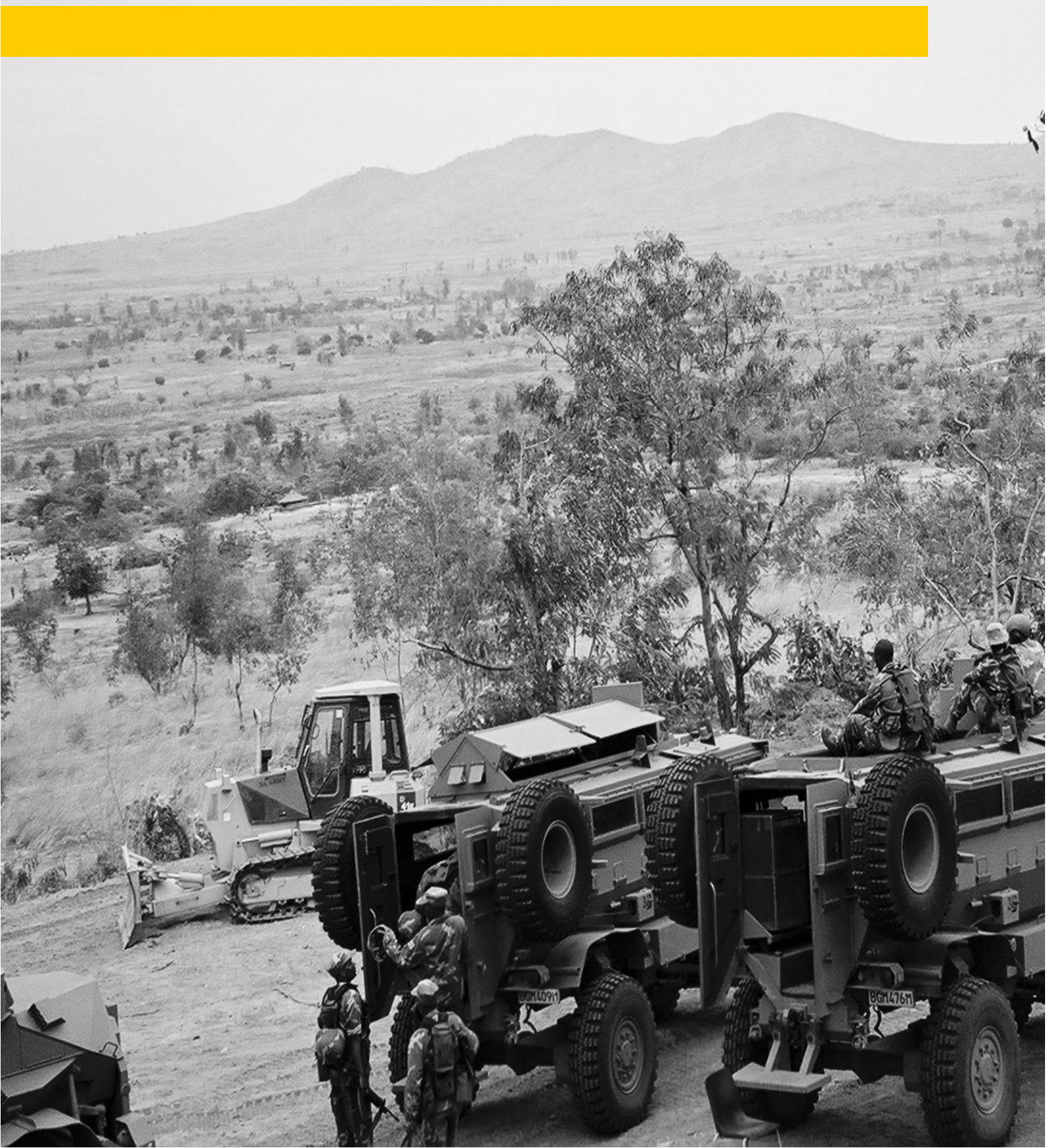


Developmental Peace Missions Theory



We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking
we used when we created them

- Albert Einstein

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This report is the first in a series of eight. Collectively, these reports explore the concept of Developmental Peace Missions as an African alternative approach to ensuring sustainable peace on the Continent. The first report analyses the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of Developmental Peace Missions, and sets a new research agenda for its implementation. Future reports will thus broadly cover the following areas:

- The nature of African conflict systems
- Assessing how war economies sustain conflict in Africa
- Reviewing the success and failures of UN/AU peace missions in Africa
- Operationalising the Millennium Development Goals into peace missions
- System and process requirements for the implementation of Developmental Peace Missions
- Developmental Peace Missions Policy Guidelines

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Executive summary

The United Nations (UN) acknowledges that its success rate in Africa is poor: a recent report estimates that sixty percent of African countries emerging from conflict will relapse back into conflict. The UN's current complex peace operations model prescribes that peacekeepers deploy to stabilise conflict between warring factions. As a rule, this entails separating warring factions, and assisting the withdrawal and assembly of opposing factions from a cease-fire line. Once a certain level of stability is reached, usually after the signing of a cease-fire agreement or comprehensive peace agreement, peacebuilders deploy to address the root causes of conflict in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. In sum, current UN approaches regard security as a precursor for development. Case study after case study, however, reveals that this model is not working very well.

Without a clear theoretical understanding of the workings of war economies, and assuming that political solutions can be successful without any effective enforcing and complementary developmental strategies to address their underlying economic logic, separating warring parties has not always created a safe environment for peacebuilding, and in some cases has assisted the functioning of war economies. As a consequence, peacekeeping operations tend to be prolonged and peacebuilding efforts can take years to start. The longer it takes for peacebuilding work to commence, the greater the probability of countries returning to conflict. Although recent UN complex operations have introduced some peacebuilding efforts in peacekeeping operations to address the underlying causes of conflict at the early stage of a mission, these early initiatives are not explicitly designed to transform war economies or form part of a larger framework for long-term development and reconstruction.

The concept of Developmental Peace Missions was developed in response to the UN's current mixed record in Africa. The Developmental Peace Missions approach strongly draws on systems thinking for its theoretical base, and adopts system thinking tools and techniques to 'see' and understand the underlying structure of conflict in Africa. In this way, systems thinking acts as a filter which can assist decision-makers to identify the most important activities and relationships in situations of conflict in a manner that is useful for the development of policy to ensure sustainable development and peace in Africa.

Unlike the UN complex peace operations model, the Developmental Peace Missions approach does not distinguish between peace enforcement, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding as separate phases in a linear process, but proposes that these operations should be combined or integrated in the field to address the nonlinear and interrelated nature of war economies. Developmental Peace Missions is based on the premise that engaging in development and reconstruction efforts as soon as possible – even when conflict is still ongoing – could contribute towards securing peace and obtaining long-term political order and economic legitimacy. Fundamentally, Developmental Peace Missions calls for a development approach, quicker mobilisation of reconstruction and development resources, and embarking on these initiatives *in unison* with security efforts. Ultimately, the success of adopting this perspective will depend on the willingness and ability of key institutional role players to move the concept of Developmental Peace Missions from theory to practical implementation.

1. Introduction

Contemporary armed conflict remains deadly, devastating, and protracted despite the presence of UN peacekeepers and other multinational forces. Even if peace operations¹ are imposed and peace agreements are brokered, it is often the case that conflict – particularly in Africa – returns. The UN itself acknowledges that its success rate in Africa is poor: a recent report estimates that sixty percent of African countries emerging from conflict will relapse back into conflict.² Statistics developed by the World Bank show that worldwide *all* peace agreements have a fifty percent chance of failing within the first five-years after they have been signed, and the chances appear to be even higher when control over natural resources is at stake.³

The UN's own frustration with its relatively high failure rate is evidenced, for example, by comments recently made by Jean-Marie Guéhenno, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, who remarked, 'United Nations mission planning remains far from perfect [and] as a result, we have peacekeeping operations that succeed, only to lapse back into conflict. Successful operations, as it were, in which the patient dies.'⁴ So, why has the UN been failing?

According to Omar Bakhet, the Director of the UN Development Programme's Emergency Response Division, UN efforts in 'East Timor, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone all demonstrate the clear need to integrate development into peace operations from early on'.⁵ Bakhet firmly states that 'development is needed to consolidate and build a peace that lasts'.⁶ In similar fashion, the former South African Deputy-Minister of Defence, Nozizwe Madlala-Roudledge, has been contending since 1999 that conflict in Africa is ultimately a failure of development, and that a solution to conflict fundamentally requires a developmental approach.

Madlala-Roudledge argues that the UN's preoccupation with establishing the military security of a war-torn country is currently being overplayed, whereas, it should run concurrently with an equally vital aspect of an overall peace plan, which is the commitment to human security i.e. the socio-economic development of the population concerned.⁷ Madlala-Roudledge points out that the long time-delay between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, which inevitably follows from the emphasis on military security, reduces the ability of organisations such as the UN to address the root causes of conflict, and ultimately causes some countries to relapse into conflict.

An alternative solution, she argues, demands that the characteristic delay between security and development in UN operations is diminished, and, more controversially, that peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations should be 'collapsed' or 'rolled-out' into one mutually reinforcing process.

¹ In most cases, the UN uses the expression 'peace operations' as a generic term to include conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. The term 'complex peace operations' (previously known, but sometimes still alluded to, as 'multidimensional peacekeeping') refers to the inclusion of both peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations into one mandate as authorized by the UN Security Council.

² UNDG/ECHA Working Group, Report on Transition Issues, February 2004, p. 14.

³ "World Bank Study Says 50-50 chance of Failure", *Washington Post*, 26 November 2002.

⁴ Statement by Jean-Marie Guéhenno United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping to the Challenges Project, London, United Kingdom, 2 March 2005 [<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/articles/article020305.htm>].

⁵ Omar Bakhet, *The lessons of Development in Reforming United Nations Peace Operations*, speech delivered at the UNITAR-IPS-JIIA Conference on 'The Reform Process of United Nations Peace Operations', 2-3 April 2001, Singapore, [http://www.undp.org/bcpr/pubinfo/transitions/2001_05/ob_speech.htm].

⁶ Omar Bakhet, *The lessons of Development in Reforming United Nations Peace Operations*, *op cit*.

⁷ Nozizwe Madlala Roudledge, *Developmental Peacekeeping: what are the advantages for Africa?*, keynote address at the African Defence Summit 2004, 13 July 2004, Gallagher Estate, Midrand South Africa

This approach forms the basis of the concept of ‘Developmental Peace Missions’ as proposed by Madlala-Routledge and Liebenberg.⁸ In essence, Developmental Peace Missions is based on the premise that engaging in development and reconstruction efforts as soon as possible – even when conflict is still ongoing – could contribute towards securing peace and obtaining long-term political order and economic legitimacy. Fundamentally, Developmental Peace Missions calls for a development approach, quicker mobilisation of reconstruction and development resources, and embarking on these initiatives *in unison* with security efforts. On an operational level this implies many things, among these, the deployment of civilian peacebuilders alongside military peacekeepers.

While the prospect of deploying peacekeepers and peacebuilders simultaneously on the onset of a peace mission certainly creates very practical problems, the fundamental importance of integrating development work with security efforts, although fairly unsystematic and rudimentary, is starting to be widely recognised. Already in 1998 the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, noted in one report that peacekeeping and peacebuilding should be thought of as simultaneous activities to be used in combination, and as complements to one another.⁹ Unfortunately, it seems as if Annan’s proposal was forgotten as current UN security efforts still maintain a distinct identity separate from humanitarian and development activities.

