The Dynamics of Transnational Alliances in Africa, 1990–2010: Governments, Rebel Groups, and Power Politics

Henning Tamm

St Antony's College

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DPhil in International Relations in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Oxford

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Abstract

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The Second Congo War (1998–2003) is widely considered the deadliest conflict since World War II, yet it has received little attention by International Relations theorists. A closer look reveals that both this war and its precursor, the First Congo War (1996–7), were neither simply intra-state nor just inter-state conflicts; their central feature were transnational alliances between neighboring governments and Congolese rebel groups. In fact, with one exception, every episode of internal war in sub-Saharan Africa from 1990 to 2010 involved external support to the rebel side from at least one African government.

In order to explain both the origins and the dynamics of transnational alliances, this dissertation develops a three-step theory. It explains why governments of weak states support foreign rebel groups, why they choose some groups from a specific country as alliance partners but not others, and why some of these allies subsequently behave uncooperatively towards their foreign sponsors, leading to the breakdown of alliances and the formation of new ones. The theory draws on both the rational choice literature and the realist school of thought. It also adapts insights from principal-agent theory. Overall, the three-step theory presents transnational alliances as the continuation of domestic politics by other means: both governments and rebel groups use them as an instrument in their own domestic struggle for power.

Drawing on a wide range of sources, including over one hundred interviews – almost all of them conducted in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda – the dissertation uses process tracing to apply the theory to seventeen transnational alliances from the Congo Wars and their aftermath. It also tests the theory's first step more widely in a cross-case analysis of forty-two African weak state dyads. Together, this multi-method approach demonstrates both the internal and the external validity of the theory.

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Abbreviations

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces (Uganda)
ADP	Alliance démocratique du peuple (Zaire)
AFDL	Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre
AFP	Agence France-Presse
AI	Amnesty International
ALIR	Armée de libération du Rwanda
ANC	Armée nationale congolaise
AP	Associated Press
APC	Armée populaire congolaise
ARS/UIC	Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia / Union of Islamic Courts
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAR	Central African Republic
CMF	*Chui* (Leopard) Mobile Force (DRC)
CMI	Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence (Uganda)
CNDD	Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie (Burundi)
CNDP	Congrès national pour la défense du peuple (DRC)
CNRD	Conseil national de résistance pour la démocratie (Zaire)
CNS	Conférence nationale souveraine (Zaire)
CSNPD	Comité de sursaut national pour la paix et la démocratie (Chad)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EACD	Expanded Armed Conflict Data
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
EIJ	Eritrean Islamic Jihad
ELF	Eritrean Liberation Front
EMOI	État-major opérationnel intégré (DRC)
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

ESO	External Security Organization (Uganda)
ex-FAR	ex-Forces armées rwandaises
FAC	Forces armées congolaises
FAPC	Forces armées du peuple congolais
FARDC	Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo
FARF	Forces armées de la république fédérale (Chad)
FAZ	Forces armées zaïroises
FDD	Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (Burundi)
FDLR	Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda
FIPI	Front pour l'intégration et la paix en Ituri (DRC)
FLC	Front de libération du Congo
FLEC-FAC	Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda – Forças Armadas de Cabinda (Angola)
FLNC	Front pour la libération nationale du Congo
FNI	Front des nationalistes intégrationnistes (DRC)
FNLA	Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola
FPDC	Force populaire pour la démocratie du Congo
FPLC	Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo
FRPI	Force de résistance patriotique en Ituri (DRC)
FRUD	Front pour la restauration de l'unité et de la démocratie (Djibouti)
FUCD	Front uni pour le changement démocratique (Chad)
HSRP	Human Security Report Project
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICD	Inter-Congolese Dialogue
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IDP	Internally displaced person
IEMF	Interim Emergency Multinational Force

IPC	Ituri Pacification Commission (DRC)
IPS	Inter Press Service
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
JCL	Justice Coalition of Liberia
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement (Sudan)
LDF	Local Defense Forces (DRC)
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army (Uganda)
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
M23	Mouvement du 23 mars (DRC)
MFDC	Mouvement des forces démocratiques de la Casamance (Senegal)
MID	Militarized inter-state dispute
MJP	Mouvement pour la justice et la paix (Côte d'Ivoire)
MLC	Mouvement de Libération du Congo
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MONUC	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies en RD Congo
MONUSCO	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en RD Congo
MPCI	Mouvement Patriotique de la Côte d'Ivoire
MPIGO	Mouvement populaire ivoirien du Grand Ouest
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
MPRD	Mouvement pour la paix, la reconstruction et le développement (Chad)
MPS	Mouvement patriotique du salut (Chad)
MRLZ	Mouvement révolutionnaire pour la liberation du Zaïre
NALU	National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
NDA	National Democratic Alliance (Sudan)
NIF	National Islamic Front (Sudan)
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NRA	National Resistance Army (Uganda)

NRF	National Redemption Front (Sudan)
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OKIMO	Office des mines d'or de Kilo-Moto (DRC)
PA	Principal-agent (theory)
PAIC	Popular Arab and Islamic Congress
Palipehutu-FNL	Parti pour la libération du Peuple Hutu – Forces nationales de libération (Burundi)
PLC	Parti de la libération congolais
PRA	People's Redemption Army (Uganda)
PRP	Parti de la révolution populaire (Zaire)
PUSIC	Parti pour l'unité et la sauvegarde de l'intégrité du Congo
QCA	Qualitative Comparative Analysis
RCD (-G / K/ML / N)	Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (– Goma / Kisangani/Mouvement de libération / National)
RDF	Rwanda Defence Force
Renamo	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SLA	Sudanese Liberation Army
SNM	Somali National Movement
SNPC	Synergie nationale pour la paix et la concorde (DRC)
SPLM/A	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement / Army
TPD	Tous pour la paix et le développement (DRC)
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front (Ethiopia)
UCDP/PRIO	Uppsala Conflict Data Program / Peace Research Institute of Oslo
UDPS	Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (DRC)

UFDD	Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement (Chad)
UFDR	Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (CAR)
ULIMO	United Liberation Movement for Democracy (Liberia)
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPC	Union des patriotes congolais
UPDA	Uganda People's Democratic Army
UPDF	Ugandan People's Defence Force
WNBF	West Nile Bank (Liberation) Front (Uganda)

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When I began the DPhil in October 2010, there were relatively few staff working on Central Africa at Oxford. Alexandra Martins, Emily Paddon, Harry Verhoeven, Will Jones, and I – all of us graduate students then – therefore decided to launch the Oxford Central Africa Forum (OCAF), which has gone from strength to strength ever since. I thank all four, as well as all the presenters we hosted, for incredibly rewarding discussions before, during, and after our events. I am especially grateful to Dan Fahey, who has become my role model for how to help, and engage with, less experienced Congo researchers.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The End of the Deadliest Conflict Since World War II?

Built on the northern shore of Lake Kivu and only a few meters away from the Rwandan border, Hotel Ihusi offers one of the most stunning settings in Goma, a provincial capital in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). On January 16, 2009, United Nations officials based in Goma were indeed truly stunned, albeit not by the hotel's natural surroundings. Congolese rebel commander Bosco Ntaganda of the Rwandan-backed *Congrès national pour la défense du peuple* (CNDP, National Congress for the Defense of the People) held a surprise press conference at Hotel Ihusi. He was accompanied by Congo's Interior Minister Célestin Mbuyu and Rwanda's Chief of Defence Staff James Kabarebe.

Ntaganda announced that he would take over the CNDP's leadership from its founder Laurent Nkunda, transform the group into a political party, and integrate its fighters into Congo's national army. Furthermore, the Congolese and Rwandan armies would soon launch a joint military operation to fight Rwandan rebels based in eastern DRC.[1] The United Nations peacekeeping mission in Congo (MONUC), the largest in the world, was completely taken by surprise. Its senior officials had neither been involved in nor informed of the deliberations that led to this momentous alliance shift.[2] Matthew Brubacher, a MONUC official, later described the Rwandan-Congolese *rapprochement* as "probably the most significant development here for 15 years."[3]

What had happened in those years?[4] At the end of the genocide in July 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) seized power in Rwanda's capital Kigali. In the meantime, the *génocidaires* – the deposed government and its armed forces – by and large fled to

[1] See ICG 2009, 4.
[2] Interview (#39) with a former MONUC official.
[3] Quoted in *The Guardian* 2010.
[4] For references on the historical overview that follows, see the detailed analysis in Chapters 4-5.

eastern Congo (then called Zaire) amidst more than a million refugees. Supported by Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko, the former government forces soon launched incursions into Rwanda. In October 1996, the RPF government responded to this cross-border threat by helping to create a Zairian rebel group whilst simultaneously invading eastern Zaire. Uganda and Angola also supported the rebels in this First Congo War. It ended in May 1997, when Laurent-Désiré Kabila was installed as the new president in Kinshasa, swiftly changing the name of the country into the DRC.

Following the breakdown of relations between Kabila and his main foreign sponsor only one year later, the Rwandan government instigated a new rebellion and again invaded its neighbor. Uganda quickly joined the fight against Kabila. This time, however, Angola, Chad, Namibia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe intervened on the president's side, leading to a military deadlock that was resolved by diplomatic means only at the end of 2002. Meanwhile, Rwanda and Uganda had shifted their support to competing Congolese rebel groups and ended up fighting each other three times in the DRC between 1999 and 2000.

After this Second Congo War formally ended, Rwanda continued to provide arms to Congolese allies in eastern DRC that opposed the government in Kinshasa. In 2005, renegade general Laurent Nkunda became Rwanda's most important partner, soon founding the CNDP. The joint Rwandan-Congolese press conference with Ntaganda at Hotel Ihusi in January 2009 – as well as Rwanda's arrest of Nkunda one week later – thus provided hope that there might finally be an end to a series of conflicts that, between August 1998 and April 2007 alone, may have caused up to 5.4 million deaths.[5]

[5] See the mortality survey data presented in IRC 2007, 16. For a methodological critique, which (a) suggests that the best estimate for August 1998 to May 2000 should be 0.68 million (rather than the IRC's 1.6), (b) simply rejects the 2001 survey, and (c) argues that the best estimate for May 2001 to April 2007 should be 0.86 million (rather than the IRC's 2.83), see HSRP 2010, 123-31. In sum, this critique suggests an overall estimate closer to two rather than five million. The debate is summarized in Williams 2011, 28-33.

Transnational Alliances in Africa: Three Research Questions

What is striking about the Congo Wars is that they were neither simply inter-state nor just intra-state conflicts; at their very core, they featured *transnational alliances* between Congolese rebel groups and neighboring governments. In fact, with the partial exception of Somalia's collapse in 1990–2, every episode of internal armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa from 1990 to 2010 that reached the standard threshold of war (i.e., at least 1,000 battle-related deaths in a given year) involved external support to the rebel side from at least one African government (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Internal Wars and Transnational Alliances in Africa, 1990–2010

War episode	Transnational alliances
Angola, 1990–4	UNITA — Congo (Rep.), South Africa, Togo, Zaire, and Zambia
Angola, 1998–2001	UNITA — Togo and Zambia
Burundi, 2000–2	CNDD–FDD — DRC and Zimbabwe
Chad, 1990	MPS — Libya and Sudan
Chad, 2006	FUCD and UFDD — Sudan
Congo (Rep.), 1997–8	Sassou Nguesso's Cobras — Angola
DRC (Zaire), 1996–7	AFDL — Angola, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
DRC, 1998–2000	RCD(-G) — Rwanda and Uganda; MLC and RCD-K/ML — Uganda
Ethiopia, 1990–1	EPLF and TPLF — Sudan
Liberia, 2003	LURD — Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea; MODEL — Côte d'Ivoire
Mozambique, 1990–1	Renamo — South Africa
Rwanda, 1990	RPF — Uganda
Rwanda, 1994	RPF — Uganda
Rwanda, 1998	FDLR — DRC
Rwanda, 2001	FDLR — DRC
Sierra Leone, 1998–9	RUF — Liberia
Somalia, 1990–2	*None (Ethiopia's support to the SNM ended in 1988)*
Somalia, 2007–10	ARS/UIC and Al-Shabaab — Eritrea
Sudan, 1990–2	SPLM/A — Ethiopia
Sudan, 1995–2006	SPLM/A — Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda; NDA — Eritrea and Ethiopia; JEM and SLA — Chad and Eritrea; NRF — Chad
Uganda, 1996	ADF and WNBF — Sudan and Zaire; LRA — Sudan
Uganda, 2002–4	ADF and LRA — Sudan

(Sources: UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2012 for war episodes, including single years of minor armed conflict if they are situated in-between two war years; author's dataset for transnational alliances.)

Transnational alliances are a significant element of contemporary patterns of conflict across the world: 134 (47%) of the 285 rebel groups listed in a global dataset on armed conflict from 1946 to 2003 had explicit or strongly suspected ties to a foreign government. If one adds the 30 cases of alleged ties, this number increases to 164 (58%).[6] Regional conflict clusters in which governments provided rear bases to each other's domestic rivals can be found not only in Africa but also in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, among others.[7]

Using the term *alliance* in the context of external support for rebels highlights that such support is not a one-way street; rather, it is part of a strategic relationship. According to one of the broader existing definitions in International Relations (IR), an alliance is "a formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states."[8] Theories of alliance formation have been developed in order to explain the balancing of power and the outbreak of major wars. Most of these theories, however, are based on the history of European great powers.[9] As a consequence, IR theorists often define alliances as formal commitments between states: quantitative studies distinguish between defense, offense, non-aggression, neutrality, and consultation pacts.[10]

As a first step towards overcoming the state-centrism of the alliance literature in IR, the definition of alliance needs to be broadened to include informal relationships not only between states (see above) but also between governments and rebel groups from different states.[11] The former relationships can then be referred to as inter-state alliances, the latter as transnational alliances.[12] Due to the predominance of state-centrism, IR theories have had little to say about this second type.[13] At the same time, the lack of theoretical work on

[6] See Salehyan 2010, 497.
[7] See Salehyan 2009, 15-7.
[8] Walt 1987, 1 (note 1).
[9] See ibid., 13. Walt's observation also partly holds true for more recent work. On pre-World War I alliances, see Snyder 1997; Weitsman 2004. On those before and during World War II, see Schweller 1998.
[10] See Sprecher and Krause 2006, 364. Similarly, see Maoz 2000, 113; Gibler and Reid Sarkees 2004, 212.
[11] In a second step, which I do not pursue, one could further broaden this definition to include relationships between two or more rebel groups from different states.
[12] These adjectives draw on a typology of relations developed in Nye and Keohane 1971.
[13] See Lemke 2003, 129-32.

external dimensions of internal armed conflicts is seen as "an important limitation" of the existing civil war literature.[14] My dissertation helps to fill this critical gap at the intersection of Comparative Politics and IR by developing a theory of transnational alliances.

The Congo Wars, outlined above, provide clues as to which questions such a theory needs to answer. The history of the two wars is very much a history of alliance *dynamics*: friends became enemies; enemies became friends. Filip Reyntjens argues that these "shifting alliances produce an unpredictable and constantly evolving geopolitical landscape."[15] This focus on the *process* of alliance politics is not limited to Central Africa. Scholars of West Africa also observe "a complex game of alliances and networks."[16] Similarly, Jon Abbink claims that the politics of alliances in the Horn of Africa "resembles a chess game, but one in which the rules constantly seem to change."[17]

Given these dynamic conceptions, it seems odd that the literature on all three African subregions simply resorts to the old adage that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."[18] Not only is this dictum overly simplistic, it also erroneously leads to a static view of transnational alliance patterns. In other words, it cannot itself explain change. By contrast, the three-step theory that I develop in this dissertation explains rather than ignores alliance dynamics. It shows that, contrary to Abbink's assertion, there is in fact an underlying set of rules that does not change. In order to do so, the theory answers *three interrelated research questions*:

(1) Why do governments of weak states support foreign rebel groups?

(2) Why do they choose some foreign rebel groups as alliance partners but not others?

(3) Why do some of these partners subsequently take actions that are undesired by their foreign sponsors, sometimes leading to the breakdown of alliances?

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[14] Blattman and Miguel 2010, 30. See also Gleditsch 2007, 294; Salehyan 2009, 6.
[15] Reyntjens 2009, 6.
[16] Banégas and Marshall-Fratani 2007, 91.
[17] Abbink 2003, 407.
[18] See Lemarchand 2009, 22; ICG 2003b, 2; Iyob 2001, 108.

In the remainder of this introduction, I first outline my theory's foundations and main arguments, then discuss its scope conditions and core assumptions. This discussion is followed by a section in which I present the dissertation's dual-purpose research design, covering its methods, case selection strategies, and sources. I conclude with a brief overview of subsequent chapters.

Theoretical Foundations and Main Arguments

Foundations

The three-step theory of transnational alliances developed in this dissertation is based on a *power politics approach* which assumes that the leaders of both governments and rebel groups rationally pursue political power (specifically, control over a sovereign state): the former try to keep it, the latter to take it.[19]

In weak states – those in which the monopoly of violence is contested – rulers face the threat not only of rebellions from societal groups but also of coups d'état from within the regime or military, as well as of interference from foreign governments. These latter two threats may arise even in strategic contexts in which both sides are defensively oriented, thus representing genuine security dilemmas. The *coup dilemma* refers to situations in which a ruler fears that members of his ruling coalition may plot to overthrow him,[20] whilst these members are concerned that the ruler may plan to exclude them from power. The *interference dilemma* denotes situations in which two neighboring weak state rulers are each afraid that the other may provide support to their domestic rivals and thereby increase the risk of a successful rebellion.

In both dilemmas, either side may at some point conclude that striking first is its best option. In the case of rulers, however, both preemptive exclusion and preemptive interfer-

[19] For references on the theoretical arguments in this section, see Chapters 2-3.
[20] Throughout this dissertation, I use the male gender simply because all the rulers that I discuss are men.

ence increase the likelihood of subsequent domestic rebellion: excluded elites and the societal groups they represent may retaliate by launching an insurgency, whereas neighboring rulers are likely to form retaliatory transnational alliances. Put differently, weak state rulers face a *double security dilemma* that connects all three threats – coups, rebellions, and foreign interference – through trade-offs. It is on the basis of these considerations about the strategic environment of weak state rulers that my theory of transnational alliances unfolds.

Step 1: Alliance Formation

The first step of the theory focuses on why weak state governments decide to form transnational alliances. Although such alliances also require the foreign rebel group's decision to cooperate, the asymmetric flow of material support from the government to the rebels suggests that the government side is of primary importance.

Given the domestic threats of rebellion and coup outlined above, weak state rulers generally combine repression and clientelism in "a delicate balancing act of keeping rivals at bay and clients happy."[21] From this perspective, there are two causal conditions – *transnational threats* and *resource opportunities* – that lead to the formation of transnational alliances. In the case of threats, such alliances keep rivals (i.e., existing rebel groups) at bay by undermining their potential or actual foreign sponsors; in the case of opportunities, they keep the ruler's key clients (i.e., potential coup plotters) happy by enabling them to profit from foreign resources.

Transnational threats are constituted either by the ruler's belief that a foreign government is about to support at least one domestic rebel group or by his knowledge that such support has already occurred. The causal logic of the two variants of the *threat mechanism* has already been captured in the discussion of theoretical foundations: *preemptive* alliance formation is directly linked to the interference dilemma; *retaliatory* alliance formation is

[21] Jackson 2002, 39.

simply a tit-for-tat response to foreign interference independent of whether the interferer's motives were defensive or offensive. In the context of threats, transnational alliances therefore represent a doubly indirect means of waging war against domestic rebel groups by weakening their foreign supporters via foreign rebel allies. In short, "the enemy of my enemy's friend is my friend."

Resource opportunities are constituted by the potential benefits to be derived from lootable natural resources in the foreign territory controlled by a potential rebel ally subtracted by the potential costs of supporting that ally. If the benefits outweigh the costs, there is a supply of opportunities. However, the *opportunity mechanism* that leads to transnational alliance formation operates only if there is also demand for them on the government side. In other words, some of the ruler's key clients – such as military and ruling party elites or well-connected businessmen – need to take an interest in these resources. This explanation suggests that many instances of foreign interference which are conventionally seen as driven by "greed" have instead, from the ruler's perspective, more to do with ensuring the allegiance of important backers in order to avoid a coup.

In sum, the overarching argument of this first step is that the formation of transnational alliances by weak state governments needs to be understood primarily as the continuation of *domestic* politics by other means.

Step 2: Agent Selection

While the first step of the theory explains why weak state governments sometimes support rebel groups from a particular foreign country, it is indeterminate as to why they choose some groups but not others from that country, assuming there is a pool of potential alliance partners. The second step answers this question. Drawing on principal-agent theory and the literature on intra-state clientelism, it conceives of alliances between governments and for-

eign rebel groups as a specific form of patron-client (or, interchangeably, principal-agent) relationships, which can be called *transnational clientelism*.

The argument of this step is that the choice of specific foreign rebel clients depends, first and foremost, on their *geopolitical relevance* and, second, on the *level of trust* that the government has in a particular group. Geopolitical relevance relates back to the first step: in the case of threats, a rebel group is relevant if it operates in an area which the patron's domestic rivals use as a rear base or which the target government uses as a supply route to these rivals; in the case of opportunities, a group is relevant if it operates in an area with significant lootable resources.

