Conflict circuit breakers in the Great Lakes Region of Africa

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Conflict resolution in the African Great Lakes Region has been linked to the protocols and projects agreed upon at the Second International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). The ICGLR created a continental-wide framework of conflict circuit breakers focused on resolving the structural and surface situational causes of the 1996 to 2003 armed conflicts that drew in at least six nations and destabilised the entire region. The implementation of these protocols and projects will serve as a test for the African Great Lakes Region to move away from conflict and into a cooperation and development phase; however, the effort to bring peace, stability and development will face obstacles not only in the security sector, but also in developing infrastructure, civil society, and good governance. In summary, this article contends that peace in the Great Lakes Region will depend equally on two factors: internal governance and building civil society institutions, and focused regional interlocking circuit-breaking institutions.

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Introduction

Conflict resolution in the African Great Lakes Region has been linked to the protocols and projects agreed upon at the Second International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) in Nairobi between 14 and 15 December 2006, and signed by Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

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At the heart of the ICGLR is the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (PSSDGLR), which is the approbation, re-imaging and realisation of the Doctrine of Manifest Destiny in an African context. It is not that dissimilar to the consolidation of North America in the mid to late 19th century and the development of the European Union in the 20th century. In rhetoric and action, it signals a clear end to the colonial or neo-colonial era. Although this view may be contrary to the mainstream view outside of Africa, the PSSDGLR promotes the vision of a continent unified by a shared physical and economic infrastructure from East to West, supported by democratic civil society principles, and inward economic growth expanding outward.

The PSSDGLR is a conflict circuit breaker in the same sense that the European Economic Community (EEC) was when it was first developed. Like the Great Lakes Region, Europe came together a decade after a devastating conflict, looked at the causes of conflict, and developed a community approach.

The analogy is not that dissimilar. At the time, two European countries were dictatorships with limited freedom, one country with vast resources had been either the source or centre of conflict for over 100 years, and two countries were barely beyond the city-state level.

A comparison to the American concept of manifest destiny is also applicable. The United States was only fifty years away from the end of its colonial period and there was an understanding that their continent had to be harnessed and unified to achieve maximum development. At the time, the US was still refining its peace and security circuit breakers, which were not fully resolved until the end of a bloody civil war in 1865.

The PSSDGLR builds on the 2004 Dar es Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region. It contains ten protocols which can be divided into three groups:
Directly related peace and security conflict circuit breakers

Governance or inter-state relations protocols that serve as conflict circuit breakers by removing or defining behaviour around conflict points and by promoting behaviour that forestalls conflict

An economic protocol that ties the region together in terms of economic growth and infrastructure development. This is a direct relative to the EEC in terms of a conflict circuit breaker

**Peace and security conflict circuit breakers**

**Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes Region**

This protocol is a direct call to maintain peace and security; therefore, it is a front-line conflict circuit breaker. It also contains an action provision that allows for an extraordinary summit to be convened in order to consider appropriate action if a member violates the PSSDGLR. It should also be seen as working with the African Union’s Peace and Security Commission and supported both the African Stand-by Force effort and CEWARN (Conflict Early Warning System).

This protocol is reinforced by seven projects:

- Joint security management of common borders
- Disarmament and repatriation of all armed groups in the eastern DRC
- Disarmament of armed nomadic pastoralists and the promotion of sustainable development in Zone 3
- Development of border zones and promotion of human security
- Demining and mine action in the Great Lakes Region
- Coordination of activities and reinforcement of capacities in the sub-region to fight illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons
- Fighting transnational crime and terrorism

The prime effort to operationalise the peace and security projects revolves around border security and disarming armed groups. It creates 12 overlapping security zones that will
allow for individual focus on the specific security issues in each zone (Peace and Security 2006). In addition, each zone may deploy its own mechanisms or agreements.

The best examples are Zone 1: Zone Volcano (Uganda, Rwanda, and the DRC, which is considered the most volatile zone) and Zone 10: Zone CEPGL (DRC, Burundi and Rwanda), which is also considered volatile with overlapping security issues. Both zones are prime examples of the challenges and risks associated with establishing conflict circuit breakers. However, they are also an example of how conflict circuit breakers can develop, albeit not always quickly or on demand.