More recently, a *Wall Street Journal* article observed that, ‘Early US decisions in Iraq [are] haunting current [reconstruction] efforts,’¹⁰ implying that the United States and its coalition partners should have spent more time planning to win the peace in Iraq rather than to simply win the war.¹¹ Unsurprisingly, special units have swiftly been launched both in the United Kingdom and the United States to develop and implement better reconstruction and development strategies in post-conflict situations, namely the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) and the Office for the Coordination of Reconstruction and Stabilisation (S/CRS) respectively. In the wake of the current situations in Afghanistan and Iraq, both the PCRU and S/CRS are investigating the operational requirements to introduce reconstruction and development work in conditions of conflict and immediately after conflict, and, more importantly, how these efforts can be integrated with security efforts.¹²

Against this background, the paper starts-off by explaining the problem of conflict in Africa and how the UN has attempted to solve this malignant problem by means of complex peace operations. Based on the UN’s mixed record in Africa, it is argued that a systems thinking perspective can assist decision-makers to understand the underlying structural sources of conflict, and, with this understanding, be able to identify the most important activities and relationships in situations of conflict in a manner that is useful for the development of policy. The applicability of adopting a systems thinking perspective is demonstrated by modelling the major causes and characteristics of conflict in Africa, modelling the UN’s complex peace operations approach, and combining these two models in order to evaluate the UN’s approach to stop conflict and ensure sustainable peace. The paper will conclude by motivating why the concept of Developmental Peace Missions provides an alternative approach to address the UN’s high failure in Africa, and sets out some key questions and recommendations for the concepts implementation.

⁸ Nozizwe Madlala Routledge and Sybert Liebenberg, ‘Developmental Peacekeeping: what are the advantages for Africa?’, *African Security Review*, 13/2, 2004, pp. 125-131.

⁹ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organisation*, Supplement No 1 (A/53/1), 27 August 1998, p. 8, par. 70.

¹⁰ ‘Early U.S. Decisions on Iraq Now Haunt American Efforts’, *Wall Street Journal*, 19 April 2004.

¹¹ Simon Chesterman and David M Malone, ‘Postwar Challenge: who plans for rebuilding Iraq?’, *International Herald Tribune*, 5 December 2002.

¹² Interviews conducted at the Department for International Development (DFID), London, United Kingdom, with Chris Trott, from the PCRU on 11 May 2005, and Col Douglas Morrison from the S/CRS on 12 May 2005.

2. The problem: conflict in Africa

This section of the paper analyses the nature of conflict in Africa in broad detail. This analysis is by no means comprehensive but serves as basis for a ‘generic African war economy model’ (see below) which was developed to illustrate how system thinking methods can assist researchers to understand the complex and seemingly chaotic and unpredictable nature of conflict in Africa.

2.1 ‘Shell-states’

When reviewing the literature on conflict in Africa, multiple explanations on the causes and motives of African conflicts are proposed by academics and policy-makers alike. Even so, most explanations concede that the interaction of economic ‘greed’ with long-standing political ‘grievances’ over the unfair distribution of resources and exclusionary nature of political systems are generally assumed as the main sources for the outbreak and duration of these conflicts.¹³ Moving beyond his controversial ‘greed vs. grievance’ thesis, World Bank researcher Paul Collier has similarly acknowledged that important economic resources do appear to make conflict more feasible when political grievances already exist, particularly when corrupt government elites unequally distribute them.¹⁴

Given the collapse of government and the fragmentation of the state, the collapse of economic production and the public service, and the erosion of the tax base, Africa’s weakest states tend to be heavily dependent on the access and exploitation of resources as a source of state income and survival. Because weak states cannot provide economic and social security, their citizens have little choice but to find alternative solutions in order to maintain reasonable levels of economic satisfaction. In this regard, one of the more common survival strategies has been to rely on the informal economy,¹⁵ which in turn reduces state revenue, and so reinforces the state’s inability to provide basic needs.

All of this, however, does not mean that anarchy reigns. On the contrary, other actors have moved into the vacuum left by collapsing African states¹⁶ and have developed alternative forms of governance and economic production that are typically located around strategic commodities. A telling example of this phenomenon, and there are several, is the former União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) rebel leader Jonah Savimbi’s control of the diamond rich areas of Angola. From 1992 through 1998, UNITA controlled about 90 percent of Angola’s diamond export, and derived an estimated \$4 billion from diamond sales during this period.¹⁷ In effect, government control over these areas is lost, and new actors have taken the opportunity to develop ‘shell-states’.¹⁸

For the casual observer, a shell-state can be thought of as non-sovereign political unit embedded within a sovereign state. Shell-states embody only some of the essential characteristics of the modern state. While the basic socio-economic elements of a state are mostly present (elements

¹³ Karen Ballentine, ‘Program on economic agendas in civil wars: principle research findings and policy recommendations’, *International Peace Academy*, April 2004, p. 4.

¹⁴ Interview with Prof Paul Collier, Brittany, France, October 2004.

¹⁵ Heiko Nitzsche, *Transforming War Economies: Challenges for Peackmaking and Peacebuilding*, Report of the 725th Wilton Park Conference in association with the International Peace Academy, Wiston House, Sussex, 27-29 October 2003, December 2003, p. 9.

¹⁶ Richard Cornwell, ‘The collapse of the African state’, in Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason (Eds), *Peace, Profit, or Plunder: the privatisation of security in war-torn African societies*, Institute for Security Studies: Brooklyn (Pretoria), p. 62.

¹⁷ See for example Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Dietrich (Eds), *Angola’s War Economy: the role of oil and diamonds*, Institute for Security Studies: Brooklyn (Pretoria).

¹⁸ Loretta Napoleoni, *Terror Inc: Tracing the money behind global terrorism*, Penguin Books: London, p. 332.

which are necessary for the functioning of a war economy), the political processes of constitutionality, political integration, legitimacy of authority and citizenship are commonly absent.

Shell-state leaders, or those vying for political power, centralise their power base by mobilising local and international clientele by forming an interlocking web of patronage and support.¹⁹ These clients may include traditional (ethnic) alliances, mercenaries, foreign firms, arms traders, money launderers, regional shell-states, and the like.²⁰ Local clients are kept in check by sharing some of the spoils of war and rewarding them with land and other commodities in return for their military loyalty, while international partners are guaranteed access to resources.

Normally, popular support amongst ordinary citizens is assured by providing a sophisticated social safety net which is supported by the profits made from resource exploitation and from various other illicit activities. This allows leaders to retain the levels of support necessary to sustain hostilities against local or regional forces, or, as history has shown, against foreign interventions which aim to enforce peace. In Colombia, for example, the FARC retains public support to maintain its guerrilla campaign by including a minimum wage for coca leaf pickers and a social security system which, amongst others, provides pensions for retired guerrillas.²¹

Popular support for sustaining conflict is also achieved through the ‘politics of identity’, meaning that citizens are mobilised around ethnic, racial, or religious identities for the purpose of claiming state power.²² Such conflicts have been often mislabelled ‘ethnic’ or ‘tribal’ conflicts, whereas the fundamental reason for mobilising people along these lines has been to legitimise the functioning of the informal economy and to demonise those that oppose it. The Rwandan genocide in 1994, for instance, has commonly been referred to as an ‘ethnic war’, yet there are no distinct ethnic distinctions between Hutu and Tutsi nationals in terms of language, culture, or religion in the country. In reality, the patterns of ethnic division and tension between Hutu’s and Tutsi’s have frequently been raised in relation to specific political and economic aims for the control of the state and its resources, in Rwanda’s case, the control of land.²³

Needless to say, the classification of shell-states also stands as a reference point from which to compare the workings of some sovereign political units in Africa. Many similarities can be drawn between shell-states and the politics of weak states as both are faced with similar local threats and global opportunities.²⁴ Within one sovereign state, for example, it is often the case that a ‘sovereign’ and a ‘non-sovereign’ shell-state both make use of global financial and commodity markets by trading natural resources to obtain financial resources, weapons, and other material needed to sustain conflict between each other.

2.2 *War economies*

The basic dynamic that shapes the functioning of shell-states is the monopoly of violence and of economic resources. Indeed, the marriage of commercial assets and military forces is without doubt

¹⁹ Cornwell, ‘The collapse of the African state, *op cit.*, p. 67.

²⁰ William Reno, *Warlord Politics and the African State*, Lynne Rienner: Boulder, Colorado, 1998 p. 36.

²¹ Alfredo Rangel Suárez, ‘Parasites and Predators: Guerrillas and the insurrection economy of Colombia’, *Journal of International Economic Affairs*, 53/2 Spring 2000, pp. 577-601.

²² Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, Polity: Cambridge, 1999, pp. 76-77.

²³ Jean Bigagaza, Carolyne Abong, and Cecile Mukarubuga, ‘Land Scarcity, Distribution and Conflict in Rwanda, in Jeremy and Kathryn Sturman (Eds), *Scarcity and Surfeit: the ecology of Africa’s conflicts*, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, pp. 51-84.

²⁴ William Reno, *Warlord Politics, op cit.*, p. 80.

a defining characteristic of shell-states.²⁵ The merging of conflict and commerce in the shell-state is often referred to by the short-hand term ‘war economies’. A war economy can be defined as a self-sustaining system in which ‘resource exploitation funds conflict, and conflict provides the means and conditions that allow continued illegitimate access to these resources’.²⁶ The cyclical patterns of violence that arise from war economy systems are now all too familiar: resource exports allow shell-state leaders to fund conflict against local competitors; to continue funding conflict, armed groups conduct scorched-earth campaigns to drive-out any opposition at terrible human cost. In sum, resources help finance conflict, conflict provides access to valuable resources, and both these factors permit shell-state leaders to consolidate their political-military power.

The primacy of the war economy in the shell-state has two significant implications for conflict in Africa. First, conflict is largely structured around the logic of trade, amongst other things, the struggle for competitive advantage and accumulation,²⁷ and not on definable geo-strategic goals.²⁸ The continuation of conflict, and not military victory, becomes a critical factor to maintain positions of power and to access resources necessary to fund conflict.²⁹ This means that shell-states are entities in a constant state of war since only through conditions of war or near war can corrupt governments, rebel movements, and even ordinary soldiers illegally target and trade resources with international allies.

The hard cash generated from the trade of resources allows warring parties to enforce and centralise their political-military power, which, in turn, enables them to control and protect valuable resources, and so on. At the same time, exploitative multinationals utilise the resources purchased from local traders to satisfy their material needs and the economic needs of states.

To ensure that this practice is continued, and because shell-states are often unable to provide their own security, multinationals and shell-state leaders regularly contract private military companies (PMCs) to protect resources and production facilities, as well as fencing-off concession areas against hostile military forces. PMCs have also been involved in exporting arms or facilitating arms transfers, training local forces, and assisting in command and control functions, and in actual combat.

Regrettably, creating a stable climate for resource extraction usually entails getting rid of all possible opponents, a fact that appears to be a virtual requirement for foreign investment.³⁰ This explains why so many population displacement campaigns occur in the vicinity of valuable resources. In Sudan, for example, the export of oil from 1999 triggered mass population displacement campaigns in the oil-rich areas of the country by the Government of Sudan and pro-government militia.

Second, war economies are rarely self-sufficient. On the contrary, they are heavily reliant on all forms of external support and supplies.³¹ Given the collapse of domestic production, external assistance is crucial, since arms and other non-military goods (oil, food, and even drugs) that are

²⁵ Levi Lunde, Mark Taylor, and Anne Huser, *Commerce or Crime?: Regulating economies of conflict*, Programme for International Co-operations and Conflict Resolution Fafo-report 424, Interface Media: Norway, 2003, p. 13.