Trust – the belief that the other side will not be exploitative – is itself a function of two factors: a shared group identity (based on ethnicity or ideology) and positive prior interactions between leaders from both sides. The importance of trust for agent selection can be inferred from principal-agent theory, which focuses on the so-called adverse selection problem: potential agents have an interest in misrepresenting their true preferences if that increases the likelihood of being chosen; the principal, in turn, cannot know these preferences with certainty, as they represent private information.

This second step of my theory assumes that, if in conflict, geopolitical concerns trump those about trust at the initial stage of agent selection, highlighting that information asymmetries – on which principal-agent theory conventionally focuses – need to be situated in the context of more fundamental strategic considerations.

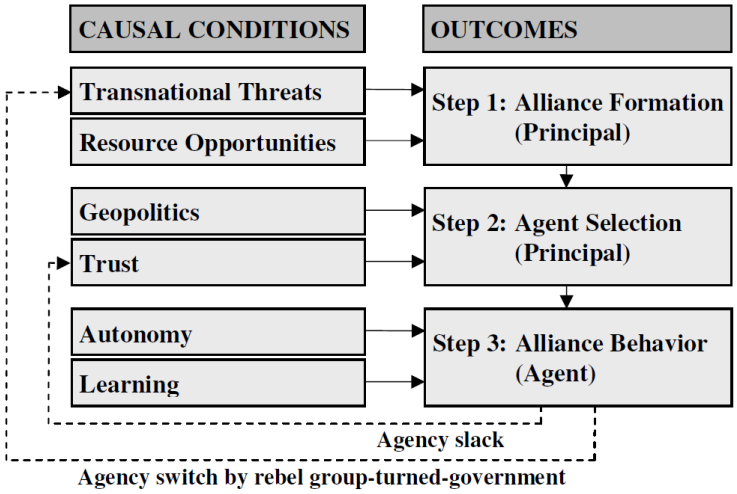
Step 3: Agent Behavior and Its Consequences

The first two steps of the theory focus on the principal. In order to understand alliance *dynamics* – e.g., how friends can become enemies – the focus needs to shift to the agent. The third step explains why agents sometimes behave uncooperatively towards their principals in the period that follows agent selection. Such behavior is called *agency slack* in princi-

pal-agent theory. An extreme form of slack is what I call *agency switch*, that is, an agent's forming an alliance with a rival of its original principal.

Uncooperative agent behavior can have direct consequences on both the strategic environment of principals and their subsequent choice of agents. In general, slack diminishes the principal's trust in its agent so that the principal may choose a different agent, whereas switch essentially forces the principal to do so (step 2). In the specific case of a rebel group that succeeds in becoming a government and thus a potential principal itself, switch means support to foreign rebel groups that fight the original principal, thus creating a new transnational threat for that principal (step 1). These feedback mechanisms from the third to the first two steps are what makes my theory dynamic (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: A Three-Step Theory of Transnational Alliances



But what explains why some rebel agents defy their foreign principals whereas others keep cooperating with them? The third step of the theory presents four analytically distinct mechanisms that, often in combination, can lead to uncooperative agent behavior. Two of them relate to *autonomy* (increases in agent leverage and decreases in principal monitoring), the other two relate to *learning* (from cooperating and from fighting). In short, the argument is that slack can occur either if an agent gains sufficient autonomy and has nega-

tive learning experiences when cooperating with its principal, or if an agent – whose fundamental objective is to take state power (see above) – learns that it is unlikely to overcome its target government militarily and is offered a power-sharing agreement.

By introducing agent leverage, conceived as a function of the ratio of available principals vis-à-vis available agents, and by relating learning experiences to the basic goal of agents, this third step again highlights causal conditions that are not found in existing applications of principal-agent theory to the realm of transnational alliances.

Scope Conditions and Core Assumptions

The theory developed in this dissertation is not about transnational alliances in general, nor is it about transnational alliances in Africa from 1990 to 2010 in particular. Rather, it is *a* theory of transnational alliances contingent on two scope conditions (*weak states* and *limited extra-regional involvement*) and two core assumptions (*rational leaders* and *survival-seeking rulers*). It nevertheless provides a building block towards a more general theory of transnational alliances, and perhaps of alliances as such. In other words, it is a middle-range theory that aims at contingent generalizations.[22] Methodologists highlight such a focus on a "specified subclass of a general phenomenon" as a particularly successful strategy for theory development.[23] My theory, in fact, relates to a subclass of a subclass: it focuses on one particular type of alliance and one particular type of state that forms them.

All four scope conditions and core assumptions deserve further discussion, as they illuminate the deeper reasons for some of my theory-building choices. I treat each of them in turn, highlighting their advantages and occasional drawbacks.

[22] On the role of middle-range theory in social science and the importance of identifying explanatory mechanisms, see Hedström and Swedberg 1998.
[23] George and Bennett 2005, 78.

Weak States

The distinction I make between weak and strong states is based on their internal characteristics, not on their material capabilities vis-à-vis other states.[24] State weakness is a slippery concept. In order to understand the strategic environment of political leaders, I propose a narrow definition that focuses on whether or not the domestic monopoly of violence is successfully exercised.[25] In short, weak states are those in which coup attempts or internal armed conflicts have recently occurred or are ongoing.

The governments of weak and strong states face distinct strategic challenges; it follows that the reasons for which they form alliances may significantly differ. As Barry Buzan puts it, weak state governments "must calculate their international relations in terms of their domestic rivalries."[26] Mainstream IR theory still has relatively little to say about such governments, a shortcoming that critics attribute to the Euro- and Western-centrism of dominant approaches.[27] There have at least been some attempts to make various strands of realism more relevant to weak states – especially African ones – and my theory can partly be seen as a contribution to this endeavor.[28]

But why focus on weak states in particular? Ways of war and peace have been central to the academic study of international relations since its very beginnings.[29] Given that contemporary wars take place primarily *within* weak states but, at the same time, have important external dimensions, it is time for the field to adjust its theoretical toolkits.[30] The notion of the double security dilemma, outlined above and developed more fully in Chapter 2, represents such an adjustment. It takes into account domestic and international politics, thus drawing on insights from both Comparative Politics and IR. The double security di-

[24] On the capabilities conception, which is based on structural realism in IR, see Handel 1990, 30-47.
[25] For a review of broader notions of state weakness, see Chapter 2.
[26] Buzan 1988, 30.
[27] See Holsti 1998, 103-6; Buzan and Little 2009, 197-9. By "mainstream IR theory," I refer to realism, institutionalism, liberalism, and constructivism.
[28] See David 1991; Clark 2001c; Lemke 2011.
[29] See Carr 2001 [1939], 8.
[30] For an influential exposition of the trend towards civil wars, see Human Security Centre 2005, 22-5.

lemma drives my theory: without it, the two theorized mechanisms for transnational alliance formation do not operate. Almost by definition, however, strong states do not face this dilemma.[31] The theory therefore applies only to weak states.

It is important to reiterate that this scope condition is conceptual, not geographic. Although Chapter 2 shows that the double security dilemma is empirically most salient in sub-Saharan Africa, neither the conception of this dilemma nor that of weak states depends on geographic location *per se*. Conversely, the theory does not apply to all African states: Chapter 2 also shows that 14 (33%) out of the 42 mainland countries south of the Sahara do not qualify as weak states in the period from 1990 to 2010.

Limited Extra-Regional Involvement

Africa and other parts of what used to be called the "Third World" have all too often been seen as playing fields for external powers. My theory deliberately favors the opposite extreme: African governments and rebel groups emerge as key actors who determine their own fates; extra-regional involvement is largely ignored. This focus on intra-regional relations arguably works well for the post-Cold War era, especially in Africa, but it is less appropriate for Africa during the Cold War or Afghanistan since 2001.

The underlying rationale for this scope condition is that IR needs a better understanding of the distinctive intra-regional security dynamics between weak states. In order to focus on these dynamics, it makes sense to isolate them as far as possible from extra-regional influences.[32] Since the end of the Cold War, powerful states have seen Africa as a strategically less important region than, say, the Middle East or South Asia;[33] it is therefore particularly well suited for this type of investigation. Although peacekeeping missions and other

[31] There is of course the intriguing issue of how and when exactly states transition from being weak to strong (or vice versa), which my theory ignores, simply taking the existence of state weakness as a given.
[32] In a similar vein, see the extensive analysis of "regional security complexes" in Buzan and Wæver 2003.
[33] See Young 2002, 537. The impact of the end of the Cold War on armed conflict in Africa is discussed in Kalyvas and Balcells 2010, 421-3; Straus 2012, 197-9.

forms of multilateral intervention have become a significant element of the geopolitical landscape,[34] their importance typically increases only towards the end of the escalating alliance dynamics studied in this dissertation. Furthermore, as the introductory example of the Congolese-Rwandan *rapprochement* illustrates, even the world's largest peacekeeping mission has been effectively shut out of one of the most important intra-regional deals in post-1990 Central Africa.

Mobutu's Zaire provides a good example to clarify why the absence of large-scale extra-regional involvement is an important scope condition of my theory. During the Cold War, Western states and their allies effectively protected the Zairian president from societal rebellion. In 1977, when around 2,000 Zairian rebels invaded the country from Angolan soil, Moroccan soldiers were flown in by French aircraft to help quell the uprising. One year later, the rebels again invaded Zaire, rapidly taking a strategic mining town. This time, French and Belgian soldiers, supported by the US Air Force, defeated the insurgents.[35] In these two incidents, known as Shaba I and II, Mobutu skillfully manipulated Western "fears of Soviet expansionism."[36]

To the extent that Mobutu could rely on extra-regional support, the double security dilemma was largely alleviated. The analysis of the Congo Wars in Chapters 4-5 demonstrates that this changed with the end of the Cold War. While, in Reyntjens' words, the first war "showed that the capacity of international players to influence a given situation considerably decreased in favour of local and regional actors," the "impotence of the so-called international community was to become even more glaring during the second war."[37]

More generally speaking, even in the case of large-scale involvement by great powers, their impact on regional war and peace is limited. As Benjamin Miller argues, great powers can affect the capabilities of actors in other regions, but they cannot change their basic mo-

[34] On post-Cold War peacekeeping in general, see Fortna 2008; on Africa, see Williams 2011, chap. 10.
[35] See Kisangani 2012, 103-13; Young 1985, 219.
[36] Schatzberg 1989, 335.
[37] Reyntjens 2009, 131. Similarly, see Prunier 2009, 24.

tivations. He therefore rejects the notion of "proxy wars" and considers regional wars to be rooted in distinct domestic and regional factors.[38] My theory focuses on these primary dimensions.

Rational Leaders

Political leaders do not always act rationally in a meaningful sense. Rational theories are thus unlikely to explain the full range of their behavior. Why, then, do I rely on rational choice in constructing a theory of transnational alliances? There are three main reasons. First and foremost, my empirical analysis demonstrates that a rationality assumption provides significant *explanatory power* in the context of transnational alliances.

Second, it provides *analytic rigor*. In one of the main studies to date of external support for rebel groups after the Cold War, the authors provide no fewer than twelve "motivations of state supporters": regional influence; destabilize neighbors; regime change; payback; ensuring influence within the opposition; internal security; prestige; support coreligionists; support co-ethnics; irredentism; leftist ideology; and plunder.[39] Albeit fairly exhaustive, it is hard not to criticize the study for having created a "laundry list" of factors. The purpose of my theory, by contrast, is to distill "the essence of a complex empirical phenomenon."[40] Throughout, I proceed to do so using verbal rather than formal theory.[41]

Closely related, third, is the value of constructing a *rational baseline* against which actual behavior can be evaluated. Rational theories cannot in themselves explain suboptimal behavior – that is, any action that diverges from the rational baseline – but they enable us to identify it and thus observe its consequences.[42] While suboptimal behavior weakens the explanatory power of a rational theory, it does not necessarily invalidate its underlying

[38] See Miller 2007, 17. For a defense of the term "proxy wars" in regional contexts, see Craig 2012, 44-7.
[39] Byman et al. 2001, 23-40.
[40] Powell 1999, 24.
[41] On the advantages of verbal (rational choice) theory, see Snidal 2004, 230. For exemplary works in this tradition, see Glaser 2010; Lipson 2003.
[42] See Glaser 2010, 3; Kalyvas 2006, 13.

logic. If we observe, for instance, that suboptimal decisions caused trouble for the leader of either a weak state or a rebel group, the rational logic of the theory is in fact confirmed: the leader could have done better had he acted rationally.[43]

In sum, I prefer a rigorous and slim baseline explanation of transnational alliances and their dynamics to one that is overly complex, even if the former does not capture the full range of alliance behavior. Given that little theoretical work has been done on transnational alliances, a rational baseline is a good place to start and can help spawn further research.

Before moving on to the second core assumption, it is important to stress that this first assumption about rationality relates to *leaders*. Although I refer to governments and rebel groups as the key actors – the two sides that form transnational alliances – the fundamental actors in my theory are individual political leaders. The conception of the double security dilemma, for example, is based on the ruler, not the government, of a weak state: the threat of a coup that a ruler faces can come from *within* the government. For the sake of simplicity, I usually treat both governments and rebel groups as unitary actors. Whenever necessary, however, I disaggregate these collective actors and specifically analyze the strategic choices their leaders make. This approach considers the level of aggregation as a pragmatic rather than ontological question.[44]

Survival-Seeking Rulers

Deciding what type of behavior counts as rational of course depends on a given theory's specification of preferences. Rational choice, after all, merely assumes that actors have fixed preferences and pursue them consistently under certain constraints.[45] My theory's notion of rationality, outlined above and developed in more detail in Chapter 2, rests on the

[43] See Glaser 2010, 21-2. This point highlights the normative roots of rational choice (see Stein 1999, 210).
[44] See Lake and Powell 1999, 13-5, 18-20. This research strategy is grounded in a weak version of methodological individualism (see Hedström and Swedberg 1998, 11-3; Kydd 2008, 427-9).
[45] See Snidal 2002, 75.

idea that the leaders of both governments and rebel groups pursue political power, with the former attempting to maintain power and the latter trying to attain it.

This minimal conception of rationality has important advantages for theory construction (see Chapters 2-3), but it also comes at a price, especially in the case of weak state governments – the focus of the theory's first two steps. As the list of the twelve motives given above indicates, rulers form alliances for reasons that go beyond narrowly conceived political survival.[46] Chapters 4-6 show that motives such as personal friendships and enmities, the quest for regional standing, and the spreading of radical ideologies, be they religious or secular, *sometimes* also drive the rulers of weak states in their alliance decisions.

The first step of the theory therefore needs to be seen as making an asymmetric argument: it implies that a *survival-seeking ruler* who faces threats and/or opportunities is expected to form transnational alliances, but it does *not* imply that such a ruler is necessarily unlikely to form alliances if these two causal conditions are absent.[47] Put differently, the two mechanisms are individually sufficient but neither jointly nor individually necessary for alliance formation.

Given the theory's minimal rationality assumption, it simply does not cover what Charles Glaser calls "nonsecurity motives."[48] However, its rational baseline helps identify the extent to which alliances are driven by factors unrelated to survival. It also shows that some of these cases of suboptimal behavior prove disastrous for aggressive governments, which – in line with the rational logic of the theory – soon face retaliatory alliances.

[46] For a seminal statement on the logic of political survival, see Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003.
[47] On asymmetric arguments, see Ragin 2008, 15-7; Goertz and Mahoney 2012, chap. 5.
[48] Glaser 2010, 36.

Research Design

The Congo Wars and Beyond: A Dual-Purpose Design

> I was aware of this conflict, of course, but as I read [Howard] French's essay [on the Second Congo War], I realized that I knew very little about its origins, evolution, or the prospects for ending it. I'm a full-time professional in the field of international relations and security studies, and I teach an undergraduate course on "the origins of modern wars" here at Harvard. I go to seminars on various international relations topics almost every week. And yet I knew next-to-nothing about the greatest international bloodletting of my lifetime.
>
> —Stephen Walt[49]

The idea to develop a theory of transnational alliances resulted from my frustration with how little mainstream IR theory as such had to say about the origins and dynamics of the Second Congo War, widely seen as the deadliest conflict since World War II.[50] With the partial exception of Boaz Atzili's important analysis of the border fixity norm's role in perpetuating state weakness and conflict – which nevertheless fails to explain some of the Congo Wars' alliance dynamics – there is no sophisticated theoretical explanation from an IR perspective of either the first or the second war.[51] The most prominent book in IR that deals with conflict in the DRC is still Séverine Autesserre's broadly constructivist *The Trouble with the Congo*.[52] But it focuses on how culture shapes international peacekeeping in the country, looking primarily at the period *after* the second war formally ended.

One of the reasons that IR theorists have paid little attention to the Congo Wars is that the these wars are often misunderstood as intra-state conflicts, which are presumably meant to be explained by other subfields of political science. In a recent survey of theories on the causes of war, two major IR scholars refer to Congo in the context of "civil wars," merely adding in an endnote that the wars had "an international component, and might be

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[49] Walt 2009.

[50] In my MPhil thesis, I adapted conventional state-centric realist alliance formation theories so as to include rebel groups and then tested them against the two Congo Wars. Despite several important shortcomings, I found them to be of some use (see Tamm 2010). The theory developed here builds on these findings. Note that my critique is limited to *mainstream* IR theory rather than to the field in general because I recognize that the New Regionalism literature has addressed the Congo Wars (see, e.g., Taylor 2005), albeit in a way that deliberately sets it apart from the mainstream in terms of its understanding of social science.

[51] See Atzili 2006/07. The Congo case study in the author's subsequent book only comprises twenty-seven pages (see Atzili 2012, 137-48, 179-93). John Clark's "constructivist account of the Congo Wars" in my view fails to deliver on what the article title promises (Clark 2011).

[52] Autesserre 2010.

called 'internationalized civil wars.'"[53] The fact that the second war "expanded into what many have called 'Africa's World War'" is hidden in another endnote.[54] In order to convince students and scholars of IR that seemingly internal armed conflicts do deserve their attention, this dissertation develops a theory that explains not only the transnational dimensions of the Congo Wars but also those of other so-called civil wars across sub-Saharan Africa from 1990 to 2010.

These two objectives – making sense of the Congo Wars whilst also building a more widely applicable theory of transnational alliances – are reflected in the *dual-purpose design* of this study. While the particular sets of cases from the Congo Wars analyzed in Chapters 4-5 are chosen on methodological grounds, I focus on these wars rather than others primarily due to their "intrinsic importance."[55] In the blog post on the second war from which the epigraph above is drawn, Stephen Walt – one of the leading alliance theorists in IR – self-critically reflects on his ignorance "about a cataclysm of this magnitude."[56] His choice of words is almost identical to that of Stephen Van Evera in the latter's argument that cases of intrinsic importance are chosen "mainly in accord with the magnitude of their human consequences," providing the two world wars and the Holocaust as examples.[57]

By contrast, the combination of cross-case and within-case analyses of forty-two weak state dyads in Chapter 6 is driven primarily by methodological concerns, namely those about external validity. In the following subsection, I explain how the three empirical chapters complement each other, jointly demonstrating both the internal and external validity of my theory. In this context, I also discuss the methods, case selection strategies, and sources employed in each chapter.

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[53] Levy and Thompson 2010, 3, 22 (note 3).
[54] Ibid., 203 (note 10). Dan Fahey has compiled data on how the two Congo Wars are coded in major conflict lists, providing further evidence that they are often misinterpreted as civil wars (see Fahey 2011, 73, 104).
[55] Van Evera 1997, 86.
[56] Walt 2009.
[57] Van Evera 1997, 87.

Methods, Case Selection, and Sources

> Scholarly research has documented that transnationalism plays an important role in civil conflict, but the specific causal mechanisms remain poorly understood, for both theoretical and methodological reasons.
>
> —Jeffrey Checkel[58]

The relatively recent turn towards invoking *causal mechanisms* and, closely related, highlighting the unique strengths of *process tracing* has reaffirmed the importance, legitimacy, and distinct methodology of small-*N*, qualitative social science research.[59] It is on the basis of this trend that Jeffrey Checkel criticizes existing scholarship on the transnational dimensions of civil wars. I share his concern that much of the predominantly quantitative work fails to provide satisfactory evidence for the causal mechanisms that are posited to explain correlational findings.[60] While Checkel's case in point is Idean Salehyan's otherwise laudable *Rebels without Borders*,[61] I would add that Salehyan's collaborative study of transnational alliances – or what, drawing on principal-agent theory, is called conflict delegation – simply does not provide mechanism-based explanations.[62]

In his edited volume, Checkel suggests three moves to improve existing scholarship: theoretically, to link insights from the quantitative literature to theories from IR and sociology; analytically, to prefer the measurement of causal mechanisms over the establishing of causal effects; and methodologically, to observe the implications of mechanisms in action.[63] Albeit conceived prior to the publication of the edited volume, my dissertation's theory and research design – especially its process-tracing case studies – are broadly in line with these three suggestions.

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[58] Checkel 2013, 9.
[59] See Mahoney 2010; Goertz and Mahoney 2012, esp. chap. 8. On the causal mechanism trend in particular, see Gerring 2008; Gerring 2010; Hedström and Ylikoski 2010.
[60] See Checkel 2013, 8.
[61] Salehyan 2009.
[62] See Salehyan et al. 2011. While the authors draw on principal-agent theory to explain external support for rebel groups (as do I in this dissertation), they (by contrast) focus on the rebel side in the formation of transnational alliances and do not address alliance dynamics.
[63] See Checkel 2013, 4.

