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## **The Factors Behind Successes and Failures of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions: A Case of the Democratic Republic of Congo**

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**Abstract:** *The political trajectory that characterised post-cold war epoch underscores a dangerous centrifugal trend in the nature of violent conflict; civil unrest and guerrilla warfare that undermine the charter of United Nations of promoting international peace and security, and the discourse of peace coexistence at the forefront of international cooperation agenda in Africa, South East Europe and Middle East. The international response to this new wave of conflicts has been articulated through the structural mechanism of United Nations as peacekeeping intervention. Despite the successes and failures associated with UN peacekeeping interventions, the trickle of studies spawned by this quest has, developed into a flood of normative and empirical analyses of various aspects and process of International peacekeeping, while limited in unravel the factor that responsible for these successes and failures. This paper argues that the national interests of the super-powers are the potent factors that will determine the success and/or failure of UN peacekeeping operations, using peacekeeping experience in the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC) as a potential case.*

*In this paper, an attempt is made to look at the framework of global politics within which peacekeeping unfolds and how it applies not only in DRC but also in Macedonia, Liberia and Somalia, thereby making it possible to develop an analytical construct for International peacekeeping successes and failures. The paper then concludes that given the contemporary geopolitics and the established structure of UN Security Council, if all super-powers are overtly and strongly committed to any UN peacekeeping operations and genuinely committed to resolving disputes in the trouble spots of the world without any primary or secondary interest in the conflicts involved, then the UN peacekeeping operations will be successful in restoring and sustaining permanent peace in the affected state(s).*

**Keywords:** Peacekeeping, National-Interest, Super-powers and Conflicts.

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## 1. Introduction

Literature on United Nations (UN) peacekeeping has grown immensely since the end of the cold war, and a plethora of studies have examined the prospect of peacekeeping with respect to its failures and successes. These upsurges suggest that the nature of conflicts have changed from regional to internal—conflicts occurring within the borders of states, thereby making peace effort to be achieved with difficulties. The UN peacekeeping interventions were sometimes deemed successful in some cases (such as El Salvador, Sierra Leone and Mozambique) and failures in others (such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and Somalia).

However, if one considers the civil war interventions, the interesting question is not only why the UN succeeded or failed but also what factor accounts for the successes or failures in Africa. However, a dearth of scholarly enquiry exists as to the underlying factors behind these successes and failures. This paper will help to fill the knowledge gap by arguing that the national interest of the super-powers is the potent factor that will determine the success and/or failure of UN peacekeeping operations, using Democratic Republic of Congo as a potential case.

## 2. The Congolese Conflicts: Role and Interest of Super Powers

The fallout of the Rwanda genocide and its consequences acted as a catalyst that precipitated Congolese conflicts. In fact, the violence of the post-cold war Congolese crisis was the product of unsettled questions that Rwandese genocide had brushed raw (Prunier 2009).

In 1994, Rwandan Hutu refugees, who perpetrated the massacres, escaped and arrived in their hundreds of thousands in the eastern part of DRC (then called Zaire) together with their arms and ammunition, vehicles and other assets of the Rwandan state, leaving power in the hands of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR). Soon after crossing the borders, the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* (Hutu extremists) militias began launching armed attacks into Rwanda from

bases in refugee camps, with the aim of making Rwanda ungovernable (Emizet 2000:165).

The defeated Hutu extremist forces used the refugee camps in Kivu region to raid Rwanda on a regular basis and to organise the slaughter of Tutsi citizens and residents of Congo. The French and Belgium governments were especially keen to help the Hutu Interahamwe militias to take back control of Rwanda from the RPF government, the latter which was backed by Washington and its allies—Uganda and Burundi.

However, Kigali response to the Interahamwe onslaught on Rwandese territory, culminated in the formation of the Democratic Forces Alliance for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL) in 1996 under the leadership of Laurent Desire Kabila. Prior to AFDL formation, Mobutu regime issued a decree to expel all Banyamulenge (Congolese born) Tutsi to Rwanda, as a conscious attempt to divert the attention of the Congolese away from the problems facing them. This was the reason why the AFDL which comprises Kabila's rebels, other rebel groups, and Eastern Zaire Banyamulenge Tutsi (all supported by the Rwandan and Ugandan armies), capitalised on the ethnic cleansing of Tutsi-Congolese and declared war on the government of President Mobutu Sesse Seko. During this military campaign of AFDL tagged *long march from Goma to Kinshasa*; over 200,000 refugees mainly Rwandan Hutus were massacred<sup>1</sup>. The role of superpowers came to the fore during AFDL campaign (November 1996-May 1997) in which France led the effort to send an international military force to protect Hutu refugees in eastern DRC. Huliaras (1998:595) maintains that:

Paris planned to use humanitarian intervention as a means to protect Mobutu. Conversely, the US appeared willing to sacrifice the Hutu refugees in order to protect Kabila and blocked French proposal at the

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<sup>1</sup> See Congo Civil War, GlobalSecurity.org, [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world\\_war/congo.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world_war/congo.htm) (last visited Aug. 25, 2008).

