	The conflict in DRC require intervention by external forces					
2.	Rebel groups cooperate with MONUSCO hence the infectiveness of the UN force					

3.	MONUSCO has clear institutional frameworks through which the conflict intervention is carried upon					
4.	One of the main challenges to MONUSCO is DRC's multiple memberships in various regional organizations					
5.	The major challenge to MONUSCO is Rwanda and Uganda in the conflict intervention					

SECTION B

CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY AVAILABLE FOR THE UN IN CONFLICT INTERVENTION IN THE DRC

Main research question: What capability and capacity is available for the UN in the DRC?

S/No	Question statement	Strength of belief or concurrence in relation to the issue				
		Agree	**Disagree**	**Undecided**	**No knowledge**	**No response**
1.	MONUSCO has well trained soldiers to handle conflict in the DRC					
2.	MONUSCO is well equipped to deal with conflict in the DRC					
3.	MONUSCO is a reactive and not a proactive force					

4.	The current MONUSCO mandate is a hindrance to peace and security in the DRC					
5.	Too many and different peace initiatives are spoiling peace efforts in the DRC					
6.	MONUSCO is ineffective because of its prolonged stay in the DRC					
7.	MONUSCO require to exit to realize peace in the DRC					

SECTION C

POST-INTERVENTION CONFLICT ACTIVITIES BY MONUSCO IN THE DRC

Main research question: How are post-intervention conflict activities by MONUSCO perceived in the DRC?

S/No	Question statement	Strength of belief or concurrence in relation to the issue				
		Agree	**Disagree**	**Undecided**	**No knowledge**	**No response**
1.	In the DRC MONUSCO is perceived as an occupational and not an interventional force					
2.	The conflict in the DRC can be handled by the Government forces without MONUSCO					
3.	MONUSCO FIB (QRF) is ineffective due to long chain of command within the UN security system					
4.	International community want MONUSCO exit DRC					
5.	MONUSCO does not receive adequate support from the DRC Government (political) and FRDC (military).					
6.	The current MONUSCO mandate is likely not to be renewed by UNSC					
7.	SADC is "frustrating" and "undermining" efforts of MONUSCO in their intervention in DRC.					
8.	Resource conflict is the					

	main driver to the current conflict in the DRC					
9.	MONUSCO can do better to solve the conflict in the DRC given more time					

SECTION D:

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY MONUSCO IN FULFILLING ITS MANDATE ON PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES IN THE DRC

S/No	Question statement	Strength of belief or concurrence in relation to the issue				
		Agree	Disagree	Undecided	No knowledge	No response
1.	What are MONUSCO challenges and opportunities in fulfilling its mandate on peace and security processes in the DRC?					
2.	The primary security threats faced by MONUSCO personnel in their efforts to bring peace and security in the DRC are the armed groups					
3.	The presence of multiple armed groups in the DRC complicate MONUSCO's efforts to maintain peace and security					

4.	Ineffectiveness is the main challenge MONUSCO has in gaining the trust and cooperation of various political actors, including government officials, opposition groups, and local authorities?					
5.	Fighting the armed groups is the measure MONUSCO takes to protect civilians like IDPs, refugees and those in conflict-affected areas					
6.	Trust is the main obstacles MONUSCO encounters in fulfilling this aspect of its mandate					
7.	Regional factors, such as cross-border conflicts, the presence of foreign armed groups, and regional power dynamics, influence MONUSCO's operations in the					

	DRC					
8.	International support is the main limitation MONUSCO face in terms of funding, personnel and sustenance					
9.	Political interferences constraints MONUSCOs ability to fulfil its mandate effectively					
10.	MONUSCO can effectively engage with local communities in the DRC to build trust, promote dialogue, and address the root causes of conflict					

APPENDIX VI: APPROVAL LETTER

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MMUST)

Tel: 056-30870
Fax: 056-30153
E-mail: directordps@mmust.ac.ke
Website: www.mmust.ac.ke

P.O Box 190
Kakamega – 50100
Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR: 509099

27th February 2024

Robert Koome Kimathi
CPC/LH/04 -70654/2021
P.O. Box 190-50100
KAKAMEGA

Dear Mr. Koome,

RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies has considered and approved your PhD proposal entitled: ***"Leveraging International conflict intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo peace and security processes"*** and appointed the following as supervisors:

1. Prof. Pontian G Okoth - SDMHA - MMUST
2. Prof. Frank Matanga - SDMHA - MMUST

You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Department of Peace and Conflicts Studies. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of two years from the date of registration to complete your PhD thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.

We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.

Yours Sincerely,

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
P.O. BOX 190-50100, KAKAMEGA (K)
Date..... Sign.....

Prof. Stephen O. Odebero, PhD, FIEEP
DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

APPENDIX VII: NACOSTI

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **523960**

Date of Issue: **06/March/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Mr.. ROBERT KOOME KIMATHI KOOME of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT INTERVENTION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES for the period ending : 06/March/2025.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/24/33628**

523960

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

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See overleaf for conditions

APPENDIX VIII: DRC GOMA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

UNIVERSITÉ DE GOMA
« UNIGOM »
Scienäa splendet et conscientia
BP. 2o4 Gama / RD Congo
Site web: www.unigom.org
Secrétariat Général à la Recherche

ATTESTATION DE RECHERCHE №0025/2024

Je soussigné Professeur Ordinaire NZABANDORA NDIMUBANZI, Secrétaire Général à larecherche de l'université de Goma, UNIGOM, atteste par la présente que le nommé **Robert KOOME KIMATHI** mène ses recherches au sein du Domaine des Sciences Juridiques, Politiques et Administratives dans la filière Relations Internationales sur son sujet intitulé « **LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT INTERVENTION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES** » du 06 Mars 2024 au 06 Mars 2025.

Prière aux autorités tant administratives, militaires que politiques de lui faciliter l'accès aux données dont il a besoin.

Fait à Goma, Le 05 Mars 2024

Le Secrétaire Général à la Recherche

Dr NZAHA NDORA NDIMUBANZI

Professeur Ordinaire