Qualitative studies of course have their own drawbacks. One issue, in particular, raises questions that "forever haunt case study research"[64] – namely, whether the few cases selected for in-depth study really are representative of the more general phenomenon that one's theory aims to explain. In John Gerring's terms, case studies have the virtue of demonstrating the *internal validity* of a theory but the vice of being weak at showing its *external validity*. For instance, if one builds a theory of transnational alliances that is supposed to be general enough to explain all 42 weak state dyads meeting its scope conditions, and one then applies this theory to only three dyads via process-tracing case studies, one should be able to demonstrate really well whether its causal mechanisms were indeed at work in those cases, but one simply cannot guarantee that this means the theory also holds in the 39 other dyads.[65] The latter – external validity – is best achieved through large-*N*, cross-case methods, which in turn are less useful for investigating causal pathways.[66]

This dissertation uses a *multi-method approach*; its research design combines within-case methods (primarily in Chapters 4-5) with cross-case methods (in Chapter 6) in order to demonstrate both the internal and external validity of my theory.[67] In the remainder of this subsection, I discuss the case selection strategies, methods, and data sources that Chapters 4-6 employ.

Medium-N Process Tracing: Alliance Dynamics in the Congo Wars

Case Selection. In terms of case selection, the three-step nature of my theory poses a challenge. Whereas the unit of analysis for the first step is a dyad of weak state governments, the reference point for the last two steps changes to a pair that includes a weak state government (as patron) and a foreign rebel group (as client). Explaining transnational alliance *dynamics* requires looking not only at the third step but also at potential feedback effects

[64] Gerring 2007, 43.
[65] Rigorous case selection can somewhat alleviate but not eliminate this concern. See ibid., chap. 5.
[66] See ibid., 48.
[67] On "mixed-method" or "multi-method" research, see Fearon and Laitin 2008, 758.

from that step to the first two. This can be best done in the context of specific armed conflicts, although these are strictly speaking not themselves cases for the theory.

Whereas Chapter 4 applies the three-step theory to the *master-cleavage* transnational alliances in both Congo Wars, Chapter 5 uses it to explain *local-cleavage* ones in northeastern Congo (Orientale Province's Ituri District and North Kivu Province's *Grand Nord*) as well as in North Kivu's *Petit Nord* during and after the second war. The first set of alliances refers to those between the Rwandan, Ugandan, or Angolan government, on the one side, and Congolese rebel groups that aimed to seize Kinshasa, on the other. The second set relates to alliances between the Rwandan or Ugandan government and Congolese groups that became focused primarily on local control, albeit largely as a means to enhance their position in national power-sharing negotiations.

The distinction between these two sets of cases has two purposes. The first is methodological and relates to the inclusion of "hard cases."[68] Popularized by Stathis Kalyvas, the disjunction between center (master cleavage) and periphery (local cleavages) in civil wars is now well recognized: actions "on the ground" are often more related to local or private conflicts than to the war's principal causes.[69] Correspondingly, conflicts in northeastern Congo and North Kivu during and after the second war are often described as "wars within the war."[70]

The *methodological purpose* of Chapter 5 is therefore to demonstrate that my theory can make sense even of particularly complex and fluid conflict dynamics in which actor disaggregation is necessary with regard to both the Ugandan army and several Congolese rebel groups – in short, hard cases.[71] At the same time, the overall chapter structure also has an *analytic purpose*. The transition from the first to the second set of alliances tells a general story about the Second Congo War and its aftermath: what began as a struggle for

[68] On the notion of "hard" or "least-likely" cases, see Eckstein 1975, 118-20.
[69] See Kalyvas 2003, 475-6.
[70] Reyntjens 2009, 207. See also Prunier 2009, 225; Autesserre 2010, 142-4; Stearns 2011, 69.
[71] On disaggregation in the study of armed conflict, see Cederman and Gleditsch 2009; Kalyvas 2010, xii.

the center (Kinshasa) over time turned into a struggle for direct and later indirect control over different parts of eastern DRC.

Table 1.2: Sets of Transnational Alliances Covered in Chapters 4-5

Master-cleavage alliances (formation)	Local-cleavage alliances (formation)
First Congo War	*Northeastern Congo*
(1) Rwanda—AFDL (1996)	(8) Uganda—RCD-K/ML (1999)
(2) Uganda—AFDL (1996)	(9) Uganda—FLC (2001)
(3) Angola—AFDL (1997)	(10) Uganda—UPC (2002)
Second Congo War	(11) Rwanda—UPC (2002)
(4) Rwanda—RCD (1998)	(12) Uganda—PUSIC (2002)
(5) Uganda—RCD (1998)	(13) Uganda—FNI (2002)
(6) Uganda—MLC (1998)	(14) Uganda—FPDC (2002)
(7) Rwanda—RCD-G (1999)	(15) Uganda—FAPC (2003)
(8) Uganda—RCD-K/ML (1999) *(This eighth alliance turned into a primarily local one after August 1999.)*	*North Kivu's Petit Nord*
	(16) Rwanda—Serufuli (2002)
	(17) Rwanda—Nkunda (2005)

The qualitative *process tracing* of these two sets of alliances, which add up to seventeen cases (see Table 1.2), somewhat defies the "methodological stereotypes" according to which qualitative analyses necessarily involve a small number of cases (*N*) whereas quantitative analyses deal with a large *N*.[72] My *medium-N* analysis lies in the middle of these two extremes; it presents a trade-off that sacrifices some empirical depth in order to study a number of cases that is sufficiently high to go beyond demonstrating the internal validity and to at least also suggest the external validity of the last two steps of the theory, which are not covered in Chapter 6. The case study findings are summarized in Table 1.3, showing that 13 (76%) of the 17 alliances studied in Chapters 4 and 5 were direct results of the feedback mechanisms from the third to the first two steps.

[72] Collier et al. 2004, 247.

Table 1.3: Overview of Case Study Findings

Transnational alliance	Step 1: Alliance Formation / Feedback	Step 2: Agent Selection	Step 3: Agent Behavior
(1) Rwanda—AFDL	Threat	Geopolitics + (varied levels of) Trust	Switch: Leverage + Learning (C)
(2) Uganda—AFDL	Threat [+ Opportunity + Other]	Geopolitics + (varied levels of) Trust	Switch: Leverage + Learning (C)
(3) Angola—AFDL	Threat	Geopolitics + Trust	*N/A*
(4) Rwanda—RCD	Switch (1) → Threat [+ Opp. + Other]	Geopolitics + (varied levels of) Trust	Slack: Leverage + Learning (C)
(5) Uganda—RCD	Switch (2) → Threat + Opp. [+ Other]	Geopolitics + (varied levels of) Trust	Slack: Other (Rwandan dominance)
(6) Uganda—MLC	Slack (5) → Loss of Trust	Geopolitics + (medium level of) Trust	*N/A*
(7) Rwanda—RCD-G	Slack (4) → Loss of Trust in a faction	Geopolitics + Trust	Slack: Learning (F)
(8) Uganda—RCD-K/ML	Slack (5) → Loss of Trust in a faction	Geopolitics + (medium level of) Trust	Slack: Leverage + Learning (C)
(9) Uganda—FLC	Slack (8) → Loss of Trust	Geopolitics + (varied levels of) Trust	Slack/Switch: Autonomy + Learn. (C+F)
(10) Uganda—UPC	Slack/Switch (9) → Loss of Trust	Geopolitics	Switch: Leverage + Learning (C)
(11) Rwanda—UPC	(Indirect) Threat + Other	Geopolitics	*N/A*
(12) Uganda—PUSIC	Switch (10) → (indirect) Threat	Geopolitics	*N/A*
(13) Uganda—FNI	Switch (10) → (indirect) Threat	Geopolitics	*N/A*
(14) Uganda—FPDC	Switch (10) → (indirect) Threat	Geopolitics	*N/A*
(15) Uganda—FAPC	Switch (10) → (indirect) Threat	Geopolitics	*N/A*
(16) Rwanda—Serufuli	Slack (7) → Loss of Trust	Geopolitics	Slack/Switch: Autonomy + Learning (C)
(17) Rwanda—Nkunda	Slack/Switch (16) → Loss of Trust	Geopolitics + Trust	Slack: Other (strategic miscalculation)

(Note: This is necessarily a simplified overview. Square brackets refer to factors of secondary importance. The numbers in brackets behind Switch *or* Slack *refer to the respective previous alliance. The* C *and* F *in brackets behind* Learning *stand for* from Cooperating *and* from Fighting*, respectively.* Autonomy *refers to the combination of increased agent leverage and decreased principal monitoring.)*

Method. The key point of process tracing is that it provides a *systematic*, theory-guided narrative. Its purpose is to assess at each step whether there is "diagnostic evidence" that supports the theorized links between causal conditions (independent variables) and outcomes (dependent variables).[73] In order to avoid a confirmation bias, process tracing also needs to consider whether there is competing evidence for rival mechanisms.[74] With regard to the first step of my theory, the two case study chapters do so by including a subsection on nonsecurity motives for every transnational alliance formation that is analyzed. Concerning the last two steps, the few alternative arguments that exist are subsumed as secondary factors by my theory, so the case study chapters focus on demonstrating that the theory's primary factors were more important – specifically, that geopolitics trumps trust in the initial choice of rebel clients and that agent leverage and learning are more significant than principal monitoring in explaining agency slack.

The application of process tracing to several alliances from two related wars follows the same imperatives as the case study method that Alexander George has called "structured, focused comparison": structured in the sense of asking the same questions of each case under study; focused because only certain, clearly delimited aspects of historical processes are analyzed.[75] In this regard, good process tracing requires "providing as continuous as possible an explanation of the key sequential steps in a hypothesized process."[76] My two case study chapters on the Congo Wars do so by structuring the analysis around key *turning points* in the wars' history of transnational alliance dynamics: each main section begins with a historical episode in which an alliance was either formed or fell apart and led to a new one, then it systematically traces the time period from the previous turning point to the one at hand.

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[73] See Hall 2003, 395; Checkel 2008, 115-6. On the notion of diagnostic evidence, see Collier 2011, 823-4.
[74] See George and Bennett 2005, 217-8; Wood 2013, 243.
[75] George and Bennett 2005, 67.
[76] Bennett and Elman 2008, 504.

Sources. The two case study chapters draw on a wide range of material. The main primary source are 134 *semi-structured interviews* conducted in the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, and the UK with (former) rebel group members ranging from top leaders to the rank and file; high-level government officials and army officers; local and international journalists, analysts, and scholars; civil society activists; as well as UN staff.[77] Forty-eight of these interviews were conducted solely for the purpose of this dissertation, the other eighty-six took place as part of the Rift Valley Institute's *Usalama Project: Understanding Congolese Armed Groups*.[78] Testimonies from an International Criminal Court case and from a judicial commission set up by the Ugandan government complement these interviews.

My participation in the Usalama Project was based on the agreement with its director Jason Stearns that, following publication, I would be allowed to use all of the material collected for my two reports on Ituri-based armed groups in this dissertation.[79] The Usalama Project interviews are clearly marked as such in the References section; they are essential to the case studies on northeastern DRC, but they play no direct role in either Chapter 4 or the North Kivu case studies in Chapter 5.

The second main primary source are news agency, newspaper, magazine, and UN reports from the time of the wars. One may also consider the numerous reports by nongovernmental advocacy organizations such as Amnesty International, the International Crisis Group, and Human Rights Watch as primary sources, as they were published during the conflicts. While some of these reports can be accessed online, I also spent several weeks in the Kampala archives of the *Daily Monitor* and *New Vision* newspapers, systematically

[77] As described in greater detail in the Appendix, I conducted research in Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu (DRC), Kigali (Rwanda), and Kampala (Uganda) from late June to August 2011; in Kampala in March 2012; in Kinshasa and Bunia in August 2012; and finally in Bunia, Kpandroma, Rethy, Mongbwalu, and Kobu (all in Ituri District, DRC) in December 2012. Research ethics approval by the University's Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-divisional Research Ethics Committee was granted on May 26, 2011 (reference no. SSD/CUREC1A/11-125).

[78] The project enabled me to hire five local research assistants (Jean Paul Basila, Daniel Litsha, and a third who wishes to remain anonymous for the report on the UPC; Didi Angaika and Claude Lonzama for the report on the FNI/FRPI). They conducted 28 of the 86 interviews in my absence (see References), subsequently providing me with transcripts.

[79] See Tamm 2013a; Tamm 2013b.

collecting reports on the Congo Wars in the most relevant periods from 1996 to 2003. I describe this fieldwork – including the interviews – in more detail in the Appendix.

Even though I sometimes, especially in Chapter 4, rely heavily on the secondary literature, my use of primary sources throughout the two chapters means that I not only provide the first rigorous theoretical account (from an IR perspective) of the transnational dynamics of the Congo Wars, but that I also contribute novel information and interpretations to the historiography of these conflicts, especially in Chapter 5. Recognizing all the potential problems that interviews with conflict participants may entail (ranging from biased accounts to outright misinformation),[80] the chapters go to considerable lengths in triangulating sources as much as possible.

Large-N Cross- and Within-Case Analyses: Alliance Formation across Africa

Case Selection. The first step of the theory answers the most fundamental question about transnational alliances – that of why they are formed – whereas the last two steps are not necessarily relevant for every alliance: there may only be one rebel group to choose as agent, or there may subsequently not be any uncooperative agent behavior. Furthermore, there are several methodological challenges to collecting *systematic* data on these two steps, arguably even more so than for the first step.[81] The combination of cross-case and within-case analyses in Chapter 6 therefore focuses on demonstrating the external validity of only the theory's first step. It also further corroborates the internal validity of that step.

The research strategy is discussed in greater detail in the chapter itself. In short, I select *all* theoretically *relevant* weak state dyads in Africa from 1990 to 2010, thus avoiding

[80] On process tracing and (elite) interviewing, see Tansey 2007. For reflections on the particular challenges of research in war-torn environments, see Vlassenroot 2005.

[81] To name but one challenge for each of the last two steps: first, some potential rebel clients may never appear in extant data sets, as their failure to attract outside support may have meant that they never overcame embryonic status (on early-failed rebel groups, see Lewis 2013); second, it is generally difficult to measure or even observe agency slack (see Lake and McCubbins 2006, 342). Both issues can be addressed by in-depth research but are less easily dealt with in the context of large-*N* data collections.

selection bias and covering the full range of possible outcomes. As the universe of relevant dyads amounts to forty-two, one can arguably speak of a *large-N* (or, perhaps, *medium-to-large-N*) analysis. Table 1.4 provides an analytic overview of these dyads.

Table 1.4: Analytic Overview of Weak State Dyads (Chap. 6)

Type of dyad	#	%
Negative dyads (no support on either side)	17	(40%)
Mixed dyads (one-sided support)	8	(20%)
Indirect retaliation in favor of an ally	*3*	
Opportunity mechanism	*4*	
Nonsecurity initiation only	*1*	
Positive dyads (two-sided support)	17	(40%)
Preemptive and retaliatory threat mechanism	*11*	
Retaliatory threat mechanism	*6*	
Opportunity mechanism also involved	*8*	
Overall number of dyads	42	(100%)

Methods. However, Chapter 6 does *not* employ inferential statistics such as regression analysis. Instead, it takes seriously the nature of mechanism-based explanations, combining an overarching cross-case analysis with several short within-case analyses. Loosely drawing on insights from Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), the purpose of this combination is to show not only that the threat and opportunity mechanisms *cover* the vast majority of instances of transnational alliance formation across Africa's weak states but also that the absence of alliances in some dyads is broadly *consistent* with the theory.[82]

The chapter includes three analytic sections, covering (1) dyads in which one or both variants of the threat mechanism occurred; (2) dyads in which there was at least a limited supply of resource opportunities whilst the demand for them varied, and (3) potentially problematic dyads in which there was either an absence of retaliation, a nonsecurity initiation of an alliance, or a merely indirect retaliation. Each section contains short within-case

[82] On the notions of coverage and consistency in QCA, which partly overlap with those of external and internal validity, see Ragin 2008, 45; Goertz and Mahoney 2012, 32-6.

analyses that tease out insights concerning the specific conditions under which each of the theorized mechanisms should or should not be expected to occur. Overall, Chapter 6 provides strong support for the empirical relevance *and* consistency of the causal mechanisms developed in the first step of my three-step theory of transnational alliances.

Sources. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) External Support Data (Version 1.0–2011), which covers the entire world from 1975 to 2009, built one of the main foundations for establishing whether or not the relevant weak state dyads featured transnational alliances. However, my own wide-ranging survey of the secondary literature on post-Cold War Africa and of the fortnightly newsletter *Africa Confidential* immediately revealed significant problems with the UCDP data. For instance, for at least 10 of the 42 dyads (24%) analyzed in Chapter 6, the dataset fails to record support from at least one side. The limited quality of extant datasets – at least with regard to Africa – was one of the main reasons that I decided against using statistical methods for establishing the external validity of my theory's first step.[83] Although I cannot confidently claim that I have not missed any transnational alliances myself, the data presented in Chapter 6 certainly improves on existing datasets such as the UCDP External Support Data.

Coding the (non)existence of transnational alliances is one thing; evaluating the causes of alliance formation is another, much more challenging issue. In order to do so for all 25 mixed and positive dyads discussed in Chapter 6, I consulted the work of leading country experts and well-respected think-tanks or advocacy organizations. Although these interpretations should not be considered definitive, they do resonate with some if not most of the dominant accounts in the existing literature and overall present a strong case for the relevance and validity of my theory.

[83] My concerns about data quality also extend to the Expanded Armed Conflict Data (EACD) used in Salehyan et al. 2011.

Chapter Overview

The remainder of this dissertation comprises six chapters, some of which have already been discussed at length above. These chapters are effectively organized into three parts: while Chapters 2 and 3 focus on theory, Chapters 4 to 6 turn their attention to applying theory to empirics, with Chapter 7 providing an overall conclusion.

Combining insights from literatures that rarely speak to each other, Chapter 2 presents an integrated approach to analyzing domestic, international, and transnational dimensions of armed conflict in and across Africa's weak states. This approach revolves around the notion of power politics and models a weak state ruler's strategic environment as a double security dilemma. It also highlights important differences in kind between governments and rebel groups.

Building on these foundations, Chapter 3 develops a dynamic three-step theory of transnational alliances. The theory conceives of weak state governments as patrons (or principals) and of rebel groups as clients (or agents). It explains, first, why weak state governments provide support to foreign rebel groups; second, why they choose some groups as alliance partners but not others; and, third, why some of these partners sometimes behave uncooperatively towards their foreign sponsors. Feedback mechanisms from the third to the first two steps highlight the dynamic nature of the theory.

After providing some historical background on Zaire, Chapter 4 systematically applies this theory to five turning points that relate to master-cleavage transnational alliances in both Congo Wars. These turning points together cover eight distinct alliances. The chapter concludes by highlighting how the Second Congo War increasingly turned from a struggle for the capital Kinshasa into a much more fragmented conflict focused on direct or indirect control over different parts of eastern and northeastern DRC.

Chapter 5 starts where the preceding chapter ends, using the three-step theory to make sense of six turning points that relate to local-cleavage transnational alliances – four of

them taking place in Ituri District and North Kivu's *Grand Nord* (northeastern DRC), the other two in North Kivu's *Petit Nord*. Altogether, they encompass ten alliances, one of which is also analyzed in Chapter 4. The fifth chapter demonstrates that the theory can bridge master and local cleavages, thus explaining most of the incredibly complex alliance dynamics in northeastern and eastern DRC during and after the Second Congo War.

On the basis of data that covers forty-two country dyads, Chapter 6 shows that the threat and opportunity mechanisms developed as part of the first step of the theory illuminate the formation of transnational alliances across almost all affected weak states in sub-Saharan Africa from 1990 to 2010. While confirming the first step's external and internal validity, the chapter also provides several insights into how that step's causal mechanisms could conceptually be further refined.

Finally, Chapter 7 returns to the Rwandan-Congolese *rapprochement* from January 2009, briefly discussing its breakdown and the subsequent rise and fall of the Rwandan-backed *Mouvement du 23 mars* (M23, March 23 Movement) rebellion. The chapter draws on this episode as well as earlier examples from the history of the Congo Wars to discuss the theory's policy implications for ending and preventing transnational alliances. It then concludes with a review of the theoretical arguments and empirical findings of this dissertation, using them as a springboard to outline promising avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Power Politics in and across Africa's Weak States

> The traditional boundaries drawn between comparative politics and international relations are dissolving. […] [They] are obsolete not only because domestic politics affects international politics and vice versa, but also because we believe that the fields can be unified under a single theoretical framework that focuses attention on political leaders as actors interested in attaining and maintaining themselves in power while subject to institutional and other political constraints.
>
> —Suzanne Werner, David Davis, and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita[1]

In this chapter, I develop an integrated framework for analyzing domestic, international, and transnational dimensions of armed conflict in and across weak states. This framework combines insights from various literatures that rarely speak to each other. Among others, it draws on the rational choice literature on political survival and on the realist school of thought in International Relations (IR).[2] While much of the discussion applies to weak states across the globe, my primary focus is on sub-Saharan Africa since independence. Overall, this chapter builds the foundations for the theory of transnational alliances that I develop in the next chapter.