²⁶ Micahel Renner, *The Anatomy of Resources Wars*, World Watch Paper 162, October 2002, p. 10.

²⁷ Mark Duffield, ‘Globalization and war economies: promoting order or the return of history?’, *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, 23/2, Fall 1999,

²⁸ Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, *op cit.*, p. 77.

²⁹ Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, *op cit.*, p. 110.

³⁰ William Reno, ‘Shadow States and the Political Economy of Civil Wars’, in Mats Berdal and David M. Malone, *Greed and Grievance*, Lynne Rienner: Colorado, 2000, p. 57.

³¹ Duffield, ‘Globalization and war economies’, *op cit.*, p. 27.

nevertheless essential to the maintenance of military campaigns have to be imported.³² Partly as a consequence of globalisation and partly as a consequence of the decline of Cold War military assistance, war economies have become heavily reliant on vast regional and global informal economic networks for supplies to sustain conflict.³³ War economies are thus not confined to national boundaries. On the contrary, they are typically supported and integrated with other regional war economies through military, economic, political, and social networks.³⁴

Alternatively, long-standing regional rivalries centred on power and economic control of natural resources can provoke military involvement from neighbouring states.³⁵ In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, both Uganda and Rwanda between 1998 and 2003 established physical control over various areas in the DRC containing commercially viable natural resources – mainly coltan, diamonds, timber and gold.³⁶

In light of the above-mentioned, it is quite clear that dismantling war economy systems offers a key opportunity to re-balance the economic scales between war and peace in favour of the latter.³⁷ Of course, the responsibility to tackle the problem of war economies, and international conflict in general, rests primarily with the UN. (In an era where peace operations are often conducted without blue helmet troops,³⁸ the useful role of the UN in securing peace is in question; however, it will ultimately be the UN that will bear the brunt of the blame for not responding to conflict). Currently, there are twenty-seven UN-led missions worldwide, with more than 65,000 blue helmet soldiers, police forces, and civilian personnel serving the UN on three continents.³⁹ Fifteen UN missions are in Africa, and the majority of these face the complex task of transforming conflicts sustained by war economies.

The following section will attempt to describe the current nature of UN peace operations, and how the UN anticipates the requirements of future operations. Specific attention is given to the reasons why UN peacekeeping operations tend to be so prolonged, and how this impedes the introduction of development and reconstruction into its operations.

3. The UN solution: complex peace operations

The UN uses four different instruments to respond to conflicts, namely conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace-building.⁴⁰ The term ‘complex peace operation’ is an

³² Niel Cooper, ‘Conflict Goods: the Challenges for Peacekeeping and Conflict Prevention’, *International Peacekeeping*, 8/3 Autumn 2001, p. 22.

Sagaren Naidoo, ‘The role of war economies in understanding conflicts’, *Global Dialogue*, [http://www.igd.org.za/pub/g-dialogue/africa/war_economies.html].

³⁴ Kaysie Studdard, ‘War Economies in a Regional Context: Overcoming the Challenges of Transformation’, *International Peace Academy*, March 2004, p. 3.

³⁵ Charles Cater, ‘The Regionalisation of Conflict and Intervention’, *International Peace Academy*, 5-9 May 2003, p. 3.

³⁶ For a more detailed account of DR Congo’s war economy and foreign intervention see for example, United Nations, *Final report of the Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, (S/2002/1146), 16 October 2002, 34 pp.

³⁷ Niel Cooper, ‘Conflict Goods’, *op cit.*, p. 35.

³⁸ Non-UN peace missions include the NATO-led operation in Kosovo and the British intervention in Sierra Leone. Nonetheless, these missions (and others) were generally launched in support of UN-endorsed resolutions.

³⁹ United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: background note: 30 April 2005*, [<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/bnote.html>], 2 June 2005; United Nations, *United Nations Political and Peace-building missions: background note: 30 April 2005*, [<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/bnote.html>], 2 June 2005.

⁴⁰ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, A/55/305-S/2000/809, August 2000. Interestingly enough, the *Brahimi Report* does not include peace enforcement as part of the UN’s repertoire to respond to conflict. Instead, it is firmly states, ‘the United Nations does not wage war, [but when] enforcement

expression used by the UN to denote the inclusion of peacebuilding mandates into peacekeeping operations. The origins of complex peace operations can be traced to the early 1990s when the UN found itself in the midst of a series of violent and complex intra-state wars that called on the political, military, humanitarian, and developmental sides of the UN system.⁴¹ Apart from monitoring ceasefire agreements and patrolling buffer zones, UN mandates expanded to include organising elections, disarming and demobilising combatants, and assisting in post-conflict reconstruction. Significantly, these changes have warranted a gradual division of labour between military and civilian personnel.⁴² This is illustrated in the following table (table 1):

Table 1: Traditional peacekeeping and complex peace operations

<i>Model/Era</i>	<i>Transition from war to peace</i>		
	Conflict	Stabilisation	Post-Conflict
Traditional Peacekeeping (Cold-War)	N/A	N/A	Ceasefire agreements Buffer Zones
Early Complex Peace Operations (Pre-Brahimi)	Traditional Peacekeeping		Peacebuilding

While the complex peace operations model has gradually become incorporated into the UN's conflict-management repertoire, its success rate regrettably remains limited.⁴³ According to one UN report, forty percent of countries emerging from conflict relapse into conflict; in Africa this figure rises to sixty percent.⁴⁴ Faced with this challenge, particularly in the wake of the failures in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia, the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, commissioned the Panel on UN Peace Operations in 2000 to thoroughly review the shortcomings of UN peace operations and to make practical recommendations to ensure their future success.

The Panel submitted the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (more commonly known as the *Brahimi Report*) to the Secretary General, which offered clear advice about minimum requirements for a successful UN intervention. These requirements include political support, a rapid deployment capacity and robust force structure, and a sound peacebuilding strategy.⁴⁵ One of enduring legacies of the *Brahimi Report* is that it urges the UN to update its peacekeeping doctrine and strategy – from observing ceasefires to laying the foundations for peacebuilding – and to develop a better, more integrated post-conflict peacebuilding strategy. The report argues that ‘these revised strategies for peacekeeping and peacebuilding need to combine in the field to produce more effective complex peace operations’.⁴⁶

Thus, by expanding the concept of peacekeeping beyond conventional military operations, the report gives due recognition to the underplayed role and untapped potential that initial development work can bring to address the causes of conflict and to prevent the recurrence of conflict. This is illustrated in the following table (table 2):

action is required, it has consistently been entrusted to coalitions of willing States, with the authorisation of the Security Council’.

⁴¹ Examples of early complex peace operations include Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Haiti, and Somalia.

⁴² Bruce Jones, *Evolving models of peacekeeping: policy implications & responses*, Centre on International Cooperation, New York, 2004, p. 16.

⁴³ Some UN success include missions in El-Salvador and Mozambique.

⁴⁴ UNDG/ECHA Working Group, Report on Transition Issues, February 2004, p. 14.

⁴⁵ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, *op cit.*, p. 1.

⁴⁶ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, *op cit.*, pp. 1-2.

Table 2: Pre-and post-Brahimi complex peace operations

<i>Model/Era</i>	<i>Transition from war to peace</i>		
	Conflict	Stabilisation	Post-Conflict Reconstruction
Pre-Brahimi Complex Peace Operations	Traditional Peacekeeping		Peacebuilding
Post-Brahimi Complex Peace Operations	Traditional Peacekeeping Initial Peacebuilding		Peacebuilding

Although the recommendations contained in the *Brahimi Report* will certainly pave the way for better complex peace operations, the UN's forecasting, planning, and analysis methods remain unchanged. The UN continues to utilise traditional methods of analysis to understand complex conflicts, and, because of this, its conflict resolution methods are only equipped to 'see' and solve the more obvious, symptomatic elements of conflict. As a result, the transition from conflict to peace continues to be approached in a compartmentalised and sequential manner i.e. first solving conflict by military means and then addressing human security issues in post-conflict situations.

The UN's current complex peace operations model prescribes that peacekeepers deploy to stabilise conflict between warring factions. As a rule, this entails separating warring factions, and assisting the withdrawal and assembly of opposing factions from a cease-fire line.⁴⁷ Once a certain level of stability is reached, usually after the signing of a cease-fire agreement or comprehensive peace agreement, peacebuilders deploy to address the root causes of conflict⁴⁸ in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.⁴⁹

This model is based on the premise that peacebuilding work is not feasible during conditions of instability, and that any long-term humanitarian, development and reconstruction efforts at this time would likely be wasted. Only when peacekeepers are able to secure the environment can peacebuilding be launched in earnest. This model is illustrated in the diagram below (figure 1):⁵⁰

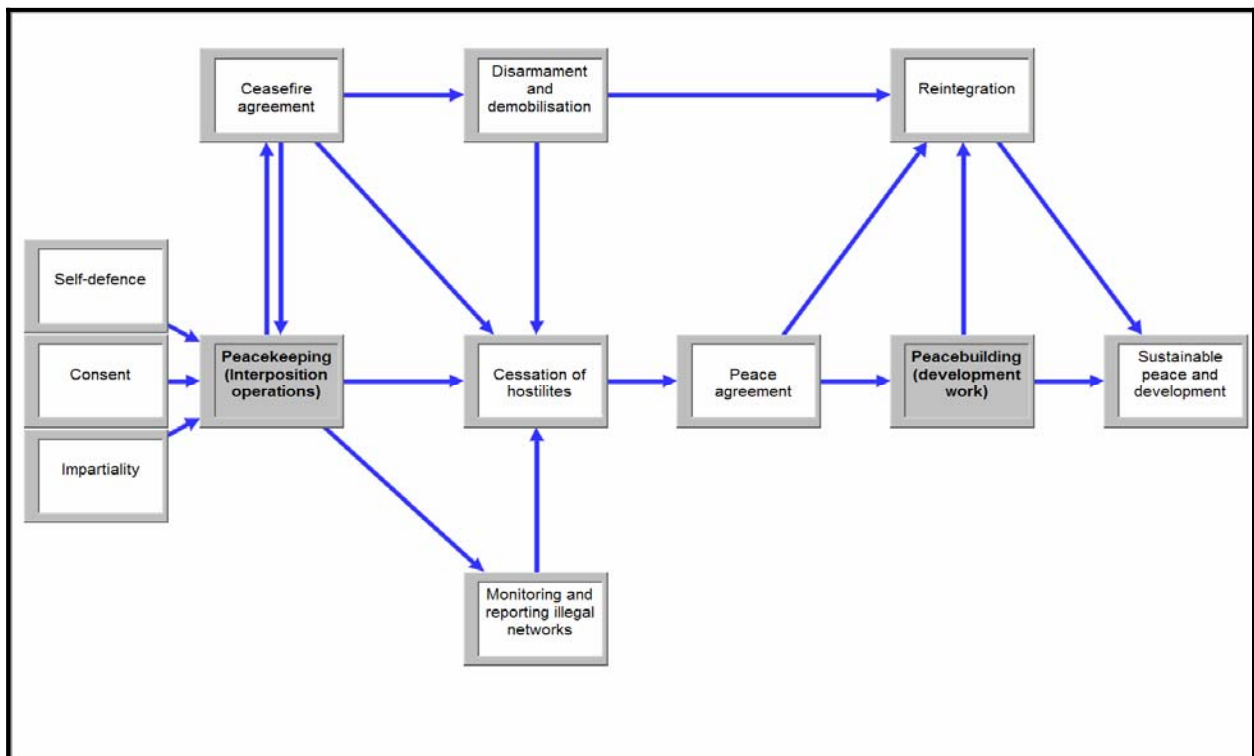
⁴⁷ United Nations, *The logic of peacekeeping*, [<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/intro/2.htm>]

⁴⁸ United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and its Working Group at the 2004 substantive session (A/58/19)*, 26 April 2004 p. 8.