With the establishment of a framework for dealing with transborder security issues, the African community has initiated a process for dealing with potentially conflict-inducing issues. This is arguably the first step in the peaceful resolution of conflict. By putting in place such agreements, the member states have created a mechanism for preventative diplomacy – in other words, a circuit breaker to conflict.

The second prime area is the disarmament and repatriation of all armed groups in the eastern DRC (Peace and Security 2006), which in itself is a primary conflict circuit breaker as it will immediately reduce tensions between key states. This notion is one of the key activities in the effort to reduce conflict in the region and will require the highest level of political will on the part of national leaders. Groups such as the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), which have been harboured by the DRC, are the main cause of grievance in the region prompting threats of armed incursions by the governments of Rwanda and Uganda.

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement set out a joint verification mechanism between Rwanda and the DRC to deal with these armed groups. This mechanism has been bogged down by low levels of trust and lack of surveillance capacity and resources, and at the moment appears to be in a non-functioning state. However, a similar concept has been put into operation by the Tri-Partite Agreement on Regional Security in the Great Lakes, which was facilitated by the US in 2004. It officially became the Tri-Partite Plus One Joint Commission (TPJC) when Burundi was added in 2005.

The principles of the TPJC mirror the larger principles of the PSSDGLR. First, the process is owned by the African parties and only facilitated by the US, and responsibility lies with the members. Second, it acts as a partnership, with the facilitating nation providing resources, training, and mediation, if necessary.

A primary lesson learned from the early efforts of Zone 1 conflict circuit breakers is that progress requires all parties to be capable of facilitating the agreement. The Joint Intelligence Cell established in Kisangani for the DRC, Uganda and Rwanda to share information about armed groups has suffered from a lack of trust to share information,
and also a lack of resources, equipment, and training. It is now functioning after a nearly 18-month start-up period.

However, the TPJC, with the resolve of the PSSDGLR, appears to be building a conflict circuit breaker. Within weeks of signing the PSSDGLR, Rwanda facilitated negotiations between the DRC and Laurent Nkunda, an ex-general of the DRC army and formerly aligned with pro-Rwanda forces during the 1996-2003 conflict. Initial results appear to be positive.

Zone 3: The Kapototur Cradle of Man Triangle (Uganda, Kenya, Sudan and Ethiopia) is the next most volatile area with conflicts between nomadic pastoralist groups whose logic for socio-economic reproduction revolves around movement in search of pastures and water with extreme levels of cattle predation. This project envisages three objectives that will act as conflict circuit breakers: the promotion of a common legal framework for border security, the development of a regional institutional framework for border security, and the enhancement of capacity in dealing with border security (Disarmament of Nomadic Pastoralists 2006).

Perhaps the most important development was the recognition that states must work together to rid the region of the various negative forces. It implies that these forces manipulate the weak border areas of the Great Lakes Region to gain sanctuary and that states acting unilaterally tend to fail. Therefore, it collective action is required to prevent and resolve border conflicts.

Importantly, an emergency assembly of a ‘troika’ of heads of state will assemble during times of crisis. The ‘troika’ will consist of the outgoing chairman, the current chairman, and the incoming chairmen. A multilateral approach has been proposed under the philosophy that unilateral action has failed in the past with states unable to deal sufficiently with border security issues. The multilateral approach will also provide for zonal conferences on security for each triangle out of the 12.

The order of the day is joint action and collective responsibility. States will work together regarding border security and destabilising or ‘negative’ forces operating in the region. This includes joint patrols, joint command and control units, joint surveillance, and joint public–military awareness campaigns. A demining programme, a small arms non-proliferation treaty, and an anti-terrorism protocol also form part of the PSSDGLR.