I begin this chapter with a review of the slippery concept of state weakness and offer a tangible definition that focuses on the monopoly of violence. Second, I propose a *power politics approach* to the study of armed conflict that, in line with this chapter's epigraph, is based on the simple assumption that the leaders of both governments and rebel groups pursue political power – the former try to keep it, the latter to take it. Third, I develop the *double security dilemma* as a theoretical model for understanding the strategic environment of weak state rulers, show why this dilemma is more relevant to Africa than to other world regions, and highlight that it remains crucial in the post-Cold War period. Finally, as a stepping stone towards the next chapter, I criticize existing applications of structural realist IR theory to the context of interactions between governments and foreign rebel groups.

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[1] Werner et al. 2003, 1-2.

[2] See, respectively, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003; Wohlforth 2008. Of course, I am not the first scholar to acknowledge that realism offers useful insights for the study of civil war (more recently, see Lawrence and Chenoweth 2010, 14-5; Christia 2012, 50-2).

Conceptualizing Weak States

The simplicity of the term *weak states* is alluring: the mere use of an adjective seems to convey a great deal of information. Readers immediately think of Africa rather than Europe, South Asia rather than North America. But what are the definitional criteria of a weak state? In fact, it seems much easier to describe rather than define the nature of state weakness:

> *Weak* states include a broad continuum of states that are: inherently weak because of geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints; basically strong, but temporarily or situationally weak because of internal antagonisms, management flaws, greed, despotism, or external attacks; and a mixture of the two. Weak states typically harbor ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other intercommunal tensions that have not yet, or not yet thoroughly, become overtly violent. Urban crime rates tend to be higher and increasing. In weak states, the ability to provide adequate measures of other political goods is diminished or diminishing. Physical infrastructural networks have deteriorated. Schools and hospitals show signs of neglect, particularly outside the main cities. GDP per capita and other critical economic indicators have fallen or are falling, sometimes dramatically; levels of venal corruption are embarrassingly high and escalating. Weak states usually honor rule of law precepts in the breach. They harass civil society. Weak states are often ruled by despots, elected or not.[3]

Over the last decade or so, conflict scholars have increasingly focused on *state capacity* as a concept encompassing state strength *and* weakness.[4] While qualitative researchers have tried to establish typologies that represent the full spectrum of state capacity – distinguishing between strong, strong-weak, weak, failing, failed, and collapsed states – quantitative researchers have primarily sought to find good continuous measures such as GDP per capita or total taxes divided by GDP.[5]

Both qualitative and quantitative scholars have begun to disaggregate the concept of state capacity. In a review of the literature, Cullen Hendrix distinguishes between three broad categories: military capacity; bureaucratic or administrative capacity; and the coherence and quality of political institutions.[6] From a more qualitative perspective, Matthew Kocher suggests five distinct dimensions of state capacity: the quantity and quality of mili-

[3] Rotberg 2003, 4 (emphasis in the original). On the "slipperiness of the concept," see also Job 1992, 23.
[4] See Kocher 2010.
[5] On qualitative typologies, see Milliken and Krause 2002; Rotberg 2003; Paul 2010, 5-7. On quantitative measures, see the overview in Hendrix 2010.
[6] See Hendrix 2010, 274.

tary assets; territorial or administrative centralization; fiscal capacity; a professional and autonomous bureaucracy; and a relative lack of institutional constraint.[7] Arguably, the first dimension overlaps with Hendrix's first category, the following three with his second category, and the fifth with his third category. What is missing from both categorizations, however, is the issue of legitimacy, which is notoriously difficult to measure but nonetheless central to some conceptions of state weakness.[8]

By contrast, for the purpose of understanding the strategic environment of political leaders, I propose a narrow and thus more tangible definition that focuses on the domestic monopoly of violence. Following Max Weber, the ideal-typical notion of a state involves a set of political institutions that *successfully* exercises a monopoly of physical force over the population of a territorially demarcated area.[9] States that actually meet this requirement can be considered *strong* states; in turn, those that struggle to do so can be labeled *weak* states. This notion of state weakness is not meant to capture the manifold dimensions of state capacity. Rather, it highlights one particularly important issue typically associated with the term "weak states," namely, that societal actors in these countries use physical force in order to affect domestic regime change.[10]

But how exactly should one operationalize Weber's abstract notion of a monopoly of violence? I propose two indicators for assessing whether such a monopoly is being successfully exercised. The first is the absence of coups. Respect for the chain of command within the state apparatus can be seen as a precondition for the state's successful exercise of the monopoly of physical force. Coup attempts initiated by factions within the government and/or the armed forces thus suggest state weakness.[11] The second indicator is the

[7] See Kocher 2010, 141-3.
[8] On the lack of horizontal and vertical legitimacy as indicators of state weakness, see Holsti 1996, chap. 5.
[9] This definition partly draws on the adaptation of Weber's definition in Mann 1993, 55.
[10] See Buzan 1983, 67.
[11] I follow Powell and Thyne 2011, 250-1, who conceive of coups as being undertaken "by *any elite who is part of the state apparatus*," which includes "non-civilian members of the military and security services, or civilian members of government" (emphasis in the original).

absence of intra-state armed conflicts. Strong states are able to deter armed opposition or at least quell it in its earliest stages. Internal armed conflicts between the government and opposition groups therefore indicate state weakness.

For both measures, one can think of narrow and broad operationalizations. Narrowly conceived, only successful coups and internal wars (with at least 1,000 battle-related deaths in a given year) should count as indicators of state weakness. More broadly understood, failed coup attempts as well as minor armed conflicts (with between 25 and 999 battle-related deaths in a given year) should also be included.[12] I follow the broader, more inclusive approach, as it is the mere existence – rather than the success or magnitude – of coup attempts and organized rebellion which demonstrates that societal actors consider physical force a viable means to bring about domestic regime change.

These two indicators can be compared to the still-dominant measure for state capacity in the quantitative literature, that is, per capita income, which an influential study regards as "a proxy for a state's overall financial, administrative, police, and military capabilities."[13] Table 2.1 shows the countries with the five highest and lowest per capita incomes, using mean values for the period from 1950 to 2010. It also shows the number of intra-state conflict years, as well as the number of failed and successful coups (all from 1950 or independence until 2010).[14]

Unsurprisingly, conflicts and coups are rare in the top performers and much more common in the worst ones. However, the table also shows that a high GDP per capita does not guarantee the absence of coups, while a low GDP per capita does not necessitate either coups or conflicts. From a monopoly-of-violence perspective, Malawi can be considered a strong state, whereas Qatar – at least in 1972, 1995, and 1996 – showed signs of a weak

[12] The distinction between minor armed conflicts and internal wars is based on the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset.
[13] Fearon and Laitin 2003, 80.
[14] The GDP per capita data are from the Penn World Table 7.1, using PPP Converted GDP Per Capita (Chain Series), at 2005 constant prices; the conflict year data are from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2012; and the coup data are from Powell and Thyne 2011.

state despite an impressive average per capita income of $42,531 in 1995–6 due to its natural resource wealth. Zimbabwe has not witnessed any sustained intra-state conflict ever since Robert Mugabe's coming to power in 1980 ended the period of white minority rule and civil war, yet his economic policies since then have been so disastrous that the country's average per capita income is lower than Ethiopia's, which experienced conflict in all years but one from 1980 to 2010.

Table 2.1: Highest and Lowest Income Countries, 1950–2010

	Country	GDP per capita	Failed coups	Successful coups	Conflict years
1	Qatar	$63,325	1	2	0
2	UAE	$60,299	2	0	0
3	Brunei	$56,438	0	0	0
4	Kuwait	$39,643	0	0	0
5	Luxembourg	$36,822	0	0	0
…					
181	Malawi	$506	0	0	0
182	Burundi	$446	5	5	17
183	Ethiopia	$428	3	2	47
184	Mozambique	$414	1	0	16
185	Zimbabwe	$364	0	0	9

As with most quantitative indicators for cross-country analyses, the use of conflict years and number of coup attempts sometimes leads to categorizations that may seem implausible from a more qualitative point of view: due to the civil war in Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom experienced twenty-two years of intra-state conflict in the period from 1971 to 1998, yet many would object to classifying the UK as a "weak state" in that period. Nonetheless, given my focus on better understanding the links between domestic, international, and transnational dynamics of conflict in the *non-Western world* – specifically sub-Saharan Africa – the presence of coups and organized rebellion represents the most useful, if imperfect, measure of state weakness.

Furthermore, using conflict years as an indicator for state weakness avoids what Kocher identifies as tautological arguments about violent conflict: "weakness is, properly speaking, the object of explanation, not the explanation itself."[15] What, then, does account for the dynamics of conflict in and across weak states? In the following sections, I suggest that the answer lies in the strategic setting in which weak state rulers and rebel groups find themselves.

Beyond Greed and Grievance: Armed Conflict as Power Politics

> He who is active in politics strives for power either as a means in serving other aims, ideal or egoistic, or as "power for power's sake," that is, in order to enjoy the prestige-feeling that power gives.
>
> —Max Weber[16]

> In truth, the Liberian factions were no more and no less than political parties in arms, and the ultimate aim of the main leaders was to take state power.
>
> —Stephen Ellis[17]

In the late 1990s, a World Bank team led by Paul Collier conducted extensive statistical research on civil wars. Collier interpreted their findings as showing that these wars were "far more likely to be caused by economic opportunities than by grievance."[18] This assertion sparked a heated debate, not least because Collier and Anke Hoeffler set up a dichotomous view on the study of rebellion, linking *grievance* explanations to political science and *greed* explanations to economics.[19] The political science approach, they argue, holds that "rebellion occurs when grievances are sufficiently acute that people want to engage in violent protest." The economics approach, by contrast, "models rebellion as an industry that generates profits from looting," thus considering rebels to be "motivated by greed."[20]

The two scholars base their conception of greed on what Jack Hirshleifer dubs Machiavelli's Theorem: "no one will ever pass up an opportunity to gain a one-sided advantage

[15] Kocher 2010, 144.
[16] From "Politics as a Vocation," originally given as a lecture in 1919 (reprinted in Weber 2009, 78).
[17] Ellis 1999, 140.
[18] Collier 2000a, 91.
[19] For a good review, see Arnson 2005.
[20] Collier and Hoeffler 2004, 564 (all three quotations).

by exploiting another party."[21] From an IR perspective, it seems fairly bizarre that Collier and Hoeffler contrast such an approach with political science *per se*. On the one hand, Machiavelli's *ambizione* is an essential part of the tradition of political realism – "the *animus dominandi*, the desire for power," in Hans Morgenthau's words.[22] On the other hand, rational choice explanations for war, heavily influenced by developments in economic theory, have been part of political science for a long time.[23]

In any case, the need to go beyond the dichotomy of greed and grievance is now widely accepted.[24] As an alternative starting point for explaining the dynamics of armed conflict in and across weak states, I propose the simple assumption that the leaders of *both* governments and rebel groups pursue political power (i.e., control over a sovereign state) – the former try to keep it, the latter to take it.[25] In their seminal book *The Logic of Political Survival*, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and his colleagues assume that "all political leaders, regardless of their institutional setting, have a common utility function that emphasizes first holding onto (or gaining) office and second maximizing their personal income while in office."[26] I drop the second element in order to focus on the extent to which a rational theory can explain the behavior of weak state rulers and rebel leaders by merely assuming that they wish to retain or take office.

As this section's epigraph by Max Weber suggests, political power is fungible: whatever one's specific substantive motives are, power in the form of political office can be used to achieve them.[27] In other words, the minimal assumption of elites pursuing political power largely sidesteps the futile "search for one overriding motivation across individuals,

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[21] Hirshleifer 2001, 10-1. It is worth highlighting that Hirshleifer juxtaposes this view with "Coase's Theorem," according to which "people will never pass up an opportunity to cooperate by means of mutually advantageous exchange," and that he sees human history as a record of the tension between the two (ibid.).
[22] Morgenthau 1946, 192.
[23] To name but two, see the influential contributions by Bueno de Mesquita 1981; Fearon 1995.
[24] See Ballentine and Sherman 2003, 6; Sambanis 2005, 329; Collier et al. 2009, 2-3.
[25] My focus is on militarily effective armed groups that fight governments. The historical record for post-colonial Africa suggests that most of these rebel groups strive to take the capital city (see Reno 2011, 15-6).
[26] Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003, 21.
[27] On the idea of fungibility, see also Vinci 2006, 32, who, drawing on Morgenthau, uses a notion of power that is much broader than the one I advocate.

time, and space that dominates much of the literature on rebellion."[28] Specific motives, after all, are impossible to observe and difficult to infer.[29]

With regard to rebellion, this power politics approach shifts the focus away from natural resources or ethnicity and towards sovereign control. Apart from occasional exceptions, sovereignty – in the sense of international legal recognition – is simply ascribed to whoever is in control of the national capital city.[30] In the wake of decolonization, this practice has given rise to what Robert Jackson calls "quasi-states," i.e., governments that possess "juridical" but lack "empirical" statehood, as they do not have effective control over the population within their national territory.[31]

There are significant material benefits that can be derived from juridical statehood. Domestically, it provides governments with legal command, that is, "the capacity to control, dominate, extract, or dictate through the law."[32] Internationally, it not only gives governments access to seats in international organizations but also enables them to make deals that involve substantial resources.[33] For instance, they can obtain development aid or loans from developed countries and from financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank. In addition, the laws that regulate international commerce provide them with an advantage vis-à-vis rebel groups in attracting foreign firms.[34]

Much of the literature that considers natural resources a cause of conflict fails to acknowledge that sovereignty is itself a significant material resource. Although natural resources can sustain rebellion and may attract foreign interference, many internal conflicts launched by rebel groups "are not so much waged over the control of natural resources than over the control of the tools of sovereignty."[35]

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[28] Kalyvas 2006, 101.
[29] See ibid., 92; Wohlforth 2010, 469.
[30] See Clapham 1996, 20.
[31] Jackson 1990, 21.
[32] Englebert 2009, 62. On why this argument holds even in a context of state weakness, see ibid., chap. 4.
[33] See Clapham 1996, 22.
[34] See Reno 2001, 198-9.
[35] Englebert 2009, 95; see also Reno 2011, 15-6.

Given this focus on state power, rebel groups appear more like political parties in arms, as Stephen Ellis puts it in this section's other epigraph, and less like criminal organizations, as Collier would have it.[36] There are good reasons to prefer Ellis's view. In weak states, especially in Africa, rulers typically combine repression and clientelism in "a delicate balancing act of keeping rivals at bay and clients happy."[37] This leaves little room for serious, nonviolent political opposition. From independence through to 1990, not a single opposition party on the African mainland was able to gain power as the result of winning a general election against an incumbent regime.[38] While there have been several transitions towards democracy since 1990, all of the countries that faced internal war (see Table 1.1) were authoritarian at the time.[39] For societal groups that were excluded from power and suffered political repression, launching a rebellion thus arguably seemed the only realistic option to seize political power.

The importance of clientelism in maintaining political rule in weak states also puts into perspective the role that ethnicity plays in rebellions. In its dyadic variant, clientelism refers to a patron who distributes favors to a client in exchange for political support. Since, within a state, there normally is a pyramid of patron-client ties up from the government down to the local level, some clients are – at a lower level – patrons themselves.[40] This reciprocal, yet asymmetric nature of clientelist power relations creates dependencies that tend to reinforce horizontal group identities, especially ethnic ones, rather than vertical ones such as class.[41]

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[36] On rebellion as a "distinctive form of organized crime," see Collier 2000b.
[37] Jackson 2002, 39.
[38] See Clapham 1996, 56.
[39] This statement is based on the classifications made by Hadenius and Teorell 2007.
[40] See Clapham 1982, 4-7. On the centrality of clientelism, see Arriola 2009, 1343-4; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003, 19; Reno 1998, 2. For a recent conceptual discussion and literature review, see Hicken 2011.
[41] See van de Walle 2001, 119. Put differently, while clientelism produces socio-economic classes "in themselves," it prevents them from becoming classes "for themselves," that is, units of political action (Médard 1982, 170). Both Médard and van de Walle discuss clientelism as one element of neopatrimonialism, a broader concept used to analyze politics in Africa and beyond (see Erdmann and Engel 2007).

As clientelist relations in African states are typically structured along ethnic lines, exclusion from government, which in turn leads to grievances, often affects ethnic groups as a whole. As the phrasing of a "dynamic of ethnopolitical struggle for state power"[42] suggests, arguments presenting ethnic exclusion as an explanation for civil war can be subsumed under my notion of power politics. In other words, ethnicity is first and foremost a medium through which political competition is expressed, not a political force in itself.[43]

Understanding the basic preferences of governments and rebel groups in terms of controlling the tools of sovereignty has two distinct advantages.[44] From a normative perspective, it views both sides as essentially fighting for the same objective. By contrast, the excessive focus on greed as the motivation of rebel groups "has tended to delegitimize violent protest in general."[45] Taking into consideration that rebellion has historically often been the only way for an opposition to come to power in Africa, there is little reason to use terms that automatically put rebel groups in a negative light vis-à-vis incumbent regimes.

More importantly, such an understanding also has an analytic advantage. Following a strategic-choice approach, I assume fixed preferences for power in order to focus on how *changes in the strategic environment* of political leaders affect their beliefs, which in turn lead to changes in their strategies vis-à-vis the elites with whom they interact.[46] Strategies "are tools the agent uses to get as close to its preferences as possible," taking into account the environment, that is, "other actors and their expected behavior, available information, [and] power disparities."[47]

The analytic advantage lies in the fact that, generally speaking, changes in the environment are more readily observable than changes in preferences. Holding preferences constant is a simplifying assumption based on methodological considerations, not on meta-

[42] Cederman et al. 2010, 114.
[43] See Bayart 1993, 55-6; Fearon and Laitin 2000, 873-4.
[44] On *basic* preferences, see Lake and Powell 1999, 10.
[45] Keen 2008, 29.
[46] See Lake and Powell 1999, 11-2.
[47] Frieden 1999, 45.

physical beliefs: it facilitates the empirical falsification of theoretical arguments. If one observes environmental changes which fail to cause the changes in strategic behavior that a given theory suggests, one can no longer explain away this failure by imputing preferences after the fact.[48]

Having discussed the methodological rationale behind my power politics approach, as well as its implications for rebel groups, it is worth considering how it relates to realist IR theories with regard to the motives of rulers. Although the general construction of my theory is inspired by Charles Glaser's *Rational Theory of International Politics*, the preference assumptions outlined above are narrower than his. Integrating arguments from neoclassical realism, Glaser models two different motives of states: security and greed.[49] The latter includes a state's "desire to increase its wealth, territory, or prestige, and to spread its political ideology or religion, when these are not required to preserve the state's security."[50] Glaser thus conceives of greed as a more encompassing concept than Collier does with regard to rebel preferences.

By contrast, I do not go beyond assuming security (in the sense of political survival) as the basic motive of a weak state ruler. While I acknowledge that even rulers of weak states sometimes have aggressive motives (see Chapter 3), my focus is on demonstrating the extent to which the behavior of weak state rulers can be explained merely by their struggle to stay in power. This approach may at first seem close to defensive realism, which assumes that all states are security seekers.[51] However, the inclusion of rebel groups as principal actors in both the domestic and the international realm as well as the assumption that they have offensive preferences (in the sense of taking state power) highlights significant differences. Overall, similar to Glaser's *Rational Theory*, my approach draws on realist insights

[48] See Snidal 2002, 80.
[49] In Glaser's view, the principal contribution of neoclassical realists such as Randall Schweller has been to highlight the importance of greed as a state motive (see Glaser 2010, 158-9; Schweller 1996). For broader visions of neoclassical realism, see Schweller 2003; Taliaferro et al. 2009.
[50] Glaser 2010, 36.
[51] As with all these "Isms," defensive realism is of course a contested label (see Tang 2010, 3-4).

and shares several premises, but whether or not it should be labeled realist in the IR sense is a question of little substantial relevance.[52]

Of much greater relevance are its analytic roots in the strategic-choice approach. Like much of the research falling under this rubric, I assume that actors are *uncertain*: they have incomplete information about other actors' preferences. Given this assumption, an actor's beliefs must be specified, as they become "critical to the choice of strategy and the outcome of the interaction."[53] Although I assume that weak state rulers only have a preference for survival, I also assume that they believe that at least some of the members of their ruling coalition as well as some weak state rulers from other countries may well have aggressive motives. Together, these two assumptions help make possible the existence of a double security dilemma, to which I now turn.[54]

The African Weak State Ruler's Double Security Dilemma

The security dilemma has long been one of the key notions in explaining international politics.[55] More recently, it has also been applied to domestic politics – specifically, to ethnic and civil conflicts as well as coups.[56] So far, however, these two strands of literature have remained largely disconnected. Building on the idea of the "double security dilemma,"[57] this section brings the two perspectives together.