UN level. France's foreign minister, Herve de Charette, accused the Americans of being spineless and by extension racist, for failing to help Africans. However, in December 1996 the US ambassador in Zaire (now DRC) said that the Mobutu government was a decadent regime sustained by France

The horrific picture of atrocities and killings that stretched from Goma and Bukavu in eastern Congo (where the civil war erupted) to Mbandaka can be said to be attributed to the national interest of the super-powers, particularly the dynamics of Franco-American rivalry in the Great Lake region of central Africa. AFDL's overthrow of Mobutu government on 17 May, 1997 unsettled Paris who felt that the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)'s victory in Rwanda and Mobutu's defeat in the DRC is parts of an 'Anglo-American conspiracy' against the French sphere of influence in Africa (Ibid).

### **3. United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in DRC (MONUC): A Review**

The Congolese peace treaty was brokered in Lusaka (Tanzania) in 1999. This ushered and withdrawal of foreign troops in the DRC, ceasefire agreement by the warring parties, and the establishment of UN peacekeeping operations. The United Nations Peacekeeping operations in the DRC (MONUC) was created on 30 November 1999 by resolution 1291 of the UN Security Council to: Ensure the enforcement and adherence (by all parties) with the terms of the Lusaka ceasefire agreement; Monitor (through appropriate channels) any violation of the agreements; facilitate the process of disarmament, demobilisation, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration (DDRRR) of armed militants; and Facilitate the transitional process and the organisation of credible elections in the country<sup>1</sup>. Acting under chapter vii of the charter of the United Nations, the

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<sup>1</sup> See MONUC: United nations Missions in DRC at its website: <http://monuc.unmissions.org/>

Security Council decided that MONUC was to use any means necessary (within its capacities and in areas of its deployment) to prevent any attempt by any armed group – in particular the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* – to revert back to war (which would threaten political stability), to protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, and to ensure the protection of civilians from the imminent threat of physical violence<sup>1</sup>.

MONUC's mandate can be summarised in terms of a long list of Security Council resolutions that broadened the mission's competencies, increased its troops and adopted tougher stances regarding the prerogative of civilian protection. The MONUC mission helped to broker a new peace deal (in 2002) which established the sharing of power between the warring parties through the formation of a transitional government, leading to presidential and legislative elections in 2006; and monitored the withdrawal of 20,000 Rwanda soldiers from the DRC (Malan and Boshoff, 2002).

Since the commencement of MONUC operation, UN peacekeeping has recorded many successes and failures<sup>2</sup>. One of the major achievements of UN peacekeeping (MONUC) is the organisation of peaceful electoral transition (Malan and Boshoff, 2002). A key important MONUC's mission was to ensure enforcement of peace agreements and facilitation of political transitional processes and to ensure credible elections, with a view to restoring and maintaining political stability in the country. MONUC's success in this regard is best illustrated by successful national elections, with an estimated 25 million voters at 53,000 polling stations in 2006 in the DRC. Prior to the transition process in 2006, UN peacekeepers helped to facilitate: the nomination of various groups that are signatory to the 2002 peace accord, for positions in President Kabila cabinet; the drafting of the new constitution and Multi-Party elections. Moreover, having won

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid

<sup>2</sup> Successes and Failures of Peacekeeping mission in this paper, are define in terms of the extent to which tasks have been implemented within the context of the mandate and the situation existing in the country or state under consideration.

a majority of the votes cast, the Transitional Government came to an end as Joseph Kabila was sworn in as President On December 6, 2006.