⁴⁹ United Nations, *General Guidelines for Peacekeeping Operations*, UNDPKO, p. 6.

⁵⁰ The UN complex peace operations model was developed using *Think Tools® Suite 4.1*. Blue arrows indicate how one element reinforces another.

Figure 1: Complex peace operations model



Case study after case study, however, reveals that this model is not working very well. Despite the UN's progress in restoring order and consolidating peace in some war-torn countries, the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding can go on for many years because peacekeepers often struggle to establish a secure environment for peacebuilding work. In this time, the root causes of conflict remain unaltered and the probability of conflict returning dramatically increases.

3.1 *Prolonged peacekeeping, delayed development*

Three principles underpin UN peacekeeping: local consent to the UN's presence, impartial implementation of mandates, and the resort to force only in self-defence. Key passages in the *Brabimi Report* and reports prepared by the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations echo that the respect for these core principles is fundamental to the success of peacekeeping operations.⁵¹ The rigid adherence to what are viewed as the core principles of peacekeeping, however, typifies the UN's failure to understand the *modus operandi* of local factions keen on maintaining their positions of power through the continuation of conflict and the exploitations of resources.

In this regard, we will try to show that peacekeeping is flawed because the strategy of interposition – a strategy regularly used by the UN to create a buffer between warring parties – does not reduce the level of conflict among warring parties (at least, if it is not complemented with developmental efforts). In fact, there is some evidence to suggest that interposition, in some cases, may actually serve to sustain conflict.

The logic of interposition is to reduce hostilities between warring parties by deploying peacekeepers between them. Once in position, peacekeepers are mandated to respond to any attempts that may violate the integrity of these areas. To undertake these tasks safely, peacekeepers have to be

⁵¹ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, op cit.*, p. 9, par; United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, op cit.*, p. 8.

perceived as legitimate, impartial, and non-aggressive. By separating warring factions, the UN assumes that hostilities will cease, and that the presence of peacekeepers will create an enabling environment for parties to reach a lasting peace agreement. While this model may work between conflicting nation-states, it is becoming more and more apparent that its effectiveness in solving conflict between shell-states is limited.

Unlike the conflicts of the Cold War, conventional battles are rare between shell-states. By and large, conflict is not fought over definable geo-strategic goals but predominantly over the access and control of resources. Unlike conventional soldiers, irregular forces sustain themselves by controlling resources, looting villages, raping, robbing, and committing other crimes against civilians. This is not to say, however, that warring parties do not fight each other. It is the case, rather, that they tend to sustain a sufficient level of conflict and disorder within and outside their areas of control to help maintain their position of power and to gain access to valuable resources.

Deploying UN forces between warring factions, therefore, does not directly interfere with their illegal and violent activities, and war economy systems continue to function in the presence of interposition forces. Above and beyond this, interposition can also serve to sustain these activities, since UN forces, in so far as they separate and protect warring factions, at the same time protect their resources from being run-over from competing parties.

It is worthwhile pausing at this point to briefly explain aforementioned arguments by using the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo as an example.

In 1999, the DRC was literally divided into three distinct political and military areas between Laurent Kabila's forces, and Rwandan and Ugandan forces. Although important political and military factors played a part triggering the conflict, all parties had taken the opportunity to plunder the DRC's resources in the wake of weak central authority. On 10 July 1999, Kabila's government, along with Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, signed the Lusaka Accords which provided for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of all foreign troops. In May 2000 the UN deployed more than 2400 personnel to the DRC to monitor the Lusaka agreement and to investigate any violations of the ceasefire.⁵² Military observer teams were posted on the entire length of the ceasefire line which essentially split the country in half.⁵³ More importantly, the ceasefire line effectively separated the government-controlled area in the west of the country from the resource-rich areas still under the control of Ugandan and Rwandan forces on the eastern border of the country.

Because the ceasefire was generally respected on the front line, the UN's interposition in the DRC diminished the threat of government attacks on Ugandan and Rwandan forces,⁵⁴ and left the exploitation of resources effectively in their hands.⁵⁵ In essence, this made it easier for Rwandan and Ugandan forces to smuggle raw materials out of the DRC and to re-export these commodities into the global market. Unsurprisingly, Uganda exported ten times more gold ore in 2001 than it

⁵² United Nations, *Report of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, 27 April-7 May 2002*, S/2002/537, 13 May 2002, p. 2, par 4. See also, United Nations, Security Council resolution 1291 (2000) of 24 February 2000.

⁵³ The ceasefire line demarked by the UN in the DRC ran from the towns of Mbendaka (Equator region) to Pepa (Shaba region).

⁵⁴ United Nations, *Ninth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, S/2001/970, 16 October, p. 3.

⁵⁵ United Nations, Addendum to the report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2001/1072, p. 26, par. 146.

ever did since its involvement in the conflict in 1998.⁵⁶ In the same year, Rwanda's coltan production (mostly of Congolese origin) soared from 147 tonnes in 1999 to 1,300 tonnes.⁵⁷

As can be seen from this example, there arise serious doubts as to the effectiveness of the UN's strategy of interposition, in particular the likelihood that interposition may even sustain the functioning of war economies. Interestingly enough, other research conducted on determining the factors that may affect the recurrence of war also alludes to the fact that partitioning warring parties may lead to a greater likelihood of a new war occurring and shortening the duration of peace.⁵⁸ The UN's problem of being unable to break the link between commodities and conflict is further compounded by the lack of effective mechanisms to challenge transnational criminal networks.

The UN is well-aware of the workings of transnational criminal networks and how these networks help warring parties to trade commodities with international buyers to acquire the supplies needed to sustain their war-efforts. Yet, current peacekeeping mandates merely allow UN personnel – typically with limited technical skills – to monitor and report the smuggling of resources and the flow of arms.⁵⁹ This is not to say that collecting information on transnational criminal networks is not essential. Indeed it is, but it is not preventing warring parties from procuring weapons and trading commodities.

In Sierra Leone, for example, despite the deployment of the largest-ever UN force to the country in March 2001, not one component of the force was responsible for monitoring the trade of conflict diamonds.⁶⁰ This situation only changed four years later in September 2004, when the UN Security Council adopted a new resolution which authorised UN personnel to monitor and patrol diamond-mining areas.⁶¹ In spite of these efforts, more than fifty percent of diamond mining in Sierra Leone still remains unlicensed and considerable illegal diamond smuggling continues.⁶²

This outcome underscores the realisation that the monitoring of activities of transnational networks is insufficient to curb resource exploitation and trade. Clearly, to effectively curtail resource flows, monitoring and reporting activities should be supported by a commitment to effective enforcement mechanisms. Not only will this require better intelligence, but also personnel with the technical expertise to target and capture those that support the functioning of transnational criminal networks (not unlike the workings of Private Military Companies⁶³).

While it is critically important for the UN to be perceived as legitimate and credible, it is equally important to isolate and marginalise those keen on sustaining conflict and smuggling valuable resources.⁶⁴ Of course, finding the correct balance between protecting civilians and that of

⁵⁶ Michael Renner, *Anatomy of Resource Wars*, World Watch Paper 162, October 2002, pp. 28-29.

⁵⁷ World Bank, *Rwanda/Burundi country profile*, Economics Intelligence Unit, May 2003.

⁵⁸ Barbara F Walter, *Does conflict beget conflict?: explaining recurring civil war*, Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, June 2002, pp. 19-20.

⁵⁹ For example, Burundi (ONUB) resolution 1545 of 21 May 2004 ('to monitor, to the extent possible, the illegal flow of arms across the national border'); DRC (MONUC) resolution 1565 of 1 October 2004 ('to observe and report in a timely matter, on the position of armed movements and groups, and the presence of foreign military forces...').

⁶⁰ United Nations, Security Council resolution 13465 (2001).

⁶¹ United Nations, Security Council resolution 1562 (2004).

⁶² United Nations, *Twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Missions in Sierra Leone*, *op cit.*, p. 5

⁶³ Although the utilisation of Private Military Companies remains a widely contested subject, there is little doubt, at least from an operational perspective, that they have proved to be extremely effective in undermining the illegal activities of warring factions. In some cases, these companies have little trouble recapturing key commercial targets, thus denying warring parties access to their major source of sustainability, *with no more than a few hundred men*.

⁶⁴ Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, *op cit.*, p. 126.

neutralising warring factions will not be easy (matters being made worse by some civilians and soldiers ‘moonlighting’ for extra cash⁶⁵), but there is reason to suggest that the UN’s accepted principles for success – developed largely from traditional peacekeeping experience during the Cold War – cannot be equally applied to those involved in and those affected by current war economy systems

This means that, where applicable, the UN may need to revise its current deterrent posture in complex peace operations and act in a more forcible manner against those that have neither the political will nor the financial compulsion to end violent conflict.⁶⁶ After all, if the UN is in the business of solving conflict, it is fair to suggest that the UN should act appropriately (hence forcibly) against those who are involved in the business of war. As fitting as this may sound, however, it appears as if key UN decision-makers are not willing to utilise UN forces in enforcement actions in the foreseeable future.⁶⁷

One positive step towards more successful UN complex peace operations is the realisation within the UN that early development work in peacekeeping operations can reduce the chances of countries returning to conflict. Although this latest development in the evolution of UN complex peace operations is certainly warranted, there are some shortcomings to this new thinking.

3.2 *Early peacebuilding work in peacekeeping*

The UN has recently begun to explore the possibility and advantages of incorporating peacebuilding work into peacekeeping operations as a way to address the root causes of conflict early in the life of a complex peace operation. The *Brahimi Report* recommends that future complex peace operations should include, amongst others, ‘quick impact projects’ and initial work on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) into peacekeeping operations.⁶⁸ Both are intended to demonstrate immediate results and improve the credibility of a new mission, strengthen the capacity for peacebuilding, and to serve as basis to attract humanitarian, development and reconstruction workers.⁶⁹ The problem with these proposals, however, is that they rely on voluntary contributions to be completed, and are essentially pursued as a ‘quick-fix’ strategies – that is, they are not designed to form part of a larger framework for long-term development and reconstruction.

Quick impact projects (QIPs) are only intended to be budgeted for the first year of a mission, and, without follow-on funding, the goodwill that such projects might build in the early phases of peacekeeping could dissipate.⁷⁰ Apart from this concern, QIPs have not been explicitly designed to be integrated into other peacebuilding activities. In Côte d’Ivoire, for example, sixty-two projects have been approved for funding in the areas of education and health facilities and other public

⁶⁵ Paul Collier, ‘Doing Well out of War: An Economic Perspective’, in Mats Berdal and David M. Malone, *Greed and Grievance*, Lynne Rienner: Colorado, 2000, p. 103.

⁶⁶ The question of using force in peace operations naturally raises many problems. The UN interventions in Congo from 1960-1963, Somalia in 1993, and Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1994-1995 are often cited as examples of the perils of using force, especially the dangers of ‘crossing the Mogadishu line’ (i.e. losing the credibility of being impartial) or simply becoming another warring party to the conflict.

⁶⁷ For example, in his first report on the implementation of the *Brahimi Report* (A/55/502), the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, affirmed that the UN will not turn into a war-fighting machine or change the fundamental principle of self-defence. Likewise, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, recently stated in the *International Herald Tribune*, ‘no UN engagement in hot wars. The United Nations cannot fight wars...if there is real campaigning to be done, then military coalitions...should be used’.

⁶⁸ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, *op cit.*, p. 4, para. 41.