In their critique of Kenneth Waltz's seminal *Theory of International Politics*, Barry Buzan and his colleagues highlight that "agents of the state are constrained not only by the international structure associated with the balance of power, but also by the domestic polit-

[52] For a parallel argument, see Glaser 2010, 14-5.
[53] Lake and Powell 1999, 11.
[54] On the central role of incomplete information (i.e., uncertainty) for security dilemmas in general, see Glaser 2010, 46-7.
[55] See Herz 1950; Jervis 1978; Glaser 1997; Tang 2009.
[56] See Posen 1993; Snyder and Jervis 1999; Tang 2011; Roessler 2011.
[57] Buzan et al. 1993, 121.

ical structure."[58] In order to stay in power, rulers thus have to respond to both internal and external constraints.[59] Focusing on violent challenges to a ruler's political survival – rather than on nonviolent ones such as electoral defeat – and building on my operationalization of weak states in the first section, I argue that three critical threats need to be distinguished: coups from within the regime or military, rebellions from societal groups, and interference from foreign governments.

Only two of these threats – coups and interference – may emerge from strategic environments that constitute what Shiping Tang calls *genuine* security dilemmas. Rigorously conceived, the notion of a security dilemma implies defensively oriented actors that are propelled into conflictual relations not by malign intentions from either side but by uncertainty and fear stemming from anarchy, that is, the absence of a higher authority.[60]

These conditions hold for neighboring weak state rulers that strive to remain in power. They may arguably also hold for relations between the ruler and members of his ruling coalition. They do not hold, however, for relations between the ruler and rebel groups as conceived in this chapter, since rebel groups are by definition excluded from access to state power and assumed to be offensively oriented in the sense that they try to seize that power by force.[61] Nonetheless, the threat of rebellion is inextricably linked to both that of a coup and that of interference, as addressing either of them typically increases the likelihood of rebellion. In other words, weak state rulers face a double security dilemma that connects these three threats via trade-offs.

The first half of the logic behind this claim is captured by the *coup dilemma*, which arises from a commitment problem between "elites with joint control of the state's coer-

[58] Ibid., 120.
[59] See also David 1991.
[60] See Tang 2009, 594-5.
[61] There is an important difference here between my analysis of ruler–rebel relations and those analyses that focus on a security dilemma between ethnic groups (see Posen 1993; Tang 2011). In my view, if one of these groups is formally in power while the other is excluded from it, a *genuine* security dilemma between them only exists in extreme cases of state collapse (see Snyder and Jervis 1999, 15-8), not simply in the absence of "a more-or-less neutral central authority" (Tang 2011, 530). Tang's vague characterization of what constitutes anarchy in his article from 2011 contradicts the rigor he himself advocates in his article from 2009.

cive apparatus."[62] Given both the secrecy and proximity of coup plots, the ruler of a country in which the use of force is considered a viable means to induce political change must be suspicious of at least some members of his ruling coalition. These elites, in turn, may interpret defensive maneuvers by the ruler as a sign that *he* plans to strike against *them*, subsequently also taking protective measures.[63] This cycle of actions will further increase mutual fears and may in fact propel the leader to exclude these members from his government. As a consequence, however, these elites and the societal groups they represent are likely to launch a rebellion in order to regain access to state power. Philip Roessler has convincingly demonstrated that this dilemma is particularly acute if political competition occurs between societal groups that are geographically concentrated, as the latter lowers the costs of starting a rebellion following exclusion from power.[64]

Notably, rulers continue to face this trade-off when a rebellion is well underway. In May 2003, for example, the Guinea-backed Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) came ever closer to capturing Monrovia. Nonetheless, after a battle just twenty kilometers away from the capital, President Charles Taylor ordered a wave of arrests within his own army, illustrating that he "still regarded his own security forces as at least as much of a threat as LURD."[65]

While developing his coup-proofing theory of civil war, Roessler – like many other conflict scholars – focuses purely on "*country-specific* factors or processes *within* the state experiencing conflict," thus overlooking "transnational factors or linkages to actors outside the state."[66] Similarly, in his book on *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, Milan Svolik highlights two fundamental challenges for dictators. The first is the problem of authoritari-

[62] Roessler 2011, 316.
[63] I use the word "may" to highlight that such a negative dynamic does not necessarily follow from anarchy. Between two defensively oriented sides, it unfolds only if at least one side begins the interaction believing that the other side is likely to be an aggressor. On the self-reinforcing aspect of initial beliefs, see Glaser 2010, 84.
[64] This condition applies especially in sub-Saharan Africa (see Roessler 2011; Roessler 2013).
[65] Reno 2007, 79.
[66] Gleditsch 2007, 294 (emphasis in the original). Regarding the "almost exclusive focus" on internal causes in the literature, see also Blattman and Miguel 2010, 30.

an control, the second that of authoritarian power-sharing; these are largely identical to what I call the threats of rebellions and of coups, respectively. Like Roessler, Svolik provides a nuanced analysis of how these two problems are interconnected.[67] At the same time, he also fails to consider external factors as an essential element of the strategic environment faced by survival-seeking rulers.

Put differently, both Roessler and Svolik miss the second half of the double security dilemma's logic – the *interference dilemma*. Afraid that a neighboring weak state ruler could arm their domestic opposition and thus decisively tilt the internal balance of power, weak state rulers may choose to strike first by providing support to the neighbor's opposition in the hope of at least alleviating the impact of any potential interference. Such a move would then likely spur a tit-for-tat response that would increase the chance of domestic rebellion. This reasoning somewhat parallels the realist notion of an external security dilemma between states: even if each state "strove only for security and had no designs on its neighbors, all states would nevertheless remain insecure; for the means of security for one state are, in their very existence, the means by which other states are threatened."[68]

In the conventional inter-state security dilemma literature, it is assumed that a ruler counters foreign threats by strengthening his own military.[69] By contrast, the logic here is that arming foreign opposition groups is safer for a weak state ruler, who must fear that his military would exploit its increased capabilities by staging a coup.[70] Due to the coup dilemma, rulers use "coup-proofing strategies" such as stacking the military with loyal co-ethnics rather than making promotions based on merit; shuffling or purging high-ranking officers; dividing the military into rival branches; or creating special paramilitary forces.[71]

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[67] See Svolik 2012, 2-12.
[68] Waltz 1979, 64.
[69] See Glaser 2010, 41-2.
[70] Powell 2012 finds that increased expenditures per soldier actually decrease both the likelihood and the success of coup attempts. However, I caution against equating increased military *spending* with increased military *capabilities*, that is, "the ability to perform military missions" (Glaser 2010, 41). It may be wise for weak state rulers to provide money, but it is dangerous for them to foster capabilities.
[71] Belkin and Schofer 2003, 596; see also Powell 2012, 1023-5.

Responding to the risk of foreign interference by building up military capabilities undermines such strategies; responding by providing arms to foreign rebels does not.

Before further discussing coups, rebellions, and foreign interference with regard to Africa from 1990 to 2010, I provide an empirical overview of these three threats across world regions. The purpose of this analysis is to examine whether the double security dilemma as conceived above should be expected to have analytic purchase in regions other than Africa.

Coups, Rebellions, and Foreign Interference in Cross-Regional Perspective

The triad of coups, rebellions, and foreign interference is a problem not only for Africa's weak state rulers. Table 2.2 displays information from three different datasets with global coverage, aggregated by region (as defined by the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset) for the time period 1975–2009.[72] In order to focus on intra-regional conflict dynamics, the data on foreign interference is limited to external support for rebels by – and inter-state conflict with – governments from the same region.[73]

Although Africa is by far the most coup-prone region with 38 out of 52 countries (73%) experiencing at least one coup attempt, both the Middle East (47%) and the Americas (43%) also witnessed such attempts in many countries. In terms of intra-state conflicts and external support for rebels by governments from the same region, the Middle East did not differ strongly from Africa and was even slightly more prone to regional interference.[74]

[72] On coups, see Powell and Thyne 2011; on intra- and inter-state conflicts, see UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2012; on external support, see UCDP External Support Data v1.0-2011. The time period 1975–2009 is simply a function of the limited temporal scope of the dataset on external support.

[73] I have some concerns about the quality of the data on external support. Given the omissions identified for Africa from 1990 to 2009 (see Chapter 6), external support is likely also underreported for the other regions.

[74] However, if only countries with land borders are counted (thus excluding Bahrain from the Middle East and Cape Verde, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the Seychelles from Africa), Africa's percentage of countries affected by external support to their domestic opposition is slightly higher (52%) than the Middle East's (50%).

Table 2.2: Coups, Rebellions, and Interference – No. of Countries by Region, 1975–2009

		Coups d'état			Rebellions	Regional interference	
Region	Countries	Attempted	Failed	Succeeded	Intra-state conflict	External support	Inter-state conflict
Africa	52 (100%)	38 (73%)	30 (58%)	29 (56%)	37 (71%)	24 (46%)	12 (23%)
Americas	35 (100%)	15 (43%)	11 (31%)	12 (34%)	13 (37%)	3 (9%)	5 (14%)
Asia	42 (100%)	9 (21%)	8 (19%)	7 (17%)	16 (38%)	12 (29%)	7 (17%)
Europe	43 (100%)	4 (9%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	10 (23%)	5 (12%)	0 (0%)
Middle East	15 (100%)	7 (47%)	6 (40%)	3 (20%)	10 (67%)	7 (47%)	4 (27%)
Totals	187 (100%)	73 (39%)	59 (32%)	51 (27%)	86 (46%)	51 (27%)	28 (15%)

Yet, a closer look at the interference data for the Middle East reveals that only Iran and Iraq formed tit-for-tat transnational alliances, while also fighting a conventional inter-state war. Most of the other instances of interference were due to one-sided support given by Iran (to groups in Egypt, Israel, and Turkey) and Syria (to groups in Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, and Turkey). The absence of retaliatory external support for rebels does not mean that this interference did not cause inter-state tensions, however: for example, Turkey entered Iran in 1996 and 1999 because of Kurdish rebel bases in these countries, leading to so-called militarized inter-state disputes (MIDs).[75]

Why, then, does the interference dilemma – which leads to preemptive and retaliatory transnational alliances – seem to play a less important role in the Middle East than in Africa? It is important to reiterate that I derive this specific form of an external security dilemma from the coup dilemma (which, in turn, is a specific form of an internal security dilemma): weak state rulers are assumed to prefer giving support to foreign rebels rather than building up their armed forces' military capabilities due to the fear of being overthrown by

[75] See Salehyan 2009, 110-3.

members of their ruling coalition, who may either be military officers themselves or politicians linking up with them.

This coup dilemma – which leads the ruler to exclude members from his ruling coalition, who in turn respond by launching a rebellion – is primarily pertinent to Africa, as the region "is unique from the rest of the world in the geographic concentration of ethnicity, the number of irregular changes of power, and the degree to which this violent competition for power occurs between different ethnic groups and leads to shifts in the politically-dominant ethnic group."[76]

Put differently, while rulers in other parts of the world also face the *threat* of a coup, this threat is less likely to take the form of a security dilemma that pits different ethnic groups within the ruling coalition against each other. Accordingly, although many of these rulers also face the threat of foreign interference, sometimes in the form of a security dilemma, they have a broader range of strategies at their disposal to address this threat. Arming foreign opposition groups is only one of them and may often not be the most effective one, especially in countries such as Turkey, where the ruler has a capable military at his command.

Returning to data on the Americas, the relative lack of external support for rebel groups (only in 3 out of 35 countries, or 9%) stands out, especially in contrast to the large percentage of states affected by coups (43%) or rebellions (37%). In their study of regional security complexes, Buzan and Wæver wonder whether South America in particular is "an under-conflictual anomaly" in terms of regional interference.[77] Transnational flows existed mainly with regard to ideational factors.[78] The three countries that did witness external support for rebels were Panama (by the United States), El Salvador (by Cuba, Nicaragua, and the United States), and Nicaragua (by Cuba, Honduras, and the United States). In other

[76] Roessler 2013, 24. Between 1950 and 2004, there have been 66 ethnic transfers of power in Africa, but only 9 in the Middle East, 5 in Asia, and none in Latin America (see ibid.).
[77] Buzan and Wæver 2003, 304. For a wide-ranging analysis of warfare in Latin America, see Centeno 2002.
[78] See Buzan and Wæver 2003, 310.

words, there were no tit-for-tat transnational alliances. Once again, while this suggests that the double security dilemma as outlined above is of limited relevance to the Americas, it does not mean that the region has been without inter-state conflicts and tensions: apart from the conflicts between the United States and Grenada (1983), the United States and Panama (1989), and Peru and Ecuador (1995), there were dozens of MIDs between Latin American governments, leading one scholar to speak of a "violent peace" on the subcontinent.[79]

In Asia, fewer countries were affected by coups (21%), whereas the percentage of countries that witnessed intra-state conflict is similar to the Americas (38%). External support (29%) was more frequent than in the Americas, but significantly less frequent than in Africa and the Middle East. Out of the 12 countries experiencing support to rebels, Afghanistan was involved in tit-for-tat transnational alliances with both Pakistan and Uzbekistan. The most frequent interferers, however, were the emerging powers China (in Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand) and India (in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka), neither of which experienced any coup attempt.

Unsurprisingly, European governments were least affected by the three threats. The coup attempts in Azerbaijan (1994 and 1995), Portugal (two in 1975 after the successful one in 1974), Russia (1991), and Spain (1981) all failed. While 10 countries (23%) experienced intra-state conflicts, only 5 of them faced external support for rebels (Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, and Serbia), none of which led to tit-for-tat transnational alliances.

In sum, then, the interconnected dynamics of the coup and interference dilemmas may well play a role in at least some parts of Asia and the Middle East, but they appear most pertinent to Africa, where tit-for-tat transnational alliances occurred between seventeen dyads from 1990 to 2010 alone (see below and, in more detail, Chapter 6).

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[79] Mares 2001, chap. 2.

Coups, Rebellions, and Foreign Interference in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1990–2010

While the double security dilemma helps make sense of security dynamics in mainland sub-Saharan Africa *since independence*, this dissertation focuses on the post-Cold War period in order to isolate intra-regional relations as far as possible (see Introduction).

Since the end of the Cold War, Africa's states have taken widely divergent pathways. In the early 1990s, a wave of democratization swept through most of the continent. In some cases, it led to the consolidation of democracy; in most cases, however, political liberalization remained partial and incomplete. On the other hand, conflict zones spanning several countries emerged; in some of them, state structures largely collapsed, the clearest case being Somalia.[80]

Some scholars argue that, since 1990, formal institutional rules have come to "matter much more than they used to, and have displaced violence as the primary source of constraints on executive behavior" across the region.[81] In other words, despite the impact of US–Soviet relations, the double security dilemma might actually be of greater relevance to pre- rather than post-1990 Africa. Other scholars, however, caution that the transition "from personal rule to rule-based governance is still far from over in much of Africa."[82]

Clearly, then, focusing on coups, rebellions, and foreign interference – rather than on competitive elections – misses some of the political power dynamics in contemporary Africa. Nonetheless, Table 2.3 shows that 28 out of 42 states (67%) experienced at least one intra-state conflict year or one coup attempt in the time period 1990–2010, thus broadly qualifying as weak states. Even if the rulers of these states also faced nonviolent challenges to their political survival, they certainly had to worry about (potential) coup plotters, rebels, and their foreign supporters. At first sight, the double security dilemma may therefore apply to two thirds of mainland Africa's states during that period.

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[80] See Young 2012, 28. On the "democratic experiments" and their varied outcomes, see Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Villalón and VonDoepp 2005.
[81] Posner and Young 2007, 127; see also Goldsmith 2004, 103-7. On changes in violence, see Straus 2012.
[82] Joseph 2008, 100; similarly, see Diamond 2008.

Table 2.3: Coups, Rebellions, and Regional Interference in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1990–2010

		Coups d'état		Rebellions	Regional interference	
Country *(Italics: not a weak state)*	GDP per capita	No. failed	No. succeeded	Conflict years	No. of countries	Interfering countries
Gabon	$10,904	0	0	0	0	—
Botswana	$8,215	0	0	0	0	—
Equatorial Guinea	$7,513	0	0	0	0	—
South Africa	$6,109	0	0	0	0	—
Namibia	$3,940	0	0	0	0	—
Swaziland	$3,439	0	0	0	0	—
Angola	$2,813	0	0	16	5	Congo-B., Congo-K, *South Africa*, Togo, Zambia
Congo-Brazzaville	$2,172	0	0	5	1	Angola
Djibouti	$2,024	1	0	5	1	Eritrea
Mauritania	$1,675	1	2	1	0	—
Cameroon	$1,649	0	0	0	0	—
Sudan	$1,534	0	0	21	4	Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda
Ghana	$1,515	0	0	0	0	—
Côte d'Ivoire	$1,384	3	1	3	2	*Burkina Faso*, Liberia
Nigeria	$1,335	1	1	2	0	—
Senegal	$1,283	0	0	9	1	Gambia, Guinea-Bissau
Gambia	$1,189	1	1	0	0	—
Kenya	$1,137	0	0	0	0	—
Benin	$1,098	0	0	0	0	—
Lesotho	$1,080	0	2	1	0	—
Zambia	$1,047	2	0	0	0	—
Chad	$936	3	0	17	2	CAR, Sudan
Guinea-Bissau	$912	4	2	2	0	—
Uganda	$838	0	0	16	3	Congo-K., Sudan, Rwanda
Tanzania	$826	0	0	0	0	—
Mali	$793	1	1	5	0	—
Togo	$784	4	1	0	0	—
Guinea	$778	1	1	2	1	Liberia
Burkina Faso	$763	0	0	0	0	—
Eritrea	$737	0	0	3	2	Ethiopia, Sudan
Rwanda	$732	0	1	12	3	Burundi, Congo-K., Uganda
Sierra Leone	$715	2	3	10	2	*Burkina Faso*, Liberia
CAR	$577	1	1	5	4	Chad, Congo-B., Congo-K., Sudan
Niger	$516	0	3	7	0	—
Malawi	$506	0	0	0	0	—
Mozambique	$502	0	0	3	1	*South Africa*
Somalia	$501	0	0	14	2	Eritrea, Ethiopia
Ethiopia	$452	0	0	20	2	Eritrea, Sudan
Burundi	$442	4	1	16	4	Congo-K., Rwanda, *Tanzania, Zimbabwe*
Liberia	$391	1	0	5	4	*Burkina Faso*, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Sierra Leone
Zimbabwe	$383	0	0	0	0	—
Congo-Kinshasa	$254	2	0	9	6	Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, *Zimbabwe*

Looking more closely at the data on these 28 states, 10 of them (36%) experienced at least one coup attempt, conflict year, and interference each; 15 (53%) experienced two of these phenomena (coup and conflict in the case of 6 or 21%, conflict and interference in the case of the other 9 or 32%); and only 3 (11%) experienced only coup attempts.[83]

Of course, the absence of either coup attempts or conflicts does not mean that there was no coup dilemma, as the latter can find expression in the form of either a coup attempt (if elements of the ruling coalition move first) or a conflict (if the ruler moves first, forcing those excluded to launch a rebellion rather than a coup). On the other hand, not every coup attempt or conflict was necessarily caused by the coup dilemma. Put differently, assessing whether or not there was a coup dilemma requires a deeper investigation of the actual strategic context of each case.[84]

In Chapter 6, I provide such an analysis for the interference dilemma, finding that it operated in 11 out of 17 weak state dyads in which tit-for-tat interference occurred. Moreover, in 4 of the 6 other dyads, the initial alliance was at least partly driven by resource opportunities, which the next chapter links to the avoidance of coups. In short, Chapter 6 confirms the importance of the double security dilemma in post-Cold War Africa.

One of the implications of this dilemma is that rebel groups indeed form "an integral part of the international relations of Africa."[85] As Table 2.3 shows, external support to rebel groups, often provided by several governments, occurred in 19 out of the 28 weak states (68%). In the following section, I criticize extant approaches to explaining these relations between governments and foreign rebel groups, concluding that a new theoretical perspective is needed.

[83] The data on interference in Table 2.3 draws on my own research (see Chapter 6 for sources); the coup and conflict data comes from the sources already identified for the previous two tables.
[84] For several examples and statistical tests using fine-grained data for sub-Saharan Africa from independence to 2005, see Roessler 2011.
[85] Clapham 1996, 209.

The Difference Juridical Statehood Makes: Why Governments and Rebel Groups Are Not "Like Units"

The double security dilemma implies that governments *and* rebel groups should be seen as actors in the international realm. Both Douglas Lemke and Anthony Vinci take this argument one step further by analyzing these two types of actors as "like units" populating a self-help system in the structural realist sense.[86] In this section, I argue that conceiving of governments and rebel groups as like units is a flawed enterprise, for it misrepresents the preferences of rebel leaders and misses the crucial importance of juridical statehood.