UN peacekeeping operation in DRC has witnessed an active phase, which included more forceful peace operations since 2005. Despite its presence, MONUC has incorporated civilian protection with great difficulty. Its more passive role failed to protect civilians and undermined the notion of civilian protection, while its aggressive operations frequently led to the abuse of civilians (John Mark 2005:2). Despite UN Security Council Resolution 1291 that called on MONUC to take 'necessary action' to protect civilians under threat of imminent violence in deployment areas of its 'infantry battalions'<sup>1</sup>, the failure to protect civilians in the provincial capital of Bukavu when a largely irregular group of between 1 000 and 1 500 armed militant rebels entered the town in 2004 without any effective opposition from the UN mission or the Congolese is one of the failures of MONUC peacekeepers. The rebel soldiers came to Bukavu under the pretence that their ethnic kin—the Banyamulenge, were facing genocide, and laid siege to the town, burning the main market, raping and pillaging and causing more than 2 000 civilians to flee to the MONUC compound (John Mark 2005:3)

Another failure of MONUC peacekeepers is the inability of MONUC peacekeepers to completely disarm the rebel groups. In May 2005, Amnesty International reported that

'Interahamwe( extreme Hutu militia) based in eastern Congo were responsible for hundreds of summary executions, rapes, beatings and civilian hostage-taking in the territory of Walungu, South Kivu Province'<sup>2</sup>. In response to these there

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<sup>1</sup> See UN Security Council resolution 1291 available at <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/313/35/PDF/N0031335.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International, '*Democratic Republic of Congo, North-Kivu: Civilians Pay the Price for Political and Military Rivalry*', Sept. 28, 2005, available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR62/013/2005/en/dom-AFR620132005en.html>

were gross human right violations and crimes against humanity perpetrated by Rwandan-backed Rally for Congolese Democracy-Goma (RCD-Goma in Eastern Congo's Kivu region. RCD-Goma soldiers, commanded by Laurent Nkunda, refused to integrate into the Congolese army and clashed with other Congolese army forces in South Kivu. However, Nkunda and his troops took control of the South Kivu town of Bukavu on 2 June 2004, and justified their onslaught claiming the action was necessary to stop genocide of the Banyamulenge—Congolese Tutsi (Gordon, 2008:12).

In late 2007, FARDC (Congolese national army) operations against Laurent Nkunda – with logistical support from MONUC – were a complete failure. This culminated in intense fighting and civil unrest that led to the displacement of over 200, 000 civilians till January 2009<sup>1</sup>. This however called into question the ability of the MONUC mission to fulfil the terms of its mandate. In the light of this, MONUC mission failed to prevent the tragic situation of human rights violations, both in areas that were under the control of rebels, as well as those controlled by the government; executions, arbitrary arrests, and rape still increasing though at a decreasing proportion.

#### **4. Factors Behind the Successes and Failures of UN Peacekeeping Mission in DRC**

Since most of the successes and failures associated with the UN peacekeeping missions in the early 1990s (particularly the DRC) closely reflected the traditional peacekeeping tactics of previous decades that was authorized under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, it might be thought that agreement within the UN Security Council would bring about multilateral intervention in many conflicts that threaten international peace around the world. This was not the case, as the problems and dilemmas that the UN

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<sup>1</sup> Michelle Faul. *Congolese army claims attack by Rwanda troops*. New York: Associated Press, 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2008

faced in tackling the hydra-headed scourge of African armed conflicts reflect the difficulties inherent in peacekeeping itself.

However, a growing body of legal and academic writing justified the failures of these international peacekeeping interventions in Africa under the pretext of UN Member States' unwillingness or inability to respond to a burgeoning number of crises, citing non-compliance by one of the parties (Marrack 1999:155-6); failure to act quickly, lack of funds and capacity, political restraints, logistical and political support services, systemic crisis; perceived failure of the UN to implement the peace settlements in Angola and Western Sahara (Damian Lilly 2000; Aboagye and Bah 2006; Nick Grono 2006; and Gowan 2008).

Following the review of the literature, it is clear that these studies do not link their findings to the dynamics of world politics and the national interest of the powerful members of UN Security Council as the underlying elements that determine the outcome of UN peacekeeping missions.

The observations of scholars above can be said to be the symptoms of UN politics, and do not necessarily account for the underlying successes and failures of its peacekeeping operations. This is because if that were true, then the solution would be simple: get the UN Security Council and General Assembly to behave well by responding quickly to warning signs of armed conflicts that may possibly threaten international peace and security or nip in the bud any crisis that may cause the outbreak of a humanitarian crisis, set an agenda towards ensuring that adequate funds are available for peacekeeping mission, provide logistical and political support or even use pressures and force to compel the parties involved to peaceful resolution. But even if all these measures were implemented, it would not make any fundamental difference as the ideological composition of UN Security Council vis-à-vis the national interest of the super-powers are the potent factors that will determine the success and/or failure of UN peacekeeping operations.