**Governance or inter-state relations protocols acting as secondary conflict circuit breakers**

Democracy and good governance projects include:
- A regional centre for democracy, good governance, human rights and civic education

- A regional initiative for the prevention and the curbing of war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes against genocide, and for the fight against impunity

- A regional initiative against illegal exploitation of natural resources

- The establishment of a regional information and communication council

There is little doubt that issues of governance have played a major role in promoting conflict in the region. According to the ICGLR, the goal of the governance initiative is to promote participative and inclusive political systems that will act as a conflict circuit breaker. This effort will confront significant challenges that include:

- The persistence of practices, perceptions and conceptions in which public property is personal and electoral processes are controlled by people who seek to cover and protect property acquired illicitly

- The non-respect of standards and principles of democratisation

- The weakness of state institutions

- The non-respect of human rights and other international conventions and standards

- The absence of constructive socio-political dialogue between the different players of the region

In many ways the establishment of appropriate governance and inter-state related protocols shares primary pillar status with the peace and security protocols of the PSSDGLR. To promote these issues the ICGLR has provided for the creation of a regional centre for the promotion of democracy, good governance, human rights and civil education. The centre will assist states in the rule of law, training, research, monitoring and increasing transparency. The centre will focus not only on state institutions, but also civil society, women and youth (Democracy and Good Governance).

The regional centre can be seen as a conflict circuit breaker – albeit in a supporting role to the direct preventative mechanism of the pact on peace and security. The centre provides for dialogue, as well as a pooling of national resources (human, technical and analytical) geared towards the sharing and regionalisation of issue resolution, whether it is conflict or governance. The centre, therefore, lessens the likelihood of conflict by creating a regional cooperation body.
The other mechanisms in place involve increased dialogue through the ICGLR and four observatory departments focusing on youth, women, media and democracy, and good governance with the aim of harmonising national policies on the highlighted areas. Funding will be drawn from the 11 states involved, donations and grants from developing partners, and international bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Furthermore, all the states involved are pushed to join and partake in the New Partnership for Africa’s Development / African Peer Review Mechanism (NEPAD/APRM), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Corruption Promotion Index (CPI) to encourage institution-building, increased accountability, and transparency. If successful, member states will be able to monitor each other’s progress in governance and corruption. Such a mechanism is vital in overseeing the fundamental principles of the ICGLR. If member states are willing to conform to this issue, the ability to implement the protocols signed in Nairobi will be far simpler. Moreover, the inclusion of all the states in the Great Lakes Region in NEPAD/APRM furthers integration and inter-state cooperation, which could facilitate the protocols.

In addition, the governance protocols start the process of addressing the concerns of Africa and the international community regarding resource exploitation. In the initial stages the establishment of a certification mechanism is to be explored, and this could also be seen as an aid to economic development and trade.

**Economic growth and infrastructure development protocols**

Economic development and regional integration is the third major action area of the PSSDGLR and represents the greatest and most challenging leap forward for the region. The Great Lakes Region has remained chronically underdeveloped in terms of regional integration, trade and infrastructure, and also remains unable to compete globally.

This area also fulfils the promise of a neo-Pan African economic approach that promotes trade across Africa. It also recognises that an economically developed and linked Africa has a reduced risk of conflict. The projects in this category are covered by the Protocol on the Specific Reconstruction and Development Zone and can be defined by two major categories: economic development and infrastructure development.

**Economic development projects**

- Establishment of a regional micro-finance support facility
- Transborder development basins (TDBs)
- Regional project on food security
Revival of the economic community of the Great Lakes countries and its specialised institutions

Regional mechanism for certification of natural resources proposal

**Infrastructure development**

- Northern Corridor: Programme for improving transport infrastructure and facilities
- Trans-African Highway: Mombasa–Lagos
- Lobito Corridor project (prefeasibility study)
- Southern Corridor (Great Lakes Region Railway) project prefeasibility study
- Pre-feasibility study on the Northern Corridor Railway extension
- Feasibility study on the rehabilitation and navigability of the Congo River Basin
- Rehabilitation and connectivity of the Inga Dam, a dam on the Inga Falls
- Feasibility study on the regional oil pipeline
- Methane gas project (Kivu regional pipeline project) feasibility study
- East African submarine cable system project (EASSy)

**Economic development conflict circuit breakers**

Here, the first issue concerns the creation of a micro-financing support facility. Such a facility would recognise the importance and prevalence of the informal sector across the region. The facility would provide access to credit to those otherwise unable to receive loans, with a view to starting some form of business or productive economic activity on the individual or micro level. This, in turn, would alleviate poverty and stimulate economic growth through job creation. The 11 states would be responsible for the initial start-up funds, but would work with international financial institutions and development partners as well as with the national ministries of finance, small/medium enterprises (SMEs), and central banks to regulate and implement the facility (Micro-Finance Support Facility 2006).