⁶⁹ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, *op cit.*, p. 5, para. 54.

⁷⁰ William J Durch *et al.*, ‘The Brahimi Report and the Future of UN Peace Operations’, *The Henry L Stimson Centre*, 2002 p. 25.

utilities.⁷¹ None of these, however, have been budgeted to kick-start DDR programmes. The fact that the process of disarming combatants and militias has not yet started in Côte d'Ivoire is considered by some as posing 'a real danger [that could] spin out control with incalculable consequences for [Côte d'Ivoire] and the subregion as a whole'.⁷²

With regards to DDR, the UN continues to rely on partners such as the World Bank to assist in completing DDR programmes.⁷³ Thus, without external funding, DDR programmes (particularly 'R') may not be completed or may not begin at all. For example, in June 2001 the World Bank's Mutli-Donor Trust Fund for DDR in Sierra Leone received less than half of the funds estimated for reintegration programmes. As a result, at the end of the reintegration programme in January 2002, more than a third of ex-combatants failed to receive any assistance. Soon after, these ex-combatants began to pose security problems, mobilise for protests, migrate toward the diamond-producing areas, and to be recruited in these areas to fight in neighbouring Liberia.⁷⁴

This example highlights two important points. First, the divide between budgeted and voluntary contributions for DDR (and other peace initiatives) continues to be an impediment to the seamless support that is needed to move from 'DD' to 'R'.⁷⁵ Secondly, in the face of the continuing availability of lucrative resources, the success of 'R' may depend on the provision of new forms of civilian economic opportunity and supporting programmes so that the temptations to continue participation in the war economy can be undercut. This means that the standard donor practice of treating 'DD' programmes (in peacekeeping) as prior to 'R' programmes (in peacebuilding) should be collapsed into mutually reinforcing processes and introduced at the earliest possible stages of a mission.

The logic of this approach is underlined, for example, by the current situation in Burundi where ex-combatants are restricted to demobilisation centres without any effort being made to re-train them with functional economic skills and to offer them employment opportunities. This situation greatly enhances the potential for a return to hostilities as ex-combatants are left with no other skills besides violence to maintain reasonable levels of economic satisfaction. Thus, by integrating DDR programmes, mechanisms are created to reduce the dependency and motivation of ex-combatants to re-participate in the war economy.

Mindful of the current dispersed efforts of the UN and non-UN donor agencies in peacebuilding operations, a recent external study commissioned by the UN entitled, *Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations*,⁷⁶ tentatively proposes that developmental work should be embedded at the start of peacekeeping, and that the long-term success of peacebuilding requires including development work into operations from the start.⁷⁷ The reports recommendations, however, are principally aimed at unifying the coordination and budgetary demands of peacebuilding work under a common framework in post-conflict environments, and not at integrating security

⁷¹ United Nations, *Fourth progress report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Missions in Côte d'Ivoire*, S/2005/186, 18 March 2005, p. 13, par 65.

⁷² United Nations, *Fourth progress report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Missions in Côte d'Ivoire*, *op cit.*, pp. 16-17, para. 81.

⁷³ See for example, United Nations, *Multidimensional Peacekeeping*, UNDPKO, pp. 183-198.

⁷⁴ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Missions in Sierra Leone*, S/2002/679, 19 June 2002, p. 3, para. 21.

⁷⁵ United Nations, *Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustained development in Africa*, A/59/285, 20 August 2004, p. 16, par. 58.

⁷⁶ Espen Barth Eide, Anja Therese Kaspersen, Ramdolph Kent, and Karen von Hippel, *Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations*, Independent Study for the Expanded UN ECHA Core Group, May 2005, 52 pp.

⁷⁷ Eide *et al.*, *Integrated Missions*, *op cit.*, pp. 7; 24.

efforts and development work at the start of a complex peace operation. This is illustrated in the following table (table 3):

Table 3: Post-Brahimi complex peace operations and ‘Integrated Missions’

Model/Era	Transition from war to peace		
	Conflict	Stabilisation	Post-Conflict Reconstruction
Complex Peace Operations (Post-Brahimi)	Traditional Peacekeeping Initial Peacebuilding		Integrated Peacebuilding

Likewise, the purpose of creating an intergovernmental ‘Peacebuilding Commission’ as proposed by Kofi Annan in his report entitled *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security, and Human Rights for All*,⁷⁸ is to provide assistance to war-torn countries in ‘the immediate aftermath of war’⁷⁹ and after peace agreements have been established, and not at exploring ways to introduce development as way to solve conflict.

The point trying to be made is that it seems as if UN decision-makers and researchers fail to appreciate the fundamental importance of limiting the time delays that typically occur between peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, and that security and development are precursors of one another. More research is needed on developing alternative strategies capable of breaking the cycle of recurrent conflict and to ensure that these strategies are mutually supported and integrated with developmental efforts that embrace military, political, economic, and social dimensions in the early planning and execution of operations – and not only after conflict has ended.

Clearly, there are very practical problems if civilian reconstruction and development personnel are expected to operate side-by-side with military forces at the onset of a peacekeeping operation, but these challenges have already been overcome by some. For instance, Kellogg, Brown, and Root (KBR Ltd), a global infrastructure development and project management company, specialises in the rapid deployment and maintenance of logistics and basic infrastructure for military forces and civilians in conflict areas. Technically, personnel contracted by KBR are able to perform all the activities traditionally performed by the military in the battlefield except for participating in actual combat.⁸⁰

At any rate, for those who claim that civilians have not operated in the midst of conflict seem to forget that over the past several decades many non-governmental organisations have carried out development work in the face of on-going violence in places as diverse as Sudan and El-Salvador,⁸¹ and countries such as the US have utilised civilian contractors in military operations since the American Revolution (the US has even a published doctrine pertaining to this capability⁸² and the UK will soon follow suite). The trend of utilising civilian contractors on the battlefield, moreover,

⁷⁸ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General: In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all*, A/59/2005, 21 March 2005, p. 31, par. 114.

⁷⁹ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General: In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all (Addendum 2: Peacebuilding Commission)*, A/59/2005 Add.2, p. 3.

⁸⁰ For more information on KBR, visit the company’s official website at [<http://www.halliburton.com/kbr/index.jsp>]

⁸¹ See for example, Deborah Eade (Ed), *Development in States of War*, Oxfam: Oxford, UK, 1 December 1996, 112 pp.

⁸² United States Department of the Army, Army Publication FM 3-100.2 (100-21), *Contractors on the Battlefield*, Washington D. C., 3 January 2003.

is growing at a rapid rate, and a number of other countries are exploring the advantages of utilising civilian contractors in conditions of conflict, amongst others, in Canada.⁸³

4. Problem statement

To sum up, without a clear theoretical understanding of the workings of war economies, and assuming that political solutions can be successful without any effective (developmental and enforcing) strategies to address their underlying economic logic, separating warring parties has not always created a safe environment for peacebuilding, and in some cases has assisted the functioning of war economies. As a consequence, peacekeeping operations tend to be prolonged and peacebuilding efforts can take years to start. The longer it takes for peacebuilding work to commence, the greater the probability of countries returning to conflict. Although recent UN complex operations have introduced some peacebuilding efforts in peacekeeping operations to address the underlying causes of conflict at the early stage of a mission, these early initiatives are not explicitly designed to transform war economies or form part of a larger framework for long-term development and reconstruction.

5. An alternative approach to understand conflict: think systems

As fundamental as the causes of conflict and conditions of peace are to the social sciences, there is surprisingly little consensus on what these causes and conditions are. A likely explanation for this is that there is a disturbing lack of integrative knowledge on the subject of conflict.⁸⁴ Typically, academics from different disciplinary boundaries have attempted to understand conflict by studying isolated events and their causes (usually assumed to be some other event) that normally arise in situations of conflict without trying to examine how the *mutual interactions* between events actually create the ideal conditions for, and determine the nature of, conflict.

As a result, contradictory and sometimes mutually exclusive conflict theories have been proposed,⁸⁵ and the majority of these theories have formed the basis of today's conflict resolution approaches which usually focus on responding to the symptomatic, more obvious problems of conflict, and solving these events in a linear (or sequential) and compartmentalised manner i.e. security efforts followed by development work.

The systems thinking perspective argues, however, that symptomatic solutions tend to have short-term benefits at best. Because the fundamental causes of a complex problem are not 'seen' or not attended to, the underlying causes of the problem tend to resurface in the long-term, and there is increased pressure for decision-makers to apply more symptomatic responses.

The systems thinking approach underscores that, to impose artificial linear solutions on a complex social problem like conflict, ignores the reality that conflict is created by a multitude of interdependent and interweaving forces. Management tools and techniques that rely on conventional methods of analysis are thus of limited use in complex and seemingly unpredictable conflict

⁸³ See for example John C F Mackay, *Is there a role for civilian contractors on Canadian forces deployed operations?*, paper written in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies at the Canadian Forces College.

⁸⁴ K Holsti, *Ecological and Clausewitzian approaches to the study of war: assessing the possibilities*, paper presented at the 30th Anniversary Convention of the International Studies Association, London, 1989.

⁸⁵ For a detailed discussion on different theories on conflict see for example João Gomes Porto, 'Contemporary Conflict Analysis in Perspective', in Jeremy Lind and Kathryn Sturman (Eds), *Scarcity and Surfeit: the ecology of Africa's conflicts*, Institute for Security Studies: Pretoria, 2002, p. 1.

environments.⁸⁶ As such, understanding the complex and nonlinear processes of conflict requires new tools, techniques, and analytical methods. In this regard, system thinking seems to be a useful decision-support tool capable of ‘seeing’ the underlying processes responsible for causing conflict.

The fact that very few theories on conflict in Africa have explicitly utilised a systems perspective to understand the complex nature of conflict is quite remarkable. Systems thinking has been employed to conceptualise and investigate a broad range of complex phenomena in many areas of science, including in the social sciences and more recently in the realm of security (such as mapping terrorist networks and criminal organisations)⁸⁷. While the application of systems thinking in the social sciences is not without its critics,⁸⁸ sufficient empirical research now exists to acknowledge that the systems thinking ‘paradigm’ is set to challenge traditional methods of analysis in the social sciences.⁸⁹

5.1 *Systems thinking fundamentals*

Systems thinking is essentially concerned with how the internal organisation or structure of a complex system is related to the system’s behaviour. The term ‘structure’ in systems thinking refers to the multiple and interwoven interactions that occur between the elements that form a complex system. These interactions allow information and energy to continually flow between the elements of a complex system.⁹⁰ Complex systems are also open system – that is, energy and information are constantly being imported and exported across the system’s boundaries. Because all elements in a complex system are interdependent of one another, change in one element will cause a change in the rest, and ultimately the overall behaviour of the system.

Understanding structure is central to systems thinking because structures generate the *patterns of behaviour* (long-term trends) and resulting *events* (short-term trends) that occur within complex systems. As such, systems thinking gains much of its analytical power as a problem solving method from the fact that problematic patterns of behaviour can be identified and replaced with more sustainable patterns. This is done by identifying the *leverage points* of a complex system. Leverage points are actions and changes in structures which, with a minimum of effort, can lead to significant, enduring improvements within the system. The more structure is understood, the more likely the leverage points of a complex problem can be identified. This is illustrated by the following diagram (figure 2)

⁸⁶ C. Murat Boz, A. Nuri Basoglu, and M. Atilla Oner *System Dynamic Modelling of Conflicts within Turkey and Between Turkey and her Neighbours*, [http://sye.yeditepe.edu.tr/2001%20System%20Dynamic%20Modeling%20of%20Conflicts%20Within%20Turkey%20and%20Between%20Turkey%20and%20Her%20Neighbors.PDF].