The problem is that the UN Security Council is a forum for the domination of powerful super-powers which can sometimes solve secondary issues where fundamental (primary) interests are not at stake. Since decision and



review of UN peacekeeping operations is at the behest of the UN Security Council, then this plays a crucial role in determining what are acceptable international norms or defining the proper practices of states and other actors in a given context, thereby defining what appropriate practice ought to be. In a situation in which the UN Security Council approves the appointment of the organisation's Secretary General, that itself dictates what appropriate approach to be used. This was evident in Macedonia's case where UN Security Council jettisoned the traditional peacekeeping method, and instead opted for preventive peacekeeping<sup>1</sup>mission (Bjorkdahl, 2006: 214-8). If preventive peacekeeping was deployed to prevent the outbreak of hostilities in Macedonia, why it is that the same preventive

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<sup>1</sup> The preventive peacekeeping is one of the peacekeeping methods use to prevent and forestall armed violence and hostilities in fragile/weak states. This method which was used in Macedonia became necessary owing to the concern among mainstream political commentators that first, the conflict in Kosovo will spread to neighbouring Macedonia, and spark off a war that could pose deadly threat to the whole of civilised Europe; and second, to prevent inter-super power rivalries involving US and Britain on one hand, and Russia on other hand, the latter who may be compelled to arm its traditional ally of Slobodan Milosevic's Serbs. It must however be pointed out that the manner in which UN Security council quickly resolve to extend the deployment of peacekeeping forces in order to stop the spread of the wars in ex-Socialist Yugoslavian republic of Macedonia despite Russia opposition against NATO led UN peacekeeping bombing in Yugoslavia, raises fundamental question of whose interest was UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) meant to serve? While I agree that preventive peacekeeping was necessary to contain the threat of war involving not only Serbia and Albania, but also Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey; or that it would upset the fragile peace in Bosnia and set Serbs, Croats and Moslems at each other throats, and raise the prospect of war between two NATO members (Greece and Turkey), my contention here is that ideological composition of UN Security Council and the national interest of Super-powers especially US, Britain and France played a crucial factor in the use of this method. Otherwise, why did the same method not used in Rwandese case that plunge the whole of central Africa into serious wars and humanitarian crises?

peacekeeping was not used in case of Yugoslavia or Rwanda? The answer lies in the national interest of the super-powers in ensuring the success or failure of UN peacekeeping operations.

The potential case of UN peacekeeping mission in DRC justifies this argument. The success and failures of MONUC can only be understood in the context of the French-US rivalry in Africa, and the legacy of the ousted Mobutu regime. While Britain supported the US in all its major international campaigns, the French consider Anglo-American interest in central Africa as a threat to the sphere of its economic and political influence<sup>1</sup>. Extensive literatures on the DRC indicate that Mobutu played his role as a bulwark against the 'communist' threat during the whole of the Cold War period. But by the end of the 90s, after the collapse of Soviet Union and the end of cold war, Mobutu was no longer a useful element for imperialism, owing to the extent of his corruption and mismanagement that called the reputation of his western allies into question. As Ted Grant argues, 'the United States and its allies abandoned Mobutu and other dictators that they supported previously, and converted to 'democracy' in the ex-colonial Africa because they find such democratic regimes much more reliable than the previous dictators'<sup>2</sup>.

Mobutu quickly shifted his allegiance to France (Collins and Askin 1993: 76) and helped the latter to consolidate its political and economic interest in central Africa. This was received negatively by the United States and its allies, thus culminated in Washington's' sponsorship of Kabila to remove former ally Mobutu from power. The overthrow of Mobutu's regime was a blow against French interests in the region, as Kabila chose to oppose France's

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<sup>1</sup> The national interest of super-powers aftermath of the cold-war is purely economic, and not political and ideology of democratization as claimed by some mainstream commentators. In DRC case, struggle to maintain access to mineral resources, market and investment opportunities dominate the national interest of the super-powers involved.