As for short-circuiting potential conflict, this notion is a valid one, but only in conjunction with complementary policies. It concerns the economic empowerment of individuals, groups and identities previously marginalised from the politico-economic sphere. Conflict
in Africa is often orchestrated by those who feel they are excluded politically, which is demonstrated by the LRA insurgency in northern Uganda and the current plethora of militia groups in the DRC. By introducing a mechanism for economic inclusion, and therefore representation, the micro-financing support facility is a conduit for stability. However, the facility must work in tandem with complementary regional policies, as conflict in the Great Lakes Region can and often does have a significant regional element.

The second significant feature is transborder development basins (TDBs), or growth triangles. This involves the voluntary integration of the border territories of two or more states (Transborder Development Basins 2006). TDBs would promote local regionalism through local economic cooperation and integration based on a common history, common interests in resource exploitation (natural and human), and a common culture. The onus is on joint development and promotes loose development associations from the states directly involved. To achieve this, TDBs must demonstrate market-friendly public intervention, combined with private investment geared towards an East Asian development model. TDBs combine regional planning and development with national collaboration and harmonisation of domestic policies in order to ensure efficient growth – politically, economically and socially. Infrastructure, health and education are essential for the success of such projects. It is proposed that local integration – if implemented successfully – would seriously diminish the potential for conflict in the region, with the increase of socio-economic benefits to areas of strife.

A spin-off of such a notion is the proposed Millennium Agricultural Programme for Africa (MAPA), which aims to halve hunger in Africa by 2015. MAPA will strive to achieve this through alliances of individuals and institutions such as farmers unions, sensitising and educating policymakers, and implementing new technologies and sciences in cultivation and crop production.

The regional integration of economic zones into TDBs reflects the growing realisation that border conflicts and transborder development go hand in hand. In essence, TDBs are a macrocosm of the micro-financing support facility, providing political and economic inclusion to previously marginalised areas. Such a project would also include invaluable small-scale dialogue opportunities between different interest groups. The project would lead to increased political and economic cooperation that is not so dissimilar to the initial neo-functionalist period of the EEC in the 1950s, where the issue of ‘spill-over’ led to further political and economic integration.

Two key projects illuminate the importance of infrastructural development: the Southern Corridor Great Lakes Region Railway (GLRR) and the Trans-African Highway.

The GLRR was conceived at the Dar es Salaam conference in 2004. The rationale was to reduce transport costs to the region, promoting investment, or at least give the region
a greater chance of competing in the global political economy. The planned railway will stretch from the East Coast to the West Coast with the possible inclusion of the Benguela railway (if completed), will include the Southern and Eastern railway systems, and will potentially reach up to the Red Sea, through Sudan. Such a project would greatly reduce the transport costs of goods and would certainly render the core Great Lakes states far more accessible. The project envisages an initial railway of 900 km, with extensions to be added after completion. However, there are fears of inertia and lack of commitment, as well as funding. The feasibility study alone costs US$961 750 for five months and will only be completed in May 2008 (Southern Corridor 2006).

The Trans-African Highway (TAH) was conceived in a similar vein to the GLRR. The aim is to construct a highway to connect Mombasa in Kenya with Lagos in Nigeria, spanning the continent. Again, the rationale is to reduce the price of exports and imports, and to open up the interior to alternative travel routes. The project would encompass 6 259 km of highway, 53 per cent of which is currently either gravel or earth (Trans-African Highway 2006).

The importance of infrastructure in the region’s development is encapsulated in these two projects. Both promote the ‘opening up’ the interior of the continent to commerce through easier, more reliable and cheaper means of transport, thus reducing the price of imports and exports to the region. Both projects aim at linking the Atlantic and Indian oceans and, in the case of the GLRR, even reaching the Red Sea. However, both projects are at risk from a lack of funds, inertia, and a lack of commitment.

With regard to conflict circuit breakers, the notion of a region closely tied by infrastructure, implying a shared economic interest, reflects once again the progression of the EEC and that of the US. Shared economic growth through mutual interest has the potential of encouraging cooperation and thus decreasing the potential for the outbreak of violent conflict. As a direct circuit breaker the link is tenuous, but combined with provisions such as collective security and collective development, shared infrastructure seriously diminishes potential conflict.

