

**National and Human Security Challenges Posed by Ethnic-influenced
conflict in the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa: A Case of the
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), 1980-2013**

by

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Abstract

The Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa comprises six countries which are Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The region is home to various ethnic groups such that it has inherited a cosmopolitan regional society with different cultures, religions and beliefs. This ethnicity diversity has for decades been a challenge to the region in the sense that it has had an influence on the politics and social fabric of the region's population. This study focused on the influence of ethnicity on conflict in the GLR of Africa with special focus on the DRC. This is because the region has for years been home to numerous coup d'états, civil wars, ethnic violence, cross-border conflicts, genocides as well as assassinations of political leaders. The DRC's post-independence era has had its fair share of negatives with unending conflict costing thousands of lives, destruction of infrastructure, socio-political instability and a weak base for economic growth. In the main the influence of ethnicity on the DRC conflict has posed serious challenges to national as well as human security and exacerbated the inability of regional leaders to find a solution for the sake of political and social stability as well as economic growth and development. It is for this reason that this study examined the national and human security challenges posed by the influence of ethnicity on the conflict in the DRC. This study has employed qualitative research method as it is based mainly on the data from disciplines in the social sciences such as History, Political Science and International Relations. The data collected was obtained from both primary sources and secondary sources. Where necessary, interviews were conducted to address the paucity of written information crucially important to achieve the objectives the study. The data from these sources was interpreted, analysed, integrated and critically presented in a narrative and descriptive manner.

Keywords: Ethnicity, national security, human security, political instability, conflict