<sup>2</sup> See Ted Grant (1996) Crisis in Central Africa available at <http://www.marxist.com/crisis-centralafrica141197.htm>

interests. The outcome of the fallout between Kabila and the allied forces (Uganda and Rwanda) that culminated in the second Congolese crisis, highlighted how the interest of super-powers (US and Britain against France) was fundamental to the understanding of Congolese crises in general and MONUC operation in particular. The continued trade and exchange of weapon between the two super-powers (US and France) to Uganda and Rwanda supported rebels in DRC and ex-Mobutuists respectively( Huliaras 1998: 595) in the aftermath of the Second Congolese crisis provided a combination of military strength for both rebel forces and Kabila's military and allied forces of Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia. This however undermined the peace process and MONUC peacekeeping operations in DRC especially in the areas of disarmament. One can argue that if US and Britain severed their ties with Uganda and Rwanda, who are maintaining a rebel regime in the DRC, or controlled the access to weapons by imposing sanctions on any American, British and French firms selling arms and ammunitions to Uganda and Rwanda, and its supported rebel forces in DRC, then the MONUC operation would be able to disarm a higher proportion of rebel forces, and restore peace and order to the DRC.

In comparison with other peacekeeping efforts in Africa, external influence is germane to peacekeeping missions. In the case of Somalia, humanitarian intervention went well at the outset such that emergency aid reached the needy; ceasefires came into force among the clans, and there was significant progress made at a conference of 'national reconciliation', until The United Nations and the United States in particular impeded the peacemaking progress by dictating terms to the parties involved (Thomson 2000: 172)

In Congolese case, the voluntary and unilateral withdrawal of Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia armies from the country as contained in the Lusaka peace treaty, cannot be said to be the magnanimity and benevolence of the departing Kabila allied forces, rather it is a product of behind-the-scene pressure from Anglo-American interest. As Bourque and Sampson (2001) argue 'the super-powers especially US and Britain exert strong diplomatic pressure on Rwanda and Uganda to withdraw from the DRC, and to

provide some support to a regional dialogue, that is, to support the establishment of permanent dialogue between civil societies in the region'. This shows the extent to which national interest of super-powers formed the basis for the success recorded by MONUC in enforcing the terms of the Lusaka ceasefire agreement to the invading foreign troops.

Second, the MONUC's success vis-à-vis peaceful transition to democratisation as evident in 2006 election, is not as a result of the willingness of the actors (the rebels and Joseph Kabila regime) to allow democracy to prevail, rather the pressure from the West especially the United States and its allies who felt that democratic regime is much more reliable than the Kabila unelected dictatorial regime. Nzogola-Ntalaja (2002) observed that, barely two weeks in office, Joseph Kabila set out on his first diplomatic mission, to Paris, Washington, New York, London and Brussels, where he seduced the international community with his apparent willingness to change course. And the international community promised more assistance provided the regime embrace democracy and commitment to end the crisis.

The pressure and promise of aid and assistance by the US and its allies was premised on the condition of democratic norms in the DRC, and thus provided impetus for Kabila's change of direction in constituting transitional government that spearheaded peaceful elections in 2006. Bourque and Sampson (2001) further contend that 'all donors including the western government and international financial institutions recognise the Lusaka Accord as the framework for interventions to help resolve the regional and military crises. The donors main mandates in relation to these issues are the deployment of the UN Observation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and the implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reinsertion and Reintegration (DDDRR) programme'<sup>1</sup>. In the aftermath of 2006 election that ushered

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<sup>1</sup> See Bourque, A. and P. Sampson 'The European Union's Political and Development Response to the Democratic Republic of the Congo', 2001. Accessed at [www.fletcher.tufts.edu/humansecurity/con2/ws4/bourque.pdf](http://www.fletcher.tufts.edu/humansecurity/con2/ws4/bourque.pdf) on 12 June 2009

democracy back to the DRC, International Monetary Fund and World Bank missions met with the DRC's government to help it develop a coherent economic plan, and President Joseph Kabila promised to implement the future reforms. In 2007, the World Bank granted up to US\$1.3 billion assistance funds over the next decade to the DRC<sup>1</sup>.

MONUC peacekeeping achievement in terms of democratisation could not have happened if external actors like US and its allies did not prevail on the Kabila regime to change course to democratic practice and allow opposition and rebels to be part of his cabinet. In this regard, the national interest of Super-powers among the UN Security Council members, especially the US and Britain, played a huge role in MONUC's success in achieving its mandate in the DRC.