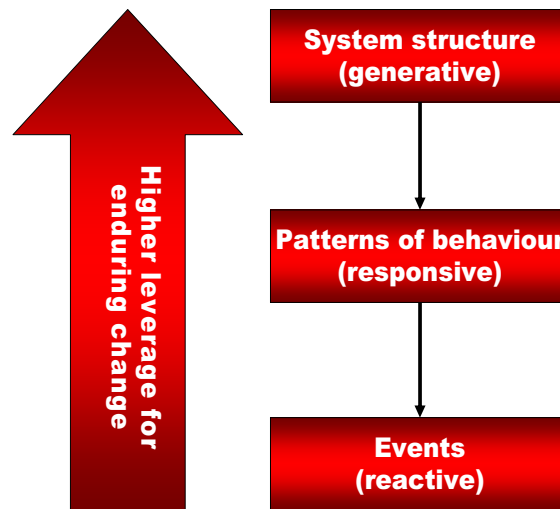
⁸⁷ See for example, Valdis E. Krebs, ‘Uncloaking terrorist networks’, *First Monday*, [http://www.firstmonday.dk/issues/issue7_4/krebs].

⁸⁸ See for example, Medd, W. & Haynes, P. (1998) *Complexity and the Social*, paper presented at the CSTT/ESRC ‘The Language of Complexity’ Workshop, Keele University, [http://www.keele.ac.uk/dept/stt/cstt2/comp/medd.htm].

⁸⁹ See for example, Raymond A. Eve, Sara Horsfall, and Mary F. Lee, *Chaos, Complexity and Sociology: myths, models and theories*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997.

⁹⁰ Fritjof Capra. *The Web of Life : A New Scientific Understanding of Living Systems*, Anchor Books: New York, 1996, p. 160.

Figure 2: System structure and leverage



It is necessary to grasp the general properties of complex systems when attempting to correct the underlying structural causes of a particular problem. The following section will examine some of these properties in more detail.

5.2 Properties of complex systems

In systems thinking it is an axiom that ‘effect’ can only be influenced by ‘cause’. This means that the direction of change or action within complex systems can be influenced directly and indirectly – that is, cause can lead to effect and effect can feed back to cause. In systems thinking, this is referred to as *nonlinearity*. The principle of nonlinearity has important implications for other properties of complex systems. Perhaps the most important of these is *feedback*.

Feedback describes a circular chain of cause-and-effect relationships, which essentially means that an element of a system indirectly influences itself. Recycled information can either counteract change (balancing feedback loops) or amplify change (reinforcing feedback loops). Balancing feedback loops maintain the implicit goal of a system, while reinforcing feedback loops allow a system to set new goals.⁹¹

The reason for emphasizing feedback is that the causes of an observed pattern of behaviour are often found within feedback structures.⁹² For instance, local warring factions may trade resources with international buyers for hard cash, which is used to acquire military equipment, which, in turn, is used to control resources, and so forth. It is also important to note that virtually all feedback processes have some form of *delay* or interruption between actions and their consequences. Delays influence the length of time it takes for change to become evident. Failure to recognise delays can result in aggressive behaviour which could prove to be counterproductive.

The ability to adapt through feedback processes is termed in systems thinking as *self-organisation*. Complex systems are able to re-organise their own structures based on experiences (feedback). The ability to continuously adapt and change from within, and from external imposition, makes system behaviour very difficult to predict or to oppose. This is because any change in one part of the

⁹¹ Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, Doubleday: New York, 1994, p. 111

⁹² Craig W Kirkwood, *Systems dynamics methods: a quick introduction*, College of Business, Arizona State University, [<http://www.public.asu.edu/~kirkwood/sysdyn/SDIntro/ch-1.pdf>], 1998, p. 7.

system will result in some variation in other parts, and the input of a new idea or individual action can lead to unpredictable and seemingly chaotic patterns of behaviour. This uncertainty of predictability is known in systems thinking as *chaos*, and describes how the collective behaviour of a complex system is very sensitive to subtle changes in any part of the system. The general behavioural pattern of a system that arises out of local interactions is termed in systems thinking as *emergence* – seeing spontaneous order emerge from chaotic, self-organising behaviour.

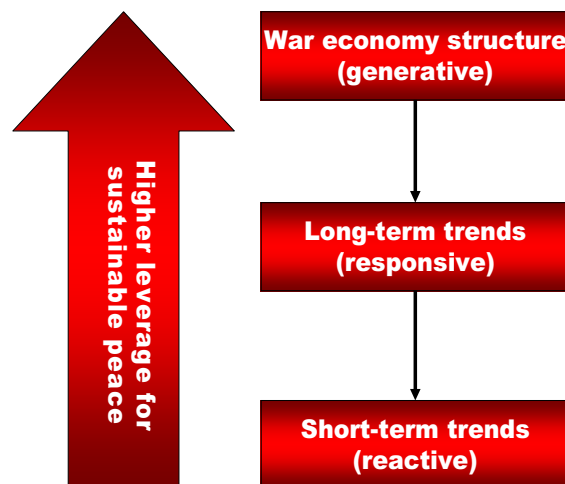
Based on this basic understanding of the properties of complex systems, the following section examines how these properties can be used to ‘see’ and understand the underlying structures that generate and sustain conflict.

5.3 *Complex systems, conflict, and war economy systems*

Adopting the language of systems thinking, the phenomena of conflict may be understood as an emergent system formed by the interaction of historical, political, economic, social, and cultural events which form a specific pattern. In Africa, this pattern seems to suggest the prevalence of war economies. The elements that form this ‘war economy system’ are interdependent on one another (i.e. each element has an influence, and is influenced, by other elements), and together these elements form a ‘war economy structure’. This structure is responsible for generating the long-term trends and resulting short-term trends that typically arise in a war economy.

The process of dismantling war economy systems, and replacing them with more sustainable structures, is done by identifying leverage points. The main advantage of using leverage-based strategies is that they follow the principle of economy of means – that is, the most enduring results come from small, well-focused actions and not from large-scale efforts.⁹³ This is illustrated by the following diagram (figure 3):

Figure 3: War economy structure and leverage



War economies, like most complex problems in our world, exhibit the essential properties of complex systems. If we assume for one moment that the main goal of a war economy is to generate conflict for economic reasons (usually, this holds true), then reinforcing processes would be responsible for generating enough conflict to support the exploitation of economic resources. On the other hand, balancing process would be responsible for maintaining that level of conflict by

⁹³ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline, op cit*, p. 114.

counteracting any external force that aims to either reduce or increase the required level of conflict necessary for resource exploitation. Together, these processes allow a war economy system to self-organise its elements when confronted with external changes in the environment. Moreover, the time it takes for these feedback processes to self-organise the elements of a war economy system can vary from element to element, which makes it very difficult for those wanting to challenge war economies to understand their seemingly chaotic and unpredictable behaviour.

From a systems perspective, it is very important to understand the properties of complex systems when attempting to understand and solve complex social problems such as conflict. If not, it is unlikely that organisations and decision-makers involved in responding to conflict will be able to forecast the consequences of their actions. Because of this, they may decide to employ strategies which could ultimately produce exactly the opposite of what they originally intended to do (Somalia is case in point).

5.4 *Modelling war economies with complex peace operations*

The nature of linkages that exist in war economy systems must be better understood, measured, modelled, and simulated so that leverage-based strategies can be identified to transform war economy systems. This process requires the use of advanced system tools and techniques – most notably system dynamics – for modelling and simulating war economies.

System dynamics is a computer-based approach to model and simulate complex physical and social systems, and to experiment with these models and simulations to identify leverage-based policies and strategies.⁹⁴ Feedback processes and delays are the building blocks of these models, and their interactions can represent and explain system behaviour.

A model is a simplified representation of a real system, over a specific point in time. Since all models are simplifications of reality, there is always a trade-off as to what level of detail is included in the model. Too little detail can overlook major interactions, while too much detail can obscure them. In order to verify that the model actually produces the patterns of behaviour that are recorded from historical data, the model must be simulated.

The process of simulating a model is very helpful because long-term patterns of behaviour of the modelled system are compressed over time and space. If the level of simulation is accurate, the leverage points of a modelled system can be identified. This process is performed by simulating changes to certain elements in the model to determine their impact on other elements of the system. Those elements that cause the greatest changes within the whole system can be regarded as leverage points, and these form the basis of leverage-based strategies.

In order to gain a broad understanding of the nature of linkages that form a war economy system and to identify leverage-based strategies, a model representing the major causes and characteristics of war economies as discussed earlier in the discussion was developed using *Think Tools® Suite 4.1*. Although not country-specific, great emphasis was placed to identify and fit the broad parameters of war economies into the model.

Naturally, this ‘generic war economy model’ is based on a few assumptions and these assumptions are known to be uncertain. Nonetheless, the advantage of using computer-based modelling tools is that assumptions can easily be changed, and the implications of these changes can be easily

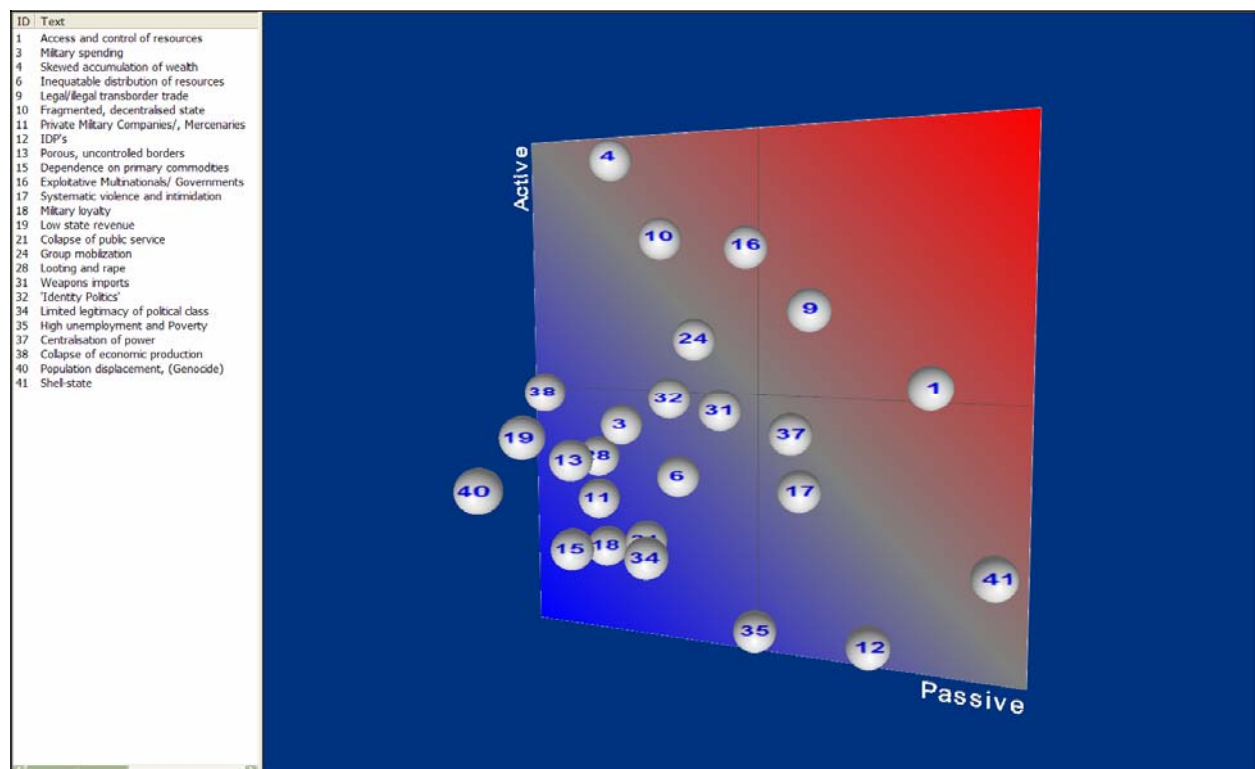
⁹⁴ For a more detailed explanation on system dynamics see for example, W J Forrester, ‘Industrial Dynamics: a major breakthrough for decision makers’, *Harvard Business Review*, 36/4, 1958, pp. 37-66.

understood. It should also be borne in mind that the purpose of developing the model was not to develop some sort of ‘magic formula’ but primarily to illustrate how system thinking techniques can assist researchers to illuminate the underlying causes of conflict and how conflict can be solved in enduring ways. Furthermore, although the model was not simulated, one of the core programmes of *Think Tools®*, namely the ‘Active/Passive Map’, is designed to identify a system’s leverage points. As such, the value of the model as it stands is limited to understanding the structure of war economies, over a specific point in time and space.