The final pillar of the conference concerns social and humanitarian issues. Issues such as refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been a major fuel for existing conflicts. Sometimes – as in the case of Congo-Zaire – the presence and actions of IDP populations (and their leaders) can cause states to collapse. Therefore it is essential that issues of this nature be dealt with multilaterally. The pact provides, for the first time, a regional legal framework to deal with such populations. The framework is in strict accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law and thus provides for the effective management of refugee and IDP populations.

This is a key issue regarding peace in the Great Lakes Region. The issue of refugees and IDPs has been instrumental in every state where recurring conflicts occur. A sizeable refugee or
IDP population has been a root cause of violent conflict in the DRC (1996-2003), Rwanda (1990-2003), Burundi (1990s), Sudan, Chad, Somalia, Angola and Uganda. In order to avoid the conflict that has plagued the region, a policy dealing with this issue is vital for lasting peace. A legal framework with the full support and commitment of the member states of the region is a significant step forward in reducing the potential for conflict by providing dialogue, collective action and a coherent codified document that can be implemented.

**Risks of and challenges to the implementation of the PSSDGLR**

The ICGLR is an important step because it is an African-owned process; however, as a long-term circuit breaker of regional conflict, it will require the active support and funding of African and non-African governments and institutions. Initial and sceptical commentary regarding the success of the ICGLR tended to focus on the issue of the will of African leaders to execute the protocols and projects.

But the risks and challenges facing the PSSDGLR are much broader and fall within two categories, namely dynamic political risks and budget support.

**Dynamic political risks**

With the exception of the DRC, the core countries of the ICGLR have achieved a sustainable level of stability. For the first time in nearly 40 years, democratically elected presidents govern from the Atlantic to the Indian oceans. Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Rwanda, and Burundi have presidents who will not stand for election within the first period of implementing the PSSDGLR; therefore consistency can be assumed in their approach to regional issues.

Kenya does have an election scheduled for 2007, as well an unresolved constitutional issue, but there seems little possibility that the country would change its political direction towards the PSSDGLR. In 2006 Burundi has experienced a level of political turmoil with an alleged coup attempt and a power struggle in the ruling party. However, in the near term it seems unlikely that this internal instability would develop into a regional conflict or hinder the broad regional integration and infrastructure efforts.

Once again with the exception of the DRC, all countries have achieved a stable relationship with their donor community (including the World Bank) as a vital source of infrastructure funding. Interestingly, a significant number of countries have received Millennium Challenge Account status with the US, which demonstrates a level of stability and offers the option for additional funding.
However, the DRC stands out as a primary political risk to the regional implementation of at least two core components of the PSSDGLR: peace and security, and economic development and regional integration. The governance and inter-state protocol component will not be regionally impacted, because much of this work depends on country-specific activities.

In terms of peace and security, political instability in the DRC will have a primary affect on securing the common borders and disarmament and repatriation of armed groups in the eastern DRC. Security Zones 1 and 10, which are at the heart of regional security issues, will remain difficult to secure and hinder any established conflict circuit breakers.

Regional integration and economic development will be significantly hindered and the vision of establishing a transcontinental economic and infrastructure programme will die. In essence, this vision envisaged linking the region from the Atlantic to the Indian oceans so that trade and transport can flow across the region and not just outward as is the current model. The ability to develop the hydroelectric capabilities of the DRC for regional distribution will also end, and this effort is a key requirement to facilitate economic growth in landlocked countries.

William Swing, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the DRC, recently noted the prime risk in the future of the DRC: 'What is the worst case scenario? For me, the worst case scenario is good elections, nothing changes' (The way forward 2006).