According to Kenneth Waltz's structural realist (or "neorealist") theory, states exist in an anarchic international system and can be thought of as like units: they are autonomous political entities that duplicate each other's activities.[87] Waltz also assumes that states are unitary actors and that their basic motive is to survive.[88] His balance-of-power theory, which – he argues – applies to any anarchic system made up of actors wishing to survive, "predicts a strong tendency toward balance in the system." Importantly, Waltz further suggests that the "expectation is not that a balance, once achieved, will be maintained, but that a balance, once disrupted, will be restored in one way or another."[89]

Lemke and Vinci argue that this line of reasoning should hold not only for states (or, more precisely, their governments) but also for militarily effective rebel groups, as the latter constitute autonomous political entities. To be clear, I agree that some rebel groups meet one of the basic criteria for *empirical* statehood: they exercise control over some territory and the population within.[90] If one further thinks of state capacity as consisting of coercive, extractive, and (re-)distributive capacities, then some rebel groups do in fact de-

[86] See Lemke 2008a, 187; Lemke 2008b, 774-5; Lemke 2011, 52-3; Vinci 2008, 308; Vinci 2009, 39-40.
[87] See Waltz 1979, 95-7.
[88] See ibid., 91, 118.
[89] Ibid., 128 (both quotations); on the two requirements, see ibid., 121.
[90] See Clapham 1998b, 150.

velop all three of these.[91] Many rebel groups collect taxes, while some also distribute resources to garner the population's support; in short, they govern.[92]

However, rebel groups do not simply emulate governments. Rather, they try to take their place. Following the power politics approach outlined above, rulers strive to hold on to state power while rebel leaders aim to seize it. Therefore, they are *not* "alike in the tasks that they face."[93] As my change in terminology suggests, the difference between governments and rebel groups that I highlight becomes more obvious if one focuses on the leaders of these collective entities.[94] The fundamental objective of a rebel leader is not to 'survive' in their position as head of a rebel group; rather, they wish to become the head, or at least an important member, of their country's government and thus cease being a rebel.

The rationale behind this objective has already been discussed above: it lies in the material benefits that can be derived from *juridical* statehood. This has an important ideational implication that further undermines the applicability of structural realist theory. A rebel group tries to overthrow the government that rules the state with which the rebels identify (in the sense of being citizens of that state). It is thus virtually unthinkable that a rebel group made up primarily of self-identified citizens from one state would try to seize power in a different state.[95] Moreover, this would be a peculiar type of foreign conquest and annexation, which has become unacceptable in the international system.[96]

This ideational aspect of juridical statehood explains why *foreign* rebel groups – by themselves – do not present an existential threat to another government and why such rebel

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[91] This classification loosely draws on Snyder and Bhavnani 2005, 570-1.
[92] On rebel governance, see Mampilly 2011.
[93] Waltz 1979, 96. If one assumes that armed groups merely strive to hold on to a certain chunk of territory that they already control, the analogy would be more apt. The empirical record, however, suggests that most of the militarily effective armed groups that fight governments strive to take the capital city (see above). My focus is on these rebel groups, not on other nonstate armed actors such as local self-defense militias.
[94] For an incisive critique of building IR theories on the assumption that collective entities (states) aim to 'survive,' see Fearon 2011, 436-7 (criticizing both Waltz and Glaser).
[95] While I do not systematically discuss secessionist rebel groups, they do not contradict this argument: such groups try to create a new sovereign state based on the rebels' shared belief that they belong to a nation that has the right to self-determination (in the sense of seceding from a repressive state). Therefore, they do not pose a direct threat to foreign capitals.
[96] See Atzili 2006/07, 141-5; Atzili 2012, chap. 1; Reno 2011, 28.

groups are often welcome to set up rear bases in neighboring states. In a Waltzian self-help system, by contrast, the Sudanese government, for example, would feel equally threatened by a strong Sudanese and a strong Ugandan rebel group. This simply does not hold; foreign rebel groups may wreak havoc in the periphery of the territory formally controlled by a neighboring government, but they will not by themselves try to seize the capital in which that government resides.

Even if one disagrees with my conceptual objections to conceiving of governments and rebel groups as like units sharing a self-help system and thus facing the same structural constraints, there are good reasons to be skeptical about existing applications in particular and Waltzian balance-of-power theory in general. First, consider Lemke's case study of post-independence Congo in his recent article. In a section titled "International Politics within Congo," he treats Congo-Kinshasa between 1960 and 1966 as an international subsystem in which autonomous political entities allegedly behaved in accordance with balance-of-power expectations: the observed behavior "clearly resembles international neo-realist activity – war fighting, the strong conquering the weak, actors confronted with common enemies allying with each other, etc."[97]

This is not only an excessively broad interpretation of what constitutes "neo-realist activity" but also internally inconsistent: Waltz's theory only purports to explain (sub-)systemic outcomes, not unit behavior.[98] By the end of 1966, virtually all Congolese actors apart from the central government had ceased to exist. Put differently, instead of the (re-)emergence of a balance of power, one actor managed to transform the whole subsystem. To interpret a number of balancing strategies (that eventually failed) as confirmation of Waltz's theory misunderstands its logic, rendering it unfalsifiable.

In fact, a collaborative research project studying international (sub-)systems across the world and throughout the last two millennia finds that Waltz's balancing proposition is

[97] Lemke 2011, 64.
[98] See Waltz 1979, 68-72.

deeply flawed: sustained hegemonic outcomes frequently occurred.[99] Reviewing this project and other recent work on the balance of power, Daniel Nexon concludes that Waltz's strong (two-requirements-only) variant of balance-of-power theory "cannot survive the combined weight of arguments and evidence" presented in the more recent literature.[100] It is hard to disagree.

In sum, broadening the notion of the international system to include not only 'states' (i.e., governments) but also nonstate actors such as rebel groups should not lead us to forget that each rebel group primarily challenges the government of the state with which it identifies. It follows that governments are existentially threatened only by domestic rebel groups, not by foreign ones. Governments and rebel groups should therefore be seen as formally differentiated parts of the international structure; they are *not* like units.[101]

Put differently, trying to revive neorealism in order to explain interactions between governments and rebel groups is likely to obfuscate rather than illuminate the mechanisms driving these relations. In the following chapter, I propose an alternative view that draws on principal-agent theory.

[99] See Wohlforth et al. 2007, 156.
[100] Nexon 2009, 353.
[101] This sentence draws on the language Waltz uses to analyze political structures (see Waltz 1979, chap. 5).

Chapter 3: A Three-Step Theory of Transnational Alliances

When the Cold War ended, it became increasingly clear that the external dimensions of armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa had to do with more than just "proxy wars" being fought by extra-regional powers.[1] Intra-African dynamics came to the fore, especially in the form of *transnational alliances* between rebel groups and foreign governments. In December 1989, Charles Taylor's rebel group invaded Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire, with significant support from the governments of Burkina Faso and Libya.[2] In October 1990, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), soon to be led by Paul Kagame, marched into Rwanda from their Ugandan rear bases.[3] Two months later, Idriss Déby fought his way to power in Chad, backed by Sudan and Libya. Whereas armed violence in the Libya–Chad–Sudan triangle had long been regionalized, the invasions into Liberia and Rwanda initiated the spiraling of conflict in West Africa and the African Great Lakes region, respectively.[4]

This chapter develops a dynamic three-step theory of transnational alliances. I begin by analyzing these alliances as clientelist relationships. Then, I present the three steps that explain (1) why weak state governments provide support to foreign rebel groups, (2) why they choose some groups as alliance partners but not others, and (3) why these partners sometimes behave uncooperatively towards their foreign sponsors.

The theory is dynamic in the sense that it specifies feedback mechanisms from the third step to both the first and second steps. It thereby illuminates the *process* of alliance politics, covering the making as well as the unmaking of alliances. In other words, the theory explains not only why "the enemy of my enemy's friend is my friend," but also why and how friends turn into enemies.

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[1] On the concept of proxy wars and its use during the Cold War, see Bar-Siman-Tov 1984. For a global history of this phenomenon in the Cold War period, see Westad 2005.
[2] See Ellis 2007, 71-4.
[3] See Prunier 1998, 130.
[4] See Burr and Collins 1999; Bøås and Dunn 2007, 35-6.

Transnational Clientelism: Adapting Principal-Agent Theory

Governments and rebel groups are not "like units" (see Chapter 2). How, then, should one conceive of them and their strategic interactions in order to explain both the formation and the dynamics of transnational alliances? Adapting insights from principal-agent (PA) theory, I examine alliances between governments and foreign rebel groups as a specific form of patron-client relationships, which can be called *transnational clientelism*.[5]

In PA theory, *delegation* refers to "a conditional grant of authority from a *principal* to an *agent* that empowers the latter to act on behalf of the former. This grant of authority is limited in time or scope and must be revocable by the principal."[6] Authority is a problematic term in the context of transnational alliances: as the case of Laurent Kabila's AFDL shows, a rebel group can become a government and thereby gain actual *de jure* authority, that is, legal sovereignty.

What a government grants a foreign rebel group should therefore be defined narrowly as military and financial support, which is indeed revocable by that government. This support is typically given in exchange for the agent's support (a) in fighting the threats that the principal faces and/or (b) in providing it with opportunities for enrichment (see below). Such a transnational exchange has the same objective as that of domestic patron-client relationships: keeping the government in power (see Chapter 2). Instead of speaking of transnational delegation, which would involve a notion of authority that is problematic in this context, I thus speak of transnational *clientelism*, which emphasizes the domestic purposes of these alliances.[7] This type of clientelism is distinguished from its domestic variants by the fact that the client does not belong to the population over which the patron claims to rule.

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[5] In a somewhat similar vein, Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov analyzes inter-state alliances in proxy wars as "a special type of patron-client relationship, i.e. a special case of formal or informal alliance between small and big states" (Bar-Siman-Tov 1984, 269).

[6] Hawkins et al. 2006, 7 (emphasis in the original).

[7] Nonetheless, in line with recent work on clientelism (see Hicken 2011, 292), I use the terminology of patrons/clients and principals/agents interchangeably.

While PA theory has its origins in economics and has been used primarily in the study of US domestic politics and – later – international organizations, there now is an emerging literature that focuses on security.[8] The PA framework highlights two related agency problems in a delegation relationship – *adverse selection* and *agency slack*.[9] They can be thought of as arising at different stages, which represent the second and third steps of my theory: the adverse selection problem occurs in the process of screening and selecting agents; the problem of agency slack emerges after the alliance has been established.

Although the notions of adverse selection and agency slack are very useful for analyzing the choice of rebel agents and their subsequent behavior, my theory demonstrates that the PA framework's conventional focus on information asymmetries and control mechanisms does not fully capture key aspects of these stages in the context of transnational clientelism.[10]

Before discussing these issues further, however, the first step of my theory investigates the conditions that lead governments to look for rebel clients in the first place. Although an alliance requires the decisions of both the government and the rebel group to cooperate, my focus in the next section is solely on the government side. Given the asymmetric flow of support, it is after all the patron that makes the difference in whether or not an alliance comes into being.[11]

[8] See Hovil and Werker 2005; Byman and Kreps 2010; Salehyan et al. 2011. For a broader review of PA theory in IR, see Tamm and Snidal 2014.
[9] See Salehyan 2010, 495.
[10] For a general critique of PA theory's narrow vision, see Gilardi and Braun 2002, 156-7.
[11] By contrast, Salehyan et al. 2011 focus on the determinants of rebel demand for external support.

Step 1: Why Governments Form Transnational Alliances

On the basis of the double security dilemma (see Chapter 2), two factors should lead governments to seek the formation of transnational alliances: transnational threats and resource opportunities. In the case of threats, transnational alliances keep rivals (existing rebel groups) at bay by undermining their potential or actual foreign backers; in the case of opportunities, they keep the ruler's clients (potential coup plotters) happy by enabling them to profit from foreign resources.

The two concepts – threat and opportunity – play important roles in the social science literature. *Threat*, or what Sallust called *metus hostilis*, the fear of an enemy, has long been associated with the realist school of thought; the notion has also been used to explain collective action more generally.[12] In IR, Stephen Walt has focused on the role of threats in explaining alliance formation.[13] *Opportunity*, on the other hand, is a concept closely associated with economics and political economy approaches; it also refers to one of the dominant strands in the literature on civil war.[14] In the IR alliance literature, Randall Schweller has linked opportunity to the "bandwagoning for profit" of revisionist states.[15]

However, Walt and Schweller conceive of threats and opportunities in ways that are inconsistent with my power politics approach (see Chapter 2). In the following two subsection, I define threats and opportunities as factors of a weak state ruler's observable strategic environment, show how these definitions differ from Walt's and Schweller's, and outline the causal mechanisms by which the two factors lead to transnational alliance formation.

[12] For a recent overview from a political theory perspective, see Evrigenis 2008. For a comparative politics application, see Slater 2010.
[13] See Walt 1987, 21.
[14] See Collier and Hoeffler 2004, 564-5; Taydas et al. 2011, 2634.
[15] Schweller 1994; Schweller 1998, chap. 3.

Transnational Threats

In the context of a weak state ruler's strategic environment, a transnational threat is constituted *either* by the ruler's belief that a foreign government is about to support at least one domestic rebel group *or* by his knowledge that such support has already occurred. In the former case, which is directly related to the interference dilemma (see Chapter 2), the ruler's updating of prior beliefs is assumed to be based on observable changes such as new rumors about meetings between a rebel group and a foreign government or any other events that clearly signal increasingly hostile relations between the ruler and the foreign government in question.[16] In the latter case, the ruler simply obtains information about already existing flows of material support.

This narrow conception differs from Walt's, who defines threat as a composite factor that includes another state's aggregate power, offensive capabilities, geographic proximity, and the ruler's perception of whether that state has aggressive intentions.[17] His combination of disparate factors without any a priori weighting as well as his undertheorized notion of perception and its arbitrary invocation in case studies have rightly been criticized by scholars from very different theoretical camps.[18] From a strategic-choice perspective, Walt's bundling together of "national preferences, strategies, and the environment into a single factor" makes it virtually impossible to falsify his arguments.[19]

By contrast, my power politics approach, which holds preferences fixed, allows me to focus on whether changes in a ruler's strategic environment lead to hypothesized changes in his behavior. Given the definition above, the expected *threat mechanism* has a *preemptive* and a *retaliatory* variant. The full causal logic is as follows: (1) The ruler obtains information that leads him to believe that the creation of a hostile alliance between a domes-

[16] For a game-theoretic demonstration that beliefs about another actor's intentions are critical to security dilemma models, see Kydd 2005, chap. 2. As the author highlights, actors' beliefs about others' intentions can be reconstructed in historical case studies if there is sufficiently rich data on this issue (see ibid., 23-5).
[17] See Walt 1987, 21-5.
[18] See Legro and Moravcsik 1999, 36-8; Barnett 2003.
[19] Frieden 1999, 50-1.

tic rebel group and a foreign government is imminent (or has already occurred); (2) given the ruler's fixed preference to maintain power, he considers this potential (or existing) alliance threatening and thus (3) responds by forming a preemptive (or retaliatory) alliance.[20] In this context, transnational alliances represent a doubly indirect means of waging war against domestic rebel groups by weakening their supporters via foreign rebel clients. To be precise, this means that "the enemy of my enemy's friend is my friend."

The third step of this mechanism should not be misconstrued as automatic. Weak state rulers are typically faced with scarce resources; providing support to foreign rebels would of course further diminish them. In some cases, a rational ruler's cost-benefit analysis leads to the conclusion that arming foreign opposition groups would be more costly than simply fighting externally backed rebels at home. In other cases, rulers are overwhelmed by transnational threats before being able to retaliate (see Chapter 6 for further discussion and examples).

Resource Opportunities

Resource opportunities are constituted by the potential benefits to be derived from "lootable"[21] natural resources in the foreign territory controlled by a potential rebel agent *subtracted by* the potential costs of supporting that agent. The latter depend both on the military capability of the potential agent and, even more importantly, on the capability of the target government: the weaker the target, the smaller the support needed to help the agent achieve territorial control. If natural resources – in particular, easily lootable ones (see Table 3.1) – are so plentiful that a foreign government's potential share in exploiting them would likely outweigh these costs, the opportunity is large.

[20] These three steps – not to be confused with my overall theory's three steps – represent the situational (macro-micro), the action-formation (micro-micro), and the transformational (micro-macro) mechanisms that together constitute the threat mechanism. On this notion of a complex causal mechanism, see Hedström and Swedberg 1998, 21-3, who draw on Coleman 1986, 1322.

[21] On the notion of lootability, see Le Billon 2001; Ross 2006; Snyder 2006.

Table 3.1: Lootable and Nonlootable Resources

Resources	Risk of accessibility by rebel groups		
	Exploitation	Theft	Extortion
Illegal lootables			
Drugs	High	High	High
Other lootables			
Alluvial gems and minerals	High	High	High
Timber	Medium	Medium	High
Agricultural goods	Medium	Medium	Medium
Onshore oil	Low	Medium	High
Nonlootables			
Kimberlite diamonds	Low	Medium	Medium
Deep-shaft minerals	Low	Low	Medium
Water dams	Low	Low	Medium
Offshore oil	Low	Low	Low

(Based on Le Billon 2012, 180)

While this conceptualization broadly captures the "foreign intervention" or "greedy outsiders" mechanism identified in the literature on links between natural resources and conflict,[22] it differs from Schweller's notion of opportunity in the context of inter-state alliances. Writing about European great power politics from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, Schweller conceives of opportunities broadly as "the prospect of making gains,"[23] having in mind issues such as territorial expansion. His key point is that, in terms of alliance behavior, "dissatisfied powers, motivated by profit more than security, bandwagon with an ascending revisionist state."[24] In other words, opportunity is a function of a specific set of preferences: rulers with revisionist ambitions take advantage of opportunities, rulers with defensive (status quo) objectives do not.

In contrast to neoclassical realists such as Schweller, I do not distinguish between security-seeking and "greedy" rulers; all weak state rulers are *assumed* merely to want to stay in power (see Chapter 2). How, then, do I expect resource opportunities to trigger transna-

[22] Ross 2004, 56-7; Humphreys 2005, 511.
[23] Schweller 1994, 93; Schweller 1998, 77.
[24] Schweller 1998, 22.

tional alliance formation? When resource opportunities in foreign states open up – that is, when there is a *supply* of opportunities – there also needs to be *demand* for them on the government side: some of the ruler's key clients, such as military and ruling party elites or influential businessmen, need to become interested in these opportunities.

Put differently, the *opportunity mechanism* also has to be put in the context of *domestic* power politics in weak states. Similar to Schweller's perspective, many analysts see nothing but "greed" in the cases of armies supporting foreign rebels, invading foreign countries, and setting up criminal networks of resource exploitation.[25] They all too often forget that weak state rulers have to rely on clientelism – e.g., providing opportunities for enrichment – to ensure the allegiance of their key domestic backers (see Chapter 2). Although some individual officers may have essentially economic interests, the reason that the army is allowed or even encouraged to get involved and exploit resources often has little to do with greed and everything to do with the ruler's logic of political survival.[26]

The Role of Nonsecurity Motives

Before discussing the role of nonsecurity motives in weak state governments' alliance decisions, both a summary and an important caveat are in order. It should be clear from the preceding discussion that I do not conceive of the opportunity and threat mechanisms as mutually exclusive. Both can be present at the same time; in that case, the formation of a transnational alliance would be overdetermined. The two mechanisms are thus seen as analytically distinct and individually sufficient, yet potentially reinforcing.

These arguments, however, are asymmetric in set-theoretic terms: they imply that, under the conditions outlined above, a weak state ruler who faces transnational threats and/or

[25] For a prime example of this view with regard to the Congo Wars, see Braeckman 2009.
[26] See Dietrich 2000, 16.

resource opportunities will form a transnational alliance, *but* they do not imply that such a ruler is necessarily unlikely to form an alliance if these two causal conditions are absent.[27]

In other words, I do not argue that either threats or opportunities are necessary conditions for alliance formation. There is a third individually sufficient condition, which the specific rational logic of my theory does not capture, but which some realists have analyzed in detail: aggressive, and sometimes reckless, governments.[28] Such governments not only exist in strong states but sometimes also in weak ones; they have "nonsecurity motives"[29] that go beyond, and may contradict, the specification of preferences for maintaining power advocated in Chapter 2.

Nonsecurity motives for transnational alliance formation are manifold. In their global study of transnational alliances from 1991 to 2000, Daniel Byman and his colleagues list no fewer than twelve "motivations of state supporters."[30] With the exception of internal security, eleven of them may arguably go beyond a narrow logic of political survival: regional influence; destabilize neighbors; regime change; payback; ensuring influence within the opposition; prestige; support coreligionists; support co-ethnics; irredentism; leftist ideology; and plunder.[31]

Notably, however, the authors analyze both strong and weak states as external supporters of rebel groups. It is not at all surprising that strong state governments – which are outside the scope of my theory – have motives exceeding narrow survival concerns. In any case, the study's overall findings are broadly in line with a power politics perspective:

> [S]tates are primarily motivated by geopolitics rather than ideology, ethnic affinity, or religious sentiment. Although these less strategic rationales sometimes play an important role in regimes' decisions to back insurgencies, they are far-less-frequent motivators than those involving considerations of regional influence and strategic competition. Indeed, when ethnic kin or religious brethren do receive support, it is often done to further realpolitik ambitions as opposed to being an end itself.[32]

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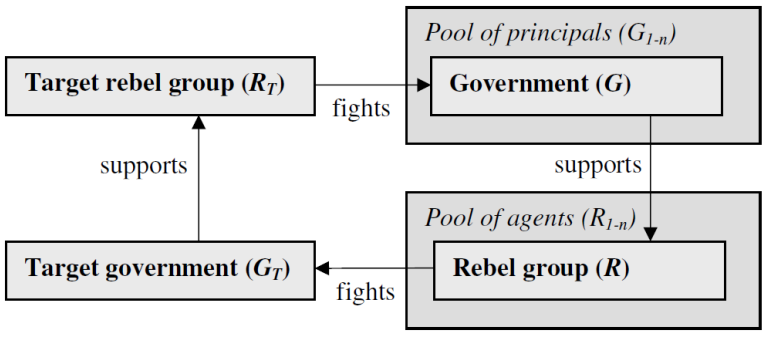
[27] On asymmetry and set theory, see Ragin 2008, 15-7; Goertz and Mahoney 2012, chap. 5.
[28] See Schweller 1996; Mearsheimer 2009.
[29] Glaser 2010, 36.
[30] Byman et al. 2001, 23. On ethnicity, see also Lake and Rothchild 1998, 29; Saideman 2001, 23.
[31] See Byman et al. 2001, 23-40.
[32] Ibid., 23.