5.4.1 War economy systems: modelling results

The *Think Tools®* Active/Passive Map is used to identify three key factors of a system, namely leverage points, drivers, and outcomes. In the map (see figure 5 and 6 below), factors in the top-right and bottom-left quadrants are leverage points. As previously mentioned, leverage points are factors that, if changed, can have a rippling effect on other factors. Leverage points in the top-right quadrant are both highly active (cause change) and highly passive (can be changed). The leverage points in the bottom-left quadrant are less active and less active. Thus, as a rule, the top-right leverage points (in the red area of the map) are those that can cause the most change in a system. Factors in the top-left quadrant are drivers (factors that drive other factors), and are factors that can be controlled. Factors in the bottom-right quadrant are outcomes (factors driven by other factors), and are factors which cannot be controlled. The Active/Passive Map of the generic war economy model is shown in the following diagram (figure 4)

Figure 4: Generic war economy model



The Active/Passive Map of the generic war economy model suggests that to avoid the problematic outcomes of a war economy system – typically the centralisation of political-military power (37), systemic violence and intimidation (17), high unemployment rates and poverty levels (35), the creation of shell-states (12), and mass numbers of internally displaced people (41) – leverage in dismantling, transforming, and/or replacing a war economy system lies in addressing:

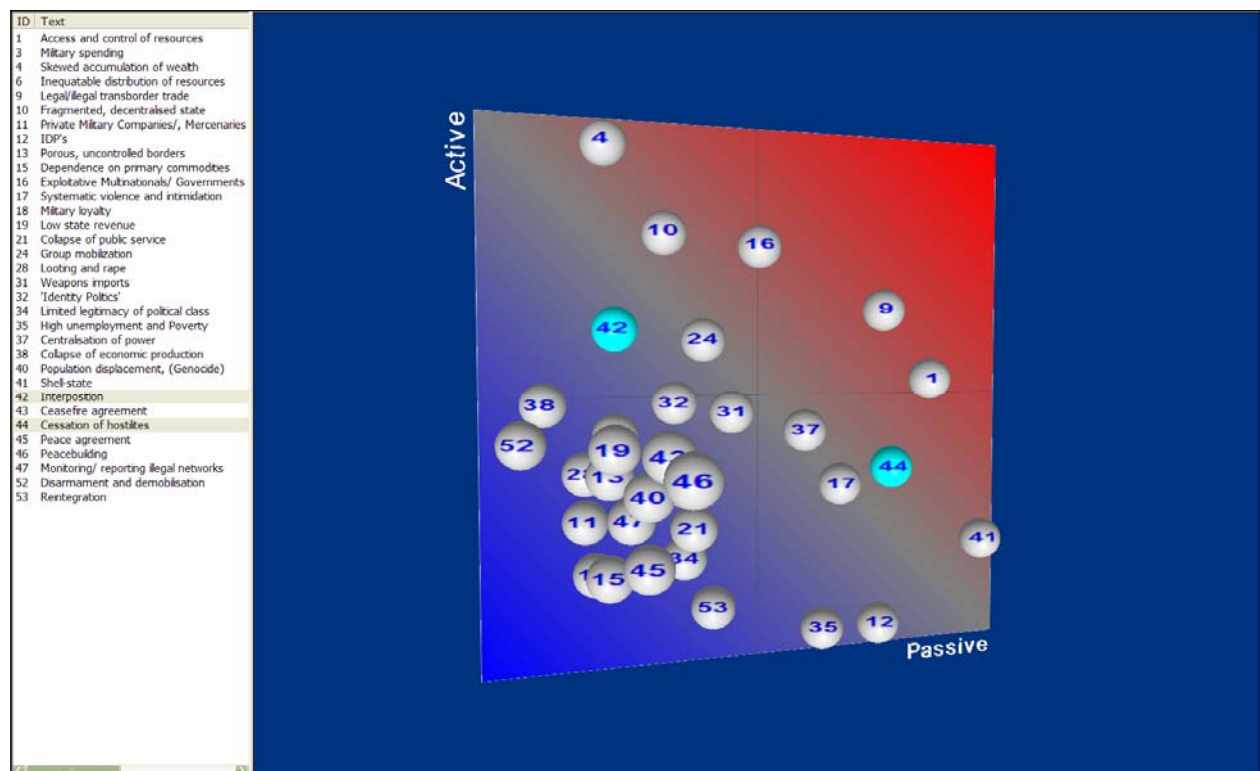
- the illegal access and control natural resources (1);
- the trade of natural resources and other valuable commodities (9);
- the workings of exploitative multinationals and foreign governments (16); and
- the import of weapons by state and non-state actors (31).

Clearly, all these issues relate to the underlying economic logic of conflict in Africa, and seem to validate the fact that very few conflicts are fought over definable geo-strategic goals. This is not to say, however, that other factors that cause conflict are not important or that they should not be addressed. Indeed, the model does suggest that the elements that sustain or drive a war economy system – typically, the skewed accumulation of wealth (4), the decentralisation of the state (10), the mobilisation of armed groups (24) through the politics of identity (32), and the collapse of economic production (38) – are important factors to consider when attempting change war economy systems.

5.4.2 War economy systems and UN complex peace operations: modelling results

In order to evaluate the UN's ability to counter war economies, the complex peace operation model (see figure 5) was factored into the generic war economy model. This combined model reveals that UN complex peace operations do not fundamentally change the outcomes of the war economy system, but merely bring about the cessation of hostilities (44). The factors that drive the war economy also remain unchanged but now include interposition (42). The Active/Passive map of the combined model is illustrated below (figure 5):

Figure 5: Generic war economy model and complex peace operations model



The results of the combined model seem to reinforce the arguments presented in the previous section: current complex peace operations are not structured to address the underlying economic

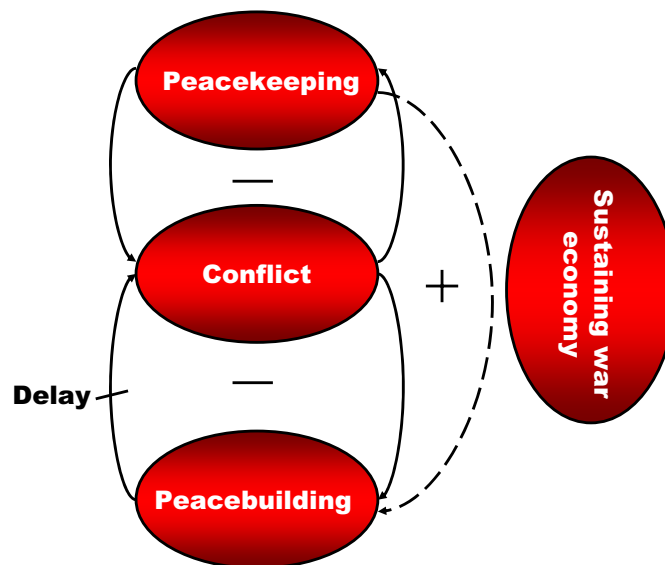
logic of war economy systems. The model also suggests that interposition is a driving factor of war economy systems, thus emphasizing the idea that current UN approaches may serve to reinforce the functioning of war economies.

If it is fair to suggest that the UN has often failed to meet the challenges posed war by economy systems, and keeping in mind that some UN decision-makers feel that ‘it can do no better today’,⁹⁵ the obvious question is: can the UN do better tomorrow? In this regard, one of the most important, and potentially most empowering, insights to come from the systems thinking approach is that not all problems are unique. Certain structural patterns in social organisations recur again and again. In systems thinking, these recurring structures are known as ‘systems archetypes’.

5.5 The UN and the ‘shifting-the-burden’ system archetype

The fact that conflict in Africa routinely subsides and returns while peacekeepers are deployed, and that the reliance on peacekeeping is constantly increasing,⁹⁶ suggests a case of what is termed in systems thinking as the ‘shifting-the-burden’ archetype. The shifting-the-burden structure reveals that an underlying problem (war economy) generates symptoms (intractable conflict, resource exploitation) that demand attention. A short-term solution (peacekeeping) is used to correct the problem, with seemingly positive results (ceasefire agreements, peace agreements), but over time it becomes evident that this solution only ameliorates the symptom, while the underlying problem (lack of socio-economic development) is left unaltered. In the long-term, the symptomatic problem resurfaces (return of conflict) and there is increased pressure for symptomatic responses. Meanwhile, the underlying problem remains unaddressed, and the side-effects of the symptomatic response (sustaining war economies) make it harder to apply the fundamental solution (peacebuilding). This is illustrated in the following diagram (figure 6):

Figure 6: The UN and the ‘shifting-the-burden’ problem structure



The UN’s response to the conflict in Sierra Leone presents a good example of the shifting-the-burden problem. Although UN peacekeepers have been present in the country for over four years

⁹⁵ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, op cit.*, p. viii.

⁹⁶ United Nations, *United Nations Peace Operations: Year in Review 2004*, [http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/pub/year_review04/ch7.htm], 2 June 2005.

(since 1999), the underlying causes of the conflict have, until now, not been sufficiently addressed.⁹⁷ In fact, the UN's initial response to the conflict in Sierra Leone resulted in a scenario of recurrent conflict where achievements were generally short-lived and unsustainable. Pressure to ameliorate these problems resulted in a gradual increase in the number of military peacekeepers, from 6000 in October 1999, to 17,500 in March 2001.⁹⁸ Despite attempts to bolster the UN's peacekeeping capacity, widespread poverty, illiteracy, discrimination against women, corruption, lack of accountability, and high levels of youth unemployment continue to contribute to the level of instability in Sierra Leone.⁹⁹ Even more shocking is that as much as 70 percent of the population continue to live on less than a dollar a day.¹⁰⁰ Interestingly enough, according to the UN's own estimates on the success rate of its peace operations, Sierra Leone has a sixty percent chance of relapsing into conflict if its root causes remain unaltered in the fifth year of the UN intervention (i.e. around October 2005.)

The chronic situation of recurrent and intractable conflict in Africa invites a new approach to challenge the way the UN currently operates. According to the systems thinking perspective, leverage in the shifting-the-burden structure lies in, firstly, weakening the symptomatic response and strengthening the fundamental solution, and secondly, combining the symptomatic and fundamental solutions.¹⁰¹ This means that to avoid the chances of countries relapsing into conflict, and to ensure self-sustaining peace, strategies should be developed to weaken conventional peacekeeping responses and strengthen peacebuilding work, and also to combine these operations into functionally complementing processes.