However, looking at the factor behind the failures of MONUC peacekeeping operations is not fundamentally different from the national interest of super-powers as already discussed. The failure of MONUC peacekeepers which includes failure to protect civilians as a result of fresh conflict, inability of MONUC peacekeepers to completely disarm the rebel groups, and inability to resettle displaced refugees to their homes under the atmosphere of peace, law and order, did not occur in isolation of the social and political milieu that warranted such mission itself. In fact they can be attributed to the capacity problems (shortage of troops, funds and logistical problems) implicit in MONUC operations. As Gilligan and Stedman (2003) noted

The Western states have been reluctant to send military forces to Africa in particular, preferring to assist the development of African capabilities, though in the short term this reinforces African dependence on external equipment and expertise. The mere 800 or so EU-led troops sent to the Congo in mid-2003 to deal

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank in 2007 granted over US\$ One Billion to Democratic Republic of Congo. Available at <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2007-03/2007-03-10-voa4.cfm>

with widespread violence in Bunia are indicative of this reluctance to engage in wars of endurance

The reluctance of five permanent members of Security Council to send their troops and military hardware to enforce the UN Security Council resolution demonstrates that the deployment of peacekeeping missions reflect the interests of the Security Council permanent members (Neack 1995:181; Gibbs 1997). MONUC would achieve its entire mandate if US, China, Russia, and France could deploy their troops and financial resources to peacekeeping mission in the DRC, as this would help to forcefully demobilise and disarm all warring parties to the crisis, and promote peaceful conflict resolution and restoration of law and order in few months. Moreover, this is unlikely as the super-powers are not prepared to risk the lives of their soldiers in conflict zones but willing to send UN peacekeepers to where the permanent members of the Security Council (especially where the United States, Britain and France) have national interest.

## **5. Conclusion**

The current balance sheet on UN peacekeeping effort suggests that, while the UN has served an effective role in legitimizing enforcement coalitions for interstate, armed collective security (as in Korea and against Iraq in Gulf War I), it has also proven to be a very ineffective peacekeeper in the many intrastate and civil conflicts that emerged in the Post-Cold War world, as evident in Rwandese and Congolese case. Since it has been established that the choice of where the UN peacekeeper goes is determined by the extent to which the interests of one or more of the members of the P-5 has important national interest (David Gibbs, 1997; Laura Neack; 1995 and Bennis; 1996) and the extent to which the conflict is believed by the P-5 to constitute a threat to international peace and security (Chantal De Jonge Oudraat 1996:518-519), the argument of critical scholars like Robert Cox (1981) and Mark Duffield (2001) that peacekeeping was to protect the ideological interest of a specific order within

the international system seems relevant as far as the crisis in the DRC is concerned.

Since the traditional peacekeeping method demand neutrality, impartiality, and consent of the states, the super-powers are limited in taking overt role in any peacekeeping operation, but they are prepare to work through the UN as a proxy for justifying their geopolitical and economic interest. States where UN peacekeeping mission succeeded, like Macedonia, Suez Canal (Egypt-Israel crisis and DRC), it is because the super-powers especially the United States, Britain and France have primary interest, and as such are more committed to the 'peacekeeping' mission. However, in states where UN peacekeeping failed, it is because one or more of the super-powers have only secondary interest in the states or regions. Secondary interest here suggests that if the state(s) or region is not strategic to the national interest of one or more of the super-powers, then they are not committed to making overt overtures such as sending troops and financial commitment to the operation. This is evident in Russian and Chinese attitude to the peacekeeping mission in the DRC.

This inevitably suggests that the more the great powers have strategic interest in conflict regions of the world, the more they will be willing to actively participate in the peacekeeping missions, and the more they will be committed to ensure a successful peacekeeping outcome. In other words, when the great powers have little or secondary interest in a particular state conflict, they would have less interest in peacekeeping mission, and would be less concerned about the success of the mission. Although a certain measure of success may sometimes be achieved when a super-power does not have a fundamental interest at stake, it will not have the same incentive to participate in a peacekeeping mission. It is likely that if all super-powers are overtly and strongly committed to any UN peacekeeping operations and genuinely committed to resolving disputes in the trouble spots of the world without having any primary or secondary interest in the conflicts involved, the UN peacekeeping operations will be successful and sustain permanent peace in the affected state(s). Otherwise, the UN may only achieve fragile peace that may snowball into full-

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blown armed and violent conflicts as experience from Angola, Somalia and the DRC suggests.

Therefore, the national interest (whether primary or secondary) of the permanent members (Super-powers) of the UN Security Council plays a significant role in determining the success or failure of any UN peacekeeping mission, given the experience of the MONUC operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



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