While my theory cannot explain transnational alliances formed due to nonsecurity motives, it enables us to recognize situations in which there is no security rationale for alliance formation (that is, when both threats and opportunities are absent). This baseline therefore helps identify alliances that are driven purely by other concerns. It also shows that many of these suboptimal decisions prove disastrous for aggressive governments, which – in line with the rational logic of the theory – soon face retaliatory counter-alliances.[33] In Chapter 6, I illustrate this logic by analyzing Sudan's overly aggressive and ideology-driven foreign policy in the 1990s, which almost led to the regime's demise.

Step 2: Choosing Rebel Agents

Assuming a government faces environmental conditions – threats and opportunities – that lead it to seek a transnational alliance, there are often several potential allies. If target rebel group R_T, which is supported by foreign government G_T, threatens government G, the latter may find, as potential agents, several rebel groups $R_{1\text{-}n}$ from G_T's country.[34] Likewise, a rebel group R may find, as potential principals, several foreign governments $G_{1\text{-}n}$ that have an interest in weakening R's target government G_T. In other words, there may be *pools* of potential agents and principals (see Figure 3.1).[35]

Figure 3.1: Principals, Agents, and Their Targets



[33] On rational theories and suboptimal behavior, see Introduction.
[34] $R_{1\text{-}n}$ may include both existing rebel groups and dissidents that ask G to support their creation of new ones.
[35] For this notion, see Hawkins and Jacoby 2006, 203. The two authors only discuss the pool of agents; they fail to discuss that, from the agent's perspective, the pool of available principals is also relevant (see step 3).

If there is only one potential agent, a government is simply assumed to choose that agent. If the pool of agents is greater than one, however, the theory outlined so far is indeterminate as to which of these potential allies are likely to be chosen. In these cases, two factors are critical for the government's choice of specific alliance partners: the level of *trust* that the government has in a particular foreign rebel group, and that group's *geopolitical relevance*. While my theory assumes geopolitics to be more important than trust, I begin by discussing trust since it is the most prominent factor in the existing literature.

Trust

Trust can be defined as "a belief that the other side prefers mutual cooperation to exploiting one's own cooperation."[36] Such a belief is important because it mitigates the adverse selection problem, which in PA theory refers to the predicament that a potential agent has an interest in misrepresenting its preferences in order to appear a more attractive alliance partner, and that the principal cannot verify these preferences at the time of selection, since preferences are private information.[37] The principal is therefore expected to engage in a process of screening in order to find agents that are most likely to have congruent preferences. Due to the information asymmetries created by private ("hidden") information, beliefs play a critical role in this process. In a context of uncertainty, an actor must judge how probable it is that the other actor's claim about its preferences is correct; beliefs can therefore be seen as probability distributions.[38] The more trust the principal has in the agent, the less severe the principal will believe the adverse selection problem is.

In the context of transnational alliances, trust depends on two factors: a shared group identity and positive prior interactions. The first, a *shared group identity*, is often based on

[36] Kydd 2005, 6.
[37] See Eisenhardt 1989, 61; Salehyan 2010, 504; Hovil and Werker 2005, 26.
[38] See Lake and Powell 1999, 11; and Chapter 2 above.

ethnicity or ideology, which are both regarded as facilitating trust.[39] One of the key mechanisms used to explain the link between shared identity and cooperation is the salience of "in-group norms of reciprocity."[40]

Given the large literature on ethnicity and conflict, it is worth discussing this identity category in some more detail. Ethnicity is conventionally used as an umbrella term that covers the differentiation of groups by color, language, or religion, typically highlighting specific descent-based attributes.[41] I follow Daniel Posner in conceiving of ethnic identities as both situational and strategic. Individuals often have multiple identities; they can choose from a limited range of socially available options and do so strategically, depending on the situation they find themselves in.[42] Posner's argument that ethnic identity choice is an instrument in the domestic politics of coalition-building can usefully be extended to the transnational realm and connected to the idea that agents have an interest in appearing particularly attractive to potential principals: whenever possible, a rebel group will highlight the identity that best fits that of the foreign government most desired as sponsor.[43]

The second factor determining trust in the context of transnational alliances is *positive prior interactions*. At the start of an alliance, this factor refers to whether members of the government previously had ongoing and overall beneficial relationships with rebel group leaders in a different context, e.g., when the leader was a minister or businessperson. If considered for an ongoing alliance, the factor also captures the extent to which the rebel group has been behaving cooperatively towards its sponsor, thus creating a dynamic link between the third and second steps of the theory.

I adopt this determinant from Russell Hardin's encapsulated-interest account of trust, which suggests that "the trusted party has an incentive to be trustworthy, […] grounded in

[39] See Salehyan et al. 2011, 719-20; Byman and Kreps 2010, 12-3.
[40] Habyarimana et al. 2009, 23.
[41] Since my theory focuses on identity more broadly, it is not necessary to discuss what exactly distinguishes ethnic from other identities. For a rigorous discussion of conceptual problems, see Chandra 2006, 397-400.
[42] See Posner 2005, 6-9; similarly, Lake and Rothchild 1998, 7; Saideman 2001, 23.
[43] See Posner 2005, 3; Saideman 2001, 27.

the value of maintaining the relationship into the future."[44] The richer and the more valuable an ongoing relationship is, the higher the level of trust is likely to be. In the case of alliance onset, my argument is that at least some of the trust developed in a different context can be carried over to the alliance context. Moreover, it should be easier for a government to screen rebel leaders with whom it had previous interactions.

However, context-specific positive interactions will be given more weight than those from other contexts. In other words, at the start of an alliance, this factor can reinforce or weaken the effect of shared group identity on trust, but it is by itself insufficient for creating high levels of trust. By contrast, during an alliance, a long context-specific history of agent cooperative behavior can become sufficient for high levels of trust even in the absence of a shared group identity. On the other hand, a shared identity alone does not guarantee continual positive interactions, as the example of Iran's need to use both carrots *and* sticks in its alliance with Hezbollah demonstrates.[45]

The adverse selection problem and the concomitant importance of trust, however, do not fully explain a government's choice of a specific rebel group. In fact, I argue that a group's geopolitical relevance is of more fundamental importance, for it relates back directly to the causes of alliance formation – threats and opportunities – from the first step.

Geopolitics

Geopolitics refers to the political geography of conflict in both the sponsor state and the target state. If a rebel group is geopolitically relevant in the sense that its area of operations is of strategic importance to the principal, it is more likely to be selected as agent. Strategic importance relates back to the causes that lead a government to form transnational alliances in the first place. In the case of transnational threats, a group is geopolitically relevant if it operates in an area that the government's domestic opponents use as a rear base or that

[44] Hardin 2001, 3.
[45] See Byman and Kreps 2010, 13.

the target government uses as a supply route for these opponents. In the case of resource opportunities, a group is geopolitically relevant if it operates in an area with significant lootable resources.

For rational, survival-seeking weak state rulers, these strategic considerations should be more important than the issue of trust: the potential benefit of significantly reducing the risk of being overthrown outweighs the potential costs of some agency slack.[46] Sudan's support for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) suggests that strategic concerns may trump trust – in particular, a shared ideology – even in the case of governments that are motivated not only by insecurity. Sudan's foreign policy in the early to mid-1990s was generally driven by Islamic fundamentalism (see Chapter 6). The LRA, one of several groups that Khartoum began to support in that period, however, was primarily known for its aim to reinstate the Ten Commandments in Uganda.[47]

In order to understand why an Islamist regime would provide arms to a Christian-influenced rebel group, one has to grasp the political geography of conflict in both Sudan and Uganda: Khartoum tried to weaken the Ugandan government, which provided support to the SPLM/A; the LRA's staging ground was Acholiland in northern Uganda, bordering SPLM/A-controlled southern Sudan. As Gérard Prunier points out, Khartoum's choice of Ugandan allies was extremely pragmatic.[48]

Assuming that geopolitics is more important than trust leads to a clear preference ranking with regard to selecting potential agents (see Table 3.2).[49] In particular, a geopolitically relevant but untrustworthy rebel group (#2) should be preferred over a geopolitically

[46] Similarly, Nicholai Lidow argues that the "decision of patrons to support rebellion owes more to geography and geopolitics than to the characteristics of the group itself." In contrast to my theory, however, he does not explain where a "state's ideological, political, or ethnic goals" come from, and he assumes that states know whether or not potential rebel allies have congruent preferences, thus ignoring the adverse selection problem (Lidow 2011, 12, 70).
[47] See Finnström 2010, 74.
[48] See Prunier 2004, 382-3.
[49] This figure is, of course, a simplification of the argument. Geopolitical relevance and trust can both be thought of as continuous rather than dichotomous factors – an analytic move that may sometimes be necessary to distinguish between groups broadly sharing the same attributes, e.g., relevance and trustworthiness. In these cases, one group might be *more* relevant or *more* trustworthy than the other.

irrelevant but trustworthy group (#3). While this hypothesized ranking cannot predict how many agents will eventually be chosen, it can easily be falsified: governments should never select a group with a ranking that is lower than that of other groups not yet chosen.

Table 3.2: Determinants of Agent Selection

Geopolitics	Trust	Rank
Relevant	High	#1
	Low	#2
Irrelevant	High	#3
	Low	#4

The question of how many groups a government will select is not directly addressed by the second step of my theory. Nonetheless, the broader strategic-choice nature of the theory suggests some additional observable implications in this regard.

How Many Agents Does It Take?

There are at least three different ways in which governments allocate military support to foreign rebel groups from a particular country. They may either attempt to (1) *focus* their support on one rebel group or (2) *diversify* their support to several groups or (3) *unify* all or most existing groups into a rebel alliance. It is sometimes argued that focusing or unifying support is likely if a sponsor seeks to overthrow the target government, whereas diversifying support is likely if the sponsor merely seeks to weaken that government.[50] Alternatively, diversification – that is, arming multiple agents – may primarily be a safeguarding mechanism in response to the adverse selection problem.[51]

By contrast, the theory presented here would suggest that any transnational alliance should, first and foremost, help the government address the threats and/or opportunities

[50] On Ethiopian President Mengistu's alliances with various Somali groups and factions in order to weaken Somalia's president Barre, see Reno 2011, 154-5; on the attempt by some of Sudan's enemies to unify several groups so that they could together overthrow the regime in Khartoum, see de Waal 2004, 210-1.
[51] See Byman and Kreps 2010, 10-1.

with which it is confronted. Given the assumption that weak state rulers face significant resource constraints, one should expect rational rulers to support as few agents as possible but as many agents as necessary for addressing their needs. While the specific alliance portfolio thus depends on both the quantity and quality of the pool of potential agents, the general observable implication is that there should be a strategic rationale – related to geopolitics and trust – for *every* group that is chosen. In turn, this means that observing alliances with groups that do not provide any added strategic value would weaken the confidence in the theory.

Step 3: Agent Behavior and Its Consequences

The third step of the theory focuses on the period that follows a government's choice of foreign rebel agents, asking why agents sometimes behave uncooperatively towards their principals. In PA theory, agent behavior that is undesired by the principal is called *agency slack*. At its extreme, it can amount to *agency switch*, that is, an agent's forming an alliance with a rival of its original principal.

In general, slack diminishes the principal's trust in its agent so that the principal may choose a different agent; switch essentially forces the principal to do so (leading back to step 2). In the specific case of a rebel group that takes state power and thereby becomes a government and a potential principal itself, switch means support to foreign rebel groups that fight the original principal, thus creating a new transnational threat for that principal (leading to step 1).[52] It is because of these feedback effects from the third step to the first two steps that a *dynamic* theory of transnational alliances needs to integrate agent behavior.

But why do some rebel groups defy their foreign patrons while others keep cooperating with them? Transnational alliances are means – rather than ends – not only for gov-

[52] Congolese President Laurent Kabila's decision to switch to Rwandan Hutu rebels is one such example (see Chapter 4); Chadian President Déby's alliance with Darfurian rebels is another (see Chapter 6).

ernments but also for rebel groups. In other words, continued cooperation with a foreign patron can be understood as an agent *strategy*, not a preference. The power politics approach adopted in Chapter 2 assumes that the basic preference of rebel leaders is to gain office, holding constant this fundamental goal. Changes in agent strategies – including uncooperative alliance behavior – therefore need to be explained by changes in the agent's environment. I argue that there are four analytically distinct mechanisms that, often in combination, can lead to agency slack – two of them relate to *agent autonomy* (increases in agent leverage and decreases in principal monitoring), the other two relate to *learning* (from cooperating and from fighting).

Agent Autonomy

From a conceptual perspective, an agent's autonomy does not necessarily translate into uncooperative behavior: "autonomy is the range of independent action that is available to an agent and can be used to benefit or undermine the principal, while slack is actual behavior that is undesired."[53] In the context of transnational alliances, this range depends on both *principal monitoring* and *agent leverage*. Although my theory assumes leverage to be more important than monitoring, I once again begin by discussing monitoring because it features more prominently in the existing literature.

Monitoring is one of the principal's key control mechanisms. It alleviates the problem of hidden action: once a clientelist relationship has been established, the agent often has an incentive to minimize its effort on behalf of the principal and to focus on its own agenda, as the principal is normally unable to observe every single step the agent takes. As a consequence, the agent may hope to receive continued support from the principal without actually putting up the effort that was agreed upon; that is, it may slack.[54] If there is sufficient

[53] Hawkins et al. 2006, 8.
[54] See Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991, 25-6; Hawkins et al. 2006, 8. In other words, PA theory assumes agents to be opportunistic, which "often involves subtle forms of deceit" (Williamson 1985, 47).

monitoring, however, the agent must fear that such behavior will be detected by the principal, which could lead to a loss of support or even to direct sanctions.

Given the covert nature of many transnational alliances, effective monitoring will often prove too costly: it puts at risk the benefit of plausible deniability.[55] Although there are various ways in which governments can obtain some on-the-ground information short of sending troops, e.g., through intelligence agents or informants, I operationalize (effective) monitoring as present only if the principal intervenes alongside the agent. In these cases, the principal's troops serve as "police patrols" with regard to agent behavior.[56]

However, the transnational alliance dynamics of the Congo Wars demonstrate that monitoring by itself is not sufficient for avoiding uncooperative agent behavior: despite the presence of thousands of Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers, Congolese rebel groups exerted both agency slack and switch. I argue that agent leverage – a factor largely overlooked in the literature applying PA theory to security issues – is more important for autonomy than monitoring.

Agent leverage depends on the combination of the pool sizes of potential agents and principals. This conceptualization differs slightly from the idea of multiple principals in the PA literature, as the latter refers to an agent that *has* more than one principal, whereas I focus on an agent that *has a choice between* multiple principals, which may be in competition with one another.[57] The notion of *potential* principals of course only includes those governments that would be willing to form an alliance with the agent in question. Evaluating whether or not a particular government (or rebel group) should count as a potential principal (or agent) is not always easy; in the end, it is a matter of judgment that requires careful analysis of the evolving strategic context. The use of process tracing in case studies facilitates such an analysis.

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[55] See Byman and Kreps 2010, 10; Salehyan et al. 2011, 714.
[56] McCubbins and Schwartz 1984.
[57] The seminal paper on multiple principals is Bernheim and Winston 1986. On agent pools, see Hawkins and Jacoby 2006.

In order to understand changes in the strategic environment of agents, it is sometimes necessary to decompose (or "disaggregate") governments into more basic actors.[58] As discussed in the context of the double security dilemma (see Chapter 2), there is a clientelist relationship between the ruler and the military. One can therefore conceive of a two-stage PA model: the leader delegates to the military, which then selects a rebel group as client.[59] This conception implies that agents may be able to play off the military (or individual officers) against the ruler, which effectively increases the number of potential principals. In the case studies, I will only revert to this more complex model if the simple government–rebel group model is clearly inadequate.

Once the pool sizes have been established, the logic of combining them in order to infer the degree of agent leverage is straightforward (see Figure 3.2). If there is only one potential agent but more than one principal, the agent has high leverage, as its principal will not be able to switch to a different agent and will also be concerned that the agent may switch to a different principal.[60] The reverse holds true if there is only one principal but more than one agent. The intermediate scenario is that both pools have a similar size.

Figure 3.2: Determinants of Agent Leverage

		Pool of principals	
		One	Multiple
Pool of agents	One	Medium	High
	Multiple	Low	Medium

[58] This is an analytic move in line with the strategic-choice approach (see Lake and Powell 1999, 19-20).
[59] In fact, PA theory has been applied to civil-military relations (see Feaver 2003). For a similar research strategy – modeling the relations between donors, contractors, and recipients as a delegation chain – see Cooley and Ron 2002, 15.
[60] For a structurally similar argument, see Miller 2005, 211.

Finally, combining agent leverage and principal monitoring – under the assumption that leverage is more decisive than monitoring – leads to a six-point scale that can be interpreted as *levels of agent autonomy* (see Table 3.3). The higher the score, the greater is the room for uncooperative agent behavior. Over time, then, there are two mechanisms leading to higher levels of autonomy: first, an increase in agent leverage due to more potential principals and/or fewer potential agents; second, a decrease in monitoring due to the withdrawal of troops by the principal.

Table 3.3: Levels of Agent Autonomy

Leverage	Monitoring	Level
Low	Yes	1
	No	2
Medium	Yes	3
	No	4
High	Yes	5
	No	6

Learning

Changes in a rebel group's alliance behavior are also determined by learning. In its Bayesian variant, learning is thought of as a process in which interactions reveal new information, leading to an updating of prior beliefs.[61] Over time, rebel leaders can learn both from cooperating with their foreign patron and from fighting the target government.

In the case of *learning from cooperating*, the interactions between the rebels and their sponsor help them obtain more information about whether continued cooperation with that sponsor is actually promising to further their basic goal, that is, gaining political office. If a principal is trying to control the agent's actions to the extent that the agent believes that complying with the principal's demands will prevent it from achieving its primary objec-

[61] See Levy 1994, 285-6; Lake and Powell 1999, 31; Kydd 2005, 18-9.

tive, then the agent will begin to behave uncooperatively, assuming it already has – or gains – sufficient autonomy. In particular, it will switch to a different sponsor if there is an increase in the size of the pool of potential principals.[62]

Learning from fighting, an important idea in bargaining models of war, refers to interactions between the rebel group and the target government.[63] Battlefield outcomes can change the rebels' beliefs in the likelihood of military victory over the government. They may simply gain new information about the government's military capacity, realizing that prior beliefs about their ability to challenge it were too optimistic. Alternatively, exogenous changes in the strategic environment – such as external intervention on behalf of the government or increased international pressure to end the conflict – may change the dynamics of conflict and thus lead rebels to update their beliefs.

Once rebel leaders believe that they are unlikely to overthrow the government, they may decide that a power-sharing agreement will get them closer to their basic goals than continued cooperation with their foreign sponsor. The ubiquity of power-sharing as a negotiated solution to civil wars in recent decades demonstrates that these conflicts are not necessarily zero-sum games with regard to the preferences of governments and rebels: in such deals, the former are able to keep power *and* the latter are able to take it.[64] If power-sharing becomes a possibility and rebels believe that they are unlikely to overthrow the government through military means, they may thus behave uncooperatively towards their foreign sponsors independent of their level of autonomy.

In sum, learning from fighting can by itself be sufficient for noncooperation, whereas learning from cooperating needs to occur in combination with increases in autonomy in order to lead to noncooperation.

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[62] Note that the feedback mechanism relating agency slack to a decrease in the principal's trust towards the agent (due to negative interactions) follows the same basic logic of updating beliefs.
[63] See Lake and Powell 1999, 18; Wagner 2007, 149-50.
[64] On the ubiquity and mixed record of power-sharing in Africa, see Mehler 2009.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have developed a dynamic three-step theory of transnational alliances that is based on the power politics approach introduced in Chapter 2. Drawing on principal-agent theory, it conceives of governments as patrons and of foreign rebel groups as their transnational clients. The specific arguments derived from this theory can be summarized in the form of the following hypotheses.

STEP 1: TRANSNATIONAL ALLIANCE FORMATION

(1) *Transnational threat hypothesis*: If a weak state ruler believes that a foreign government is about to support a domestic rebel group or if he knows that such support has already occurred, the ruler will provide material support to foreign rebels in order to weaken that government and thus keep his domestic rivals at bay.[65]

(2) *Resource opportunity hypothesis*: If the benefits to be derived from lootable natural resources in the foreign territory controlled by a potential rebel agent outweigh the costs of supporting that agent (*supply*) and if some of the weak state ruler's key clients become interested in these resources (*demand*), the ruler will provide material support to that agent in order to keep his domestic backers happy.