6. Developmental Peace Missions

So far, the paper has shown that security can no longer be regarded as a precursor for development but rather that security and development are precursors of one another and mutually interdependent. Although it has become common-place to assert that security and development are intimately linked, the need to address these twin imperatives through integrated policies and programmes from the start of a new mission, at this stage, is still lacking.

Despite lip-service being paid to the centrality of the development-security discourse, few missions have explicitly unified developmental work with security efforts to deal with the full range of interrelated issues that threaten peace and security. Adopting this approach requires addressing military and human security issues at the same time i.e. any effort at obtaining stability and security also implies an effort at development. This assumption forms the basis for the concept of Developmental Peace Missions.¹⁰²

The concept of Developmental Peace Missions strongly draws on systems thinking for its theoretical base. The concept was developed to understand the structure of conflict in Africa, and adopts the

⁹⁷ United Nations, *Twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Missions in Sierra Leone*, S/2005/273, 26 April 2005, p. 11, par 47.

⁹⁸ United Nations, *Sierra Leone – UNIMASIL – Background*, Department of Peacekeeping Operations [<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unamsil/background.html>], 11 July 2005.

⁹⁹ United Nations, *Twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Missions in Sierra Leone*, S/2005/273, 26 April 2005, p. 11, par 47.

¹⁰⁰ United Nations, *Twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Missions in Sierra Leone*, *op cit.*, p. 10, par 40.

¹⁰¹ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, *op cit.*, p. 111

¹⁰² In line with South Africa's current White Paper on Peace Missions (tabled in parliament 24 February 1999), the term peace 'operation' is avoided because it immediately creates the perception of military dominance. The term 'mission', on the other hand, suggests a broader series of diplomatic, political, and economic activities.

systems thinking approach to ‘see’ this underlying structure. In this way, systems thinking acts as a filter which can assist decision-makers to identify the most important activities and relationships in situations of conflict in a manner that is useful for the development of policy to ensure sustainable development and peace in Africa.

Unlike the UN complex peace operations model, the Developmental Peace Missions approach does not distinguish between peace enforcement, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding as separate phases in a linear process, but proposes that these operations should be combined or integrated in the field to address the nonlinear and interrelated nature of war economies. These operations are regarded as simultaneous and to be used in combination in the field for two specific reasons. The systems thinking perspective highlights that, firstly, security and development are mutually interdependent, and secondly, leverage in the shifting-the-burden problem structure lies in combining the symptomatic response (security) and the fundamental solution (development). In light of this, some implications of adopting the concept of Developmental Peace Missions are explored in the next section.

6.1 *Some implications*

It should be recognised from the outset that any efforts at dismantling war economies cannot be regarded as value and judgement free.¹⁰³ Challenge the structural sources of a war economy system will inevitable change its structure and will add another layer of 'conflict' – that is, a conflict of interests – to the war economy, thus increasing its complexity. This, however, does not detract from the responsibility of Africans and rest of the international community to commit to human security and sustainable development in Africa.

An important implication of the Developmental Peace Missions approach rests on an analytical level. A systems analysis of the complex and interrelated issues of conflict (both military and human security) in the target-region is required to determine its underlying structural source and logic. This entails a clear understanding of the reinforcing processes that originally gave rise to the conflict and the balancing processes that sustain it. In this regard, the identification of leverage points within these processes can play a fundamental role – with a minimum of effort and application of resources – in transforming problematic events and patterns of behaviour and replacing these with more sustainable structures. Understanding conflict through a systems paradigm can greatly assist decision-makers to determine what needs to be done and by whom, how, and when in a mission.

Secondly, the different actors, agencies, and institutions involved in a mission must plan and work together under a common strategic framework to ensure that combined security and developmental efforts are started as soon as possible, and that these efforts form part of a larger framework for long-term development and reconstruction. Stakeholder-involvement is a key component of the planning process as local actors have the knowledge and experience to prioritise essential needs and key problems with foreign civilian experts. This integrated planning approach in some ways correspond to the notion of ‘integrated missions’ as proposed by the UN, but places more emphasis on fusing security and developmental efforts throughout the course of a mission (as opposed to a more integrated peacebuilding approach in post-conflict environments), and on addressing security and development issues in an interrelated and contextually relevant way (as opposed to sectoral programming).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Liberal Roland Paris, ‘Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism’, *International Security*, 22/2, 1997, p.56.

¹⁰⁴ See for example, M I Midlarsky (Ed), *Inequality, democracy and economic development*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1997.; P Healey, *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places and fragmented societies*, MacMillan Press: London, 1997.

Immediate security and developmental efforts should focus on minimising the chances of the target country relapsing into conflict. At the same time, these early efforts must lay the foundation for reversing the problematic political, economic, social and environmental patterns of behaviour that typically prevail in shell-states and their economies of war.

This process is bound to be *costly*, and requires greater resources than donor countries and African states have been so far willing to commit to reconstruction and development on the Continent. It will be a *long-term* process, as the introduction of appropriate forms of governance, regulated market relationships, and impartial judicial systems, as well as mechanisms to re-distribute resources, inevitably all take time – realistically, at least a ten to twenty year time horizon. It will also require a *greater commitment to using military force* as the odds of re-structuring and transforming war economy systems may depend on the ability of military forces to break the all-important link between commodities and conflict. Finally, this process requires *recognising the limitations of peace missions* as the obstacles facing success are so significant as to raise doubts about the capacity of any mission to be consistently effective. Given the magnitude of the challenges, the range of actors involved, the range of agendas engaged, and serious resource constraints, and keeping in mind that developmental assistance has not always been successful in areas devoid of conflict, it is crucial to take a realistic, more incremental approach to address the problematic patterns of behaviour and relationships that exist in war economy systems.

Thirdly, on an implementation level, peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations (and potentially peace enforcement) should combine in the field into functionally complementing processes at the start of a mission, and even when conflict is still ongoing. Amongst other things, this entails deploying civilian personnel in conflict zones. While the idea of deploying civilians to do development work in unstable and dangerous environments may seem daunting, early peacebuilding work during conflict can be a major incentive for securing peace, and may potentially serve as a basis for long-term political accountability and economic sustainability.

Militarized violence is rarely, if ever, equal in intensity throughout war economy systems. As such, doing development work during conflict periods provides an opportunity for intervening forces to ensure early dividends to peace, at least in some areas of the target-region. Significantly, these early initiatives can play a major role in improving the credibility of a new mission and set a positive tone for the rest of the mission.¹⁰⁵ Fast-tracking basic service delivery, skill-development, and creating formal income-generating activities in these ‘zones of civility’¹⁰⁶ is crucial to this project, as these initiatives may undercut the temptations of combatants and ordinary citizens for continued participation in the war economy. Ultimately, these areas may serve as a model to encourage similar initiatives in other regions.

The responsibility for creating the space for peacebuilding work rests primarily with the military. In resource-rich areas, this task may prove particularly challenging since, as the generic African model illustrates, it requires recapturing key commercial targets, undermining the activities of transnational criminal networks (including the Multinationals that support these networks), and curbing the flow of weapons. While some of these tasks may seem too improbable for some, few can disagree that

¹⁰⁵ According to Major Adam Wills, group commander of the Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) group, a specialist unit of the British Army which manages the interface between military and civilian organisations wherever British forces are deployed in operations, the current situation in Iraq could have been largely avoided if American and British troops started reconstruction and development immediately after the conventional war had been won. In other words, the gap between security and development efforts in the campaign should have been shortened to ensure early dividends to peace (or regime change) in Iraq.

¹⁰⁶ The term ‘zones of civility’ was coined by Mary Kaldor, currently the Director of the Global Civil Society Programme at the London School of Economics and political Science. See Kaldor, *New and Old Wars, op cit.*, pp. 133-134.

the business of war will continue to be a low-risk, high-profit activity if warring parties are not denied from their major source of sustainability. It seems appropriate then to suggest that the use of force, or the threat of force, is essential to curb the plundering and trade of valuable resources and the perpetuation of conflict.

It should be borne in mind, however, that most combatants and many ordinary citizens rely on the informal economy for survival. For these individuals, taking part in the war economy is nothing more than a lucrative job opportunity and way to escape poverty. Accordingly, any enforcement action should be accompanied by the creation of alternative forms of income. If not, it is possible that local populations may become hostile towards foreign intervention forces.¹⁰⁷

Fourthly, underpinning all these implications is the inclusion of the basic principles of sustainable development into peace missions. The primary strategic objective of any peace mission, especially in Africa, must be to contribute towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.¹⁰⁸

6.2 *From theory to practice: critical questions and practical recommendations*

From a theoretical standpoint, the concept of Developmental Peace Missions seems appropriate in creating a different perspective on the nature and functioning of conflict systems and how to respond to them. Unlike most other conflict resolution approaches, the concept explicitly adopts a systems thinking perspective to create a clear understanding of the complex structures that are responsible for causing conflict. With this understanding, it is possible to develop better strategies that could dismantle African conflict systems and replace these with more peaceful and enduring structures.

Yet, the concept of Developmental Peace Missions was not developed to simply be theoretically sound, but fundamentally to serve as a mechanism to alleviate the immense suffering caused by conflict in Africa. The strategies as proposed by the concept of Developmental Peace Missions will be of little value if they cannot be realistically and practically implemented. To be applicable, the Developmental Peace Missions concept must move from the realm of theory to the realities of implementation. To do this, specific issues need to be addressed and practical solutions to these issues need to be developed. They are:

- The ability and feasibility of embedding systems thinking methods, tools, and techniques in the policy arena in order to develop viable and sustainable responses to conflict, specifically the need to model and simulate conflict as part of an integrated decision-support system
- Translating a systems based understanding of conflict into a strategic framework, policy, doctrine, and appropriate structures
- Identify and mobilise the technical implementation requirements relating to funding, institutional structures, skills, capacity, and interoperability

¹⁰⁷ For example, the problem with ‘crossing the Mogadishu line’ in Somalia, as various commentators have pointed out, was not the use of excessive force by American special forces operators, but the failure of the mission to take into account the political and economic situation of the country.

¹⁰⁸ The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) aim to (1) eradicate poverty and extreme hunger, (2) achieve universal primary education, (3) promote gender equality and empower women, (4) reduce child mortality, (5) improve maternal wealth, (6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, (7) ensure environmental sustainability, and (8) develop a global partnership for development by the year 2015. More information on the MDGs can be accessed on the official website of the UN at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

- Mobilisation of support for the implementation of Developmental Peace Missions interventions by the international community with special reference to the United Nations, African Union, and other regional organisations.
- The ability to dismantle and transform war economy systems without exacerbating their functioning and undermining some of their positive generative process
- Means to accelerate short-term capacity building, service delivery, and equitable redistribution of natural resources in accordance with long-term development goals in an unstable, volatile, and non-consensual environment
- The feasibility of deploying civilian (re)construction capacity alongside military forces in hostile environments
- Operationalise development approaches into security efforts in such a way as to advance the achievement of the Millennium Developmental Goals
- Defining the requirements of a suitable exit strategy
- Assess Africa's capacity to implement Developmental Peace Missions in support of its own strategic objectives

7. Conclusion

The high failure rate of international peace interventions requires a re-thinking of current practices. In response to the apparent failures of the UN in Africa, Developmental Peace Missions offers an alternative African solution which aims to ensure that future peace operations on the Continent are implemented in a sustained and sustainable manner. In order to achieve this, and where applicable, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding operations must combine in the field and complement one another to address the nonlinear and interrelated problems posed by war-torn states. Ultimately, the success of adopting this perspective will depend on the willingness and ability of key institutional role players to move the concept of Developmental Peace Missions from theory to practical implementation.