Tony Gambino, former director of the USAID Mission to the DRC, pointed out six key danger points:

- To date, security sector reform has been a failure. The Congolese army is divided, ineffective, and fleckless
- Impunity still goes almost entirely unpunished, and it is growing worse
- Justice is rarely seen at any level in the Congo
- Corruption is rampant. The worst corruption is found around President Laurent Kabila
- Social services are limited or non-existent
- Economic development is uneven because of the extractive industries (The way forward 2006)

The DRC is therefore a key circuit breaker to conflict in itself. It stands to reason that if the DRC commits itself to the ICGLR’s proposals, a major source of conflict in the region
will be seriously diminished. The DRC has been party, either directly or indirectly, to conflicts encompassing Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Sudan and a host of Southern African states, as well as international interference from the US and France throughout the post-independence period, resulting in large arms flows and legitimising the corrupt and violent regime of Mobutu Sese Seko. If the DRC government manages to merge its domestic and regional priorities within the framework provided, a major theatre of conflict will suddenly have closed, but only in the climate of regional cooperation, implying the need for ‘neighbourly’ support from the rest of the region.

**Budgeting risk**

The issue of funding for the various projects proposed to stymie conflict in the Great Lakes Region and to promote development is a contentious issue with many implications such as ‘who funds what and for how long’, as well as the issue of sustainability. Throughout the independence period, multilateral projects and organisations have been plagued by the lack of political will with regards to the contributions of member states. As a vast literature underscores, this is not confined to Africa; the UN is susceptible to similar problems, especially in crisis response projects (De Waal 1997; Dallaire 2003).

Regarding the ICGLR, the issue of funding has been repeatedly highlighted as a risk point. The approach to funding in this instance addresses the previous stumbling blocks to the sustainability of financing ambitious, multilateral projects. In doing so the ICGLR established a fund, a follow-up mechanism, and secured both regional and international commitment to its implementation and maintenance. The ICGLR’s projects are to be financed by a Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development (SFRD). Initially the fund is to be financed by the member states with mandatory contributions, following the ratification of the protocols. The contributions from member states will be supplemented by the international community and the fund itself will be housed in the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Such a strategy depends on the political will of the member states and of the international community in a supporting role, reflecting the ethos of the conference, ownership and partnership. So far, initial prospects have been good. The DRC has pledged US$1 million, and Tanzania has pledged US$559 350 for the commission and US$500 000 for the SFRD. The Netherlands has pledged €5 million, and the Group of Friends, consisting of 26 members, has also given US$10 million for national preparatory activities. So far it seems political will from all parties concerned is committed to the protocols established at the ICGLR. However, the contributions at the moment are not sufficient to initialise and sustain the ambitious proposals adopted in Nairobi.

The ICGLR not only established four project areas and the SFRD, but also a commission and follow-up mechanism that need to be funded. A recent article in Uganda’s *Sunday
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In total, the estimated implementation and maintenance cost amounts to some US$2 billion, which excludes the cost of the follow-up mechanism and the commission. Clearly, there needs to be consistent dedication on the part of donors, be they regional or international, to finance the projects proposed fully or they will face another truncated attempt at a multilateral approach to peace and nation building that falls at the first hurdle – the issue of funding.

Conclusions

The African Great Lakes Region has been a quagmire of violent conflict since the colonial period. Regarding the root causes of war in Central Africa, analysts have highlighted five high-risk areas.

- Ethnicity is a factor when one ethnic group dominates the state to the point where there is competition between ethnic groups for power and resources
- Then there is the notion of artificial boundaries that cut across ethnic groups, creating cross-border tensions and internal power imbalances
- Resource scarcity, leading to armed conflict among certain groups, especially pastoralists, over resources essential for survival
- Economic dependency and underdevelopment stunt the growth of mature democratic politics
- Alien models of statehood were imposed by colonial powers. Many states had a shaky legitimacy with post-independence leaders usually vying to occupy the seats of their colonial masters (*De Waal* 2000)

From these root causes of war, some implications can be drawn. In order to reduce the potential for conflict, an African state must be African in nature – in other words, it should be free of colonial or neo-colonial ties, incorporate the interests of cross-border groups, be dedicated to anti-ethnic politics, and be engaged in economic development with political and economic opportunities for the population. When these are combined, conflict circuit breakers are established. With the formation of the AU, the adoption of the TPJC, the re-establishment and expansion of the East African Community, and the success of the other regional blocs, the African continent is looking decisively African.
The ICGLR’s four pillars (peace and security; good governance and democracy; economic development and regional integration; and social and humanitarian issues) embody the key areas needed to be effective conflict circuit breakers. The problems of funding, dynamic political risks and lack of political will, by both African nations and the international community, pose a major threat to the implementation of the PSSDGLR.

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