(3) *Nonsecurity motives hypothesis*: Although transnational threats and resource opportunities are individually sufficient conditions for the formation of transnational alliances, they are not necessary conditions; even weak state rulers will sometimes act irrationally from a security perspective, supporting foreign rebels for reasons that are unrelated to their political survival.

STEP 2: AGENT SELECTION

(1) *Geopolitics-trumps-trust hypothesis*: A weak state ruler's choice of foreign rebel agents depends, first, on the geopolitical relevance that these agents have with regard to the threats and/or opportunities that the ruler faces, and, second, on the level of trust that the ruler has in these agents; if these two factors are in conflict with each other, the ruler will prefer geopolitical relevance over trust.

STEP 3: AGENT BEHAVIOR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

(1) *Learning-from-cooperating hypothesis*: If a rebel agent has (or gains) sufficient autonomy and over time makes negative learning experiences while cooperating with its

[65] For exceptional circumstances in which a ruler's failure to do so does not necessarily disconfirm this general hypothesis, see Chapter 6.

principal, the agent will begin to behave uncooperatively towards that principal; in particular, the agent will switch to a different sponsor if there is an increase in the size of the pool of potential principals.

(2) *Learning-from-fighting hypothesis*: If a power-sharing deal becomes a possibility and an agent believes that it is unlikely to overthrow the government through military means, the agent will behave uncooperatively towards its principal independent of its own level of autonomy.

(3) *Slack hypothesis*: If a rebel agent behaves uncooperatively towards a principal, the principal will over time lose trust in that agent and try to find alternative agents.

(4) *Switch hypothesis* (a specific variant of the *transnational threat hypothesis*): If a rebel agent seizes power in its own country, thus turning into a government itself, and then begins to support foreign rebels that fight its original principal, this principal will in turn support new rebel agents from the rebels-turned-government's country.

In the next two chapters, I will apply this theory in order to explain the dynamics of the Congo Wars, covering seventeen transnational alliances from 1996 to 2009. Combining process tracing with an analytic focus on key turning points in the alliance history of the two wars, I will demonstrate how the three-step theory can – without sacrificing too much of the richness of the historical record – bring order to what may at first appear to be chaotic alliance shifts.

Although the three steps of the theory follow a sequential logic and are interconnected through feedback effects, each one of them also represents a distinct answer to a distinct research question. In this sense, each step can be tested by itself. As the first step is the most fundamental one for explaining the phenomenon of transnational alliances, Chapter 6 will focus on that step in a systematic cross-case analysis covering forty-two weak state dyads across sub-Saharan Africa.

Together, the next three chapters will show that the theory illuminates both broader patterns of transnational alliance formation and the deeper dynamics that lead from one alliance to another.

Chapter 4: Master-Cleavage Transnational Alliances in the Congo Wars

Introduction: The Regional Origins of the Congo Wars

> Only through a regional lens can one bring into focus the violent patterns of interaction that form the essential backdrop to the spread of bloodshed within and across boundaries [in Central Africa].
>
> —René Lemarchand[1]

In 1959, three years before gaining independence from Belgium, Rwanda witnessed a social revolution that ended the long-lasting rule of the minority Tutsi and brought to power the much more populous Hutu.[2] Subsequent violence led to a large Tutsi exodus to neighboring countries. By late 1964, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) counted 336,000 Rwandan refugees: 200,000 in Burundi, 78,000 in Uganda, 36,000 in Tanzania, and 22,000 in Zaire.[3]

According to Gérard Prunier, it was this 1959 upheaval in Rwanda that triggered a chain of events ultimately leading to the Congo Wars.[4] Some of the 1959 Tutsi refugees based in Uganda joined Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM), helping him seize power in Kampala in 1986. From Uganda, these Tutsi then invaded their country of origin in 1990, setting in motion the Rwandan civil war. Four years later, at least partly as a consequence of that war, the governing Hutu elite launched a genocide against the Tutsi that, after much bloodshed, ended with the coming to power of the former Tutsi refugees and a massive exodus of Hutu to neighboring countries, especially Zaire. In the Zairian refugee camps, the Hutu *génocidaires* then regrouped and began to launch incursions into Rwanda. This finally led Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated government to attack

[1] Lemarchand 2009, x.
[2] See Mamdani 2001, chap. 4.
[3] See Prunier 1997, 62. The 'real' figure was likely somewhat higher (see ibid; Waugh 2004, 9).
[4] See Prunier 2009, 330-1.

Zaire in 1996, partnering with Zairian Tutsi, who themselves had become victims of ethnic discrimination, and with former comrade-in-arms Museveni.

As this simplified causal chain suggests, one indeed needs a regional lens to make sense of the dynamics of violence in Central Africa. From Prunier's perspective, the First Congo War represents, first and foremost, an extension of the Rwandan civil war – a view that is shared by many experts.[5] By contrast, Emizet Kisangani highlights Mobutu's politics of excluding Zairian Tutsi as the major critical juncture leading to war; he thus conceives of the conflict chiefly as a Zairian civil war.[6]

Given that I focus on the causes of transnational alliance formation and on the alliance dynamics that follow, it is important to reiterate that this chapter does not primarily address the traditional question of the *causes* of war.[7] Unsurprisingly, I believe that there are critical internal *and* external causes. Nonetheless, my focus on transnational alliances implies that external – more specifically, regional – factors are more important for explaining the *dynamics* of the Congo Wars. Furthermore, due to Rwanda's key role in the onset of both wars, explaining the formation of alliances with Congolese rebel groups sometimes necessarily overlaps with explaining the proximate causes of the wars themselves.

In order to still do justice to the underlying internal causes, I first discuss the process of state decay in Mobutu's Zaire and the ethnic tensions that developed in the east of the country prior to the 1994 influx of Rwandan Hutu. Next, using the three-step theory of transnational alliances developed in the previous chapter, I analyze five turning points relating to master-cleavage alliances in the two Congo Wars: (1) Rwanda's and Uganda's decision to help create the AFDL and invade Zaire in October 1996; (2) Angola's decision to join the war effort in February 1997; (3) the collapse of the alliance between the AFDL, Rwanda, and Uganda, and the subsequent re-invasion coupled with the creation of the

[5] See, e.g., Reyntjens 2009, 55; Stearns 2011, 15.
[6] See Kisangani 2012, 124-5.
[7] See Levy and Thompson 2010.

RCD in July–August 1998; (4) Uganda's alliance with the MLC in September 1998; and (5) the split of the RCD into RCD-G and RCD-K/ML, as well as the subsequent fighting between Rwanda and Uganda in Kisangani in May/August 1999. Each of these five sections is further divided into subsections that indicate which step of the theory is being addressed. Finally, by way of conclusion and as a stepping stone towards the next chapter, I summarize the findings of this chapter and highlight how the fighting in Kisangani reinforced a military stalemate, turning the Second Congo War from a struggle for the capital Kinshasa into one for direct or indirect control over different parts of eastern and northeastern Congo.

Background: State Decay and Ethnic Conflict in Mobutu's Zaire

The decay of the Zairian state constituted a critical permissive condition for the Congo Wars.[8] In the early 1990s, President Mobutu not only faced significant domestic opposition and civil unrest, he also lost the unconditional support of key Western allies – Belgium, France, and the United States – that had long helped sustain his kleptocratic rule.[9] Official data on government expenditures shows that the share reserved for Mobutu's discretionary spending rose from 39 percent (in 1986) to 49 percent (in 1988), then to 80 percent (in 1990), and even to 95 percent (in 1992).[10] He used this money to buy off some of the more than 150 political parties that were created in the chaotic democratization process launched in 1990.[11] In this context, Mobutu also encouraged ethnic tensions in eastern Zaire.[12] Meanwhile, the state effectively ceased to deliver even the most basic public services, and

[8] See Clark 2002a, 4. For similar assessments, see Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 214; Reyntjens 2009, 3-4; Stearns 2011, 113; Kisangani 2012, 126.
[9] See Kisangani 2000b, 220.
[10] See Reno 1998, 154.
[11] See Bratton and van de Walle 1997, 166; Lemarchand 2003, 39.
[12] See Reno 2006, 51-2.

unpaid soldiers went on looting sprees across the country.[13] How did it come to this calamitous state of affairs?

The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State

When Joseph-Désiré Mobutu first took power through a military coup in September 1960, the "Congo Crisis" was already in full swing. Shortly after becoming independent from Belgium in June 1960, Congolese army soldiers mutinied and two provinces – Katanga and South Kasai – launched secession attempts. Mobutu stepped down in early 1961 but then staged another coup in November 1965. In his early years in power following that second coup, the country in fact witnessed not only the restoration of a modicum of political stability but also some economic recovery.[14]

From 1973 onwards, however, the Zairian state slowly began to disintegrate. On November 30, 1973, Mobutu launched the so-called Zairianization measures, which nationalized foreign businesses, providing him with "a vast new pool of goods for patrimonial distribution to deserving members of the political class."[15] While these measures helped Mobutu consolidate his clientelist networks, they proved disastrous for Zaire's economy, as most of the new owners had no managerial experience. Tax revenues from agricultural trade declined from 61 percent of state revenues in 1973 to 28 percent in 1978.[16] At the same time, foreign debt rose to new heights, largely due to the collapse of copper prices.[17]

Military officers were excluded from the spoils of Zairianization. Having already subordinated the *Forces armées zaïroises* (FAZ, Zairian Armed Forces) to his political party in 1970, Mobutu now took further steps to avoid a political challenge by disgruntled senior officers. Between 1974 and 1975, he restructured the military and promoted several young

[13] See Weiss 1995, 162; Lemarchand 2003, 32-3.
[14] See Kisangani 2012, 17-24; Kisangani 2000a, 263-4; Reno 2006, 47.
[15] Young and Turner 1985, 328. The subsection heading alludes to the title of this seminal monograph.
[16] See Reno 1997a, 42.
[17] See Kisangani 2012, 24.

officers, typically from his own ethnic group. Using the pretext of a coup plot, Mobutu then purged the so-called "old oligarchy" from commanding positions. The alleged coup thus enabled him to "drastically narrow the ethno-regional base of the officer corps."[18]

In other words, the coup dilemma (see Chapter 2) led Mobutu to systematically weaken his armed forces. The consequences of these actions became evident in 1977, when an estimated 2,000 Zairian rebels – the *Front pour la libération nationale du Congo* (FLNC, Front for the National Liberation of Congo) – invaded the country from Angolan soil. The rebels initially faced little resistance from the Zairian army, which appeared "disorganized, underequipped, and demoralized."[19] Around 1,500 Moroccan soldiers were then flown in by French aircraft to help push back the rebels. One year later, the FLNC again invaded Zaire, swiftly taking the strategic mining town Kolwezi. This time, French and Belgian troops, supported by the US Air Force, came to Mobutu's rescue.[20]

In these two incidents, known as Shaba I and II, Mobutu skillfully manipulated Western "fears of Soviet expansionism" by presenting Zaire as Africa's bulwark against Communism.[21] The two military interventions highlight the extent of extra-regional backing that Mobutu enjoyed, effectively serving as a deterrent for potential future rebellions. As long as the Cold War continued, the interference dilemma (see Chapter 2) was therefore largely alleviated for Mobutu; this enabled him to meddle in neighboring countries without great concern for potential blowback. Before turning to some of these neighbors and their involvement in the Congo Wars, however, the impact of the 1990s democratization process on eastern Zaire needs to be discussed in more detail. For geographic guidance, Map 4.1 shows North and South Kivu, discussed below, as well as Ituri District, discussed in Chapter 5.

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[18] Kisangani 2000b, 214. On the conflict between Mobutu and the old oligarchy, see ibid., 212-4.
[19] Ndikumana and Kisangani 2005, 75.
[20] See Kisangani 2012, 103-13; Young 1985, 219.
[21] Schatzberg 1989, 335. See also Larmer 2013b, 90. As part of his "authenticity" campaign, Mobutu had changed the name of Katanga province into Shaba.

Map 4.1: Eastern Zaire / DRC (reprinted from Stearns 2012a, 7)



Democratization and Ethnic Conflict in North and South Kivu

The *Conférence nationale souveraine* (CNS, Sovereign National Conference), which opened in Kinshasa in August 1991, increased ethnic tensions in North and South Kivu by discussing the question of citizenship.[22] It thus helped reinvigorate the "politics of autochthony" (or indigeneity), not only pitting self-proclaimed autochthonous groups against Kinyarwanda speakers, but also leading to tensions within the latter, with Hutu differentiating themselves as "indigenous" from Tutsi as "nonindigenous."[23] Both developments can only be explained by sketching the history of Kinyarwanda-speaking Congolese.

As a first cut, Mahmood Mamdani provides a useful categorization, distinguishing between Kinyarwanda-speaking nationals, migrants, and refugees living in Congo. The first group already resided on Congolese territory in pre-colonial times, the second moved from Rwanda to Congo under Belgian colonialism, and the third fled across the border in the postcolonial period owing to instability in Rwanda.[24] Between 1928 and 1956, more than 150,000 Rwandans – both Hutu and Tutsi – came to the Kivu highlands in order to provide labor for Belgian-owned farms and mines. This mass immigration radically changed Kivu's socio-demographic structure. By the end of the colonial era, the population density in the territories of Masisi and Rutshuru (North Kivu) had increased fourfold, and the Banyarwanda – a term commonly used to describe Congolese with Rwandan ancestry living in North Kivu – now constituted by far the largest ethnic group in these areas.[25]

In the context of local elections between 1958 and 1965, tensions over local administrative control in North Kivu mounted between the "indigenous" Hunde (and, to a lesser extent, the Nande and Nyanga), on one side, and the Banyarwanda, on the other, culminating in the so-called Kanyarwanda War from 1963 to 1966. In what was to become a pattern

[22] For an overall assessment of the CNS, see Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 189-208.
[23] See Mamdani 2001, 246-7. On the notion of autochthony, see Jackson 2006.
[24] See Mamdani 2001, 236-7.
[25] See Stearns 2012b, 15-9.

in the 1980s and 1990s, the provincial assembly had suggested to strip the Banyarwanda of their voting rights and even to expel them collectively from the province.[26]

In the late 1960s, however, President Mobutu allied with the Banyarwanda – a group that due to its overall minority status in the country was unlikely to become a serious threat to him. From 1969 to 1977, Barthélémy Bisengimana, a Tutsi, was Mobutu's chief of staff and thus the architect of most of his policies. As a consequence, the 1972 nationality law granted Congolese citizenship to all immigrants from Rwanda and Burundi who had arrived before 1950. In combination with the 1973 General Property Law and the Zairianization measures, it enabled Bisengimana to award large tracts of land and plantations in North Kivu to fellow Tutsi.[27]

In the early 1980s, the pendulum swung once again. In classic divide-and-rule fashion, Mobutu now sided with the "indigenous" groups by passing a new nationality law in 1981, which revoked the 1972 law and granted citizenship only to people who were able to prove that their ancestors had lived in Congo before August 1885, the year in which the Berlin Conference ended. This new cut-off point of course turned all colonial-era immigrants into noncitizens, disenfranchising hundreds of thousands of Kinyarwanda speakers.[28]

In this context of uncertainty, it is unsurprising that many young Tutsi living in eastern Zaire began to sympathize with the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the Tutsi rebels that invaded Rwanda from Uganda in October 1990. Throughout the early 1990s, the RPF received recruits and material support from Zaire-based Tutsi. This also partly explains the tensions that emerged within the Kinyarwanda-speaking community in eastern Zaire at the time: while Tutsi sided with the RPF, Hutu identified with the government in Kigali.[29]

Meanwhile, many Hutu and Tutsi delegates were not allowed to participate in the CNS, which embraced the 1981 nationality law. To make matters even worse for the Kin-

[26] See ibid., 21-2; Autesserre 2010, 134-5; Lemarchand 2009, 13.
[27] See Kisangani 2012, 176-7; Autesserre 2010, 135-7.
[28] See Jackson 2007, 486-7.
[29] See Stearns 2011, 69-75.

yarwanda speakers, President Mobutu abandoned his tradition of appointing outsiders to top provincial positions, instead naming a Nande, Jean-Pierre Kalumbo, as governor and a Nyanga, Jean Bamwisho, as vice governor of North Kivu. These two quickly formed an alliance among the "indigenous" Hunde, Nande, and Nyanga, and purged Banyarwanda from the provincial administration.[30] The decision to appoint "natives," thus intensifying local ethnic competition for political power, was "another Mobutu strategy to stall the democratization process."[31]

This strategy, however, soon spiraled out of control. Following reciprocal assassinations of political leaders, Kalumbo and Bamwisho made inflammatory speeches in March 1993, triggering an ethnic conflict between "indigenous" and Banyarwanda militias that began in the territory of Walikale but soon spread to Masisi, Rutshuru, and Kalehe. When the conflict ended around August 1993, largely due to Mobutu's decisions to send in his presidential guard and appoint a new administration, between 7,000 to 16,000 people had been killed and around 250,000 internally displaced.[32]

The Kivus – and the country as a whole – were thus already in an extremely volatile condition when an estimated 1.5 million Hutu refugees came across the Rwandan border in July 1994. According to UNHCR figures, 850,000 people arrived in five enormous camps around Goma (North Kivu) and 650,000 in thirty smaller camps around Bukavu and Uvira (South Kivu). Among them were tens of thousands of combatants who served either in the former *Forces armées rwandaises* (FAR, Rwandan Armed Forces) or in the Interahamwe militia, the two main perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide.[33] The ex-FAR/Interahamwe "quickly re-established administrative control" over the Hutu refugees; for the next two years, they "ruled over significant parts of eastern Zaire and pursued an active insurgency

[30] See Stearns 2012b, 25-7; Kisangani 2012, 178.
[31] Kisangani 2012, 182-3.
[32] See Stearns 2012b, 27-8; Kisangani 2012, 168, 179.
[33] In addition, 270,000 Rwandan refugees lived in nine camps in Burundi, 570,000 in eight camps in Tanzania. See Prunier 2009, 25. Generally, all numbers relating to Rwandan refugees and, in particular, to the ex-FAR/Interahamwe (the *génocidaires*) need to be seen as contentious.

inside Rwanda."[34] The Zairian government's support for these Hutu rebels was one of the crucial factors that led to Rwanda's invasion in 1996 (see the next section).

Mobutu used the humanitarian crisis that resulted from the refugee influx to re-establish himself as an important partner for the international community.[35] While the president thus initially profited from this crisis, the populations of North and South Kivu came to bear the brunt. In North Kivu, the Hutu influx further shattered the unity of the Banyarwanda, as the ex-FAR/Interahamwe formed alliances with Zairian Hutu militias. Between 1995 and 1996, this Hutu alliance – at times in collaboration with FAZ contingents – attacked both "indigenous" militias and Zairian Tutsi. As a consequence of the fighting, tens of thousands died, hundreds of thousands were internally displaced, and at least 18,000 Zairian Tutsi fled across the border, setting up refugee camps in Rwanda.[36]

In stark contrast to the ethnic conflicts that had engulfed North Kivu from March 1993 onwards, South Kivu remained largely peaceful until 1996. The Congolese with Rwandan ancestry living in South Kivu are called Banyamulenge, Mulenge being a village on the Itombwe plateau above the Ruzizi plain, between Bukavu and Uvira. Whereas the Banyarwanda made up approximately 40 percent of the overall population of 2.8 million in North Kivu around the early 1990s, the Banyamulenge only represented about 3 to 4 percent of South Kivu's estimated population of 2.4 million.[37]

In ethnic terms, the Banyamulenge are Tutsi. Around the early 1970s, in the context of anti-Tutsi sentiments in the region, they deliberately began referring to themselves as Banyamulenge (rather than Banyarwanda) in order to stress their indigeneity, having largely

[34] Reed 1998, 134. Note that the conventional label "ex-FAR/Interahamwe" is a simplification insofar as some of these combatants had previously been members of the Impuzamugambi rather than the Interahamwe militia (see Romkema 2007, 32; on the Impuzamugambi, see Prunier 1997, 243).
[35] See Prunier 2009, 27; Stearns 2011, 41.
[36] See Stearns 2012b, 29; Kisangani 2012, 179; Prunier 2009, 58; Reyntjens 2009, 17-8. For details on these violent incidents, see OHCHR 2010, paras. 156-66.
[37] See Prunier 2009, 52.

migrated at the time of Rwandan King Rwabugiri (1853–95).[38] Prior to their renaming, in the mid-1960s, they had supported Mobutu against the so-called Simba rebellion. Given that, in South Kivu, this insurgency was largely led by three ethnic groups that lived next to the Banyamulenge (the Babembe, Bafulero, and Bavira), their pro-government stance led to persistent inter-ethnic tensions after the rebels were defeated in 1966.[39]

These tensions finally came to a head in 1996. The trigger were two resolutions passed one year earlier by the transitional parliament, which had replaced the CNS, demanding the "repatriation" of all people of Rwandan origin, including the Banyamulenge. The resolutions need to be seen in the context of Mobutu's planning for the 1997 national elections. Ever since the Simba rebellion, the main ethnic groups in South Kivu had been by and large opposed to Mobutu. However, it was these majority groups – rather than his former Banyamulenge allies – whose support he would need to win the vote in South Kivu. He thus decided to sacrifice the Banyamulenge by forming an alliance with the Babembe, Bafulero, and other groups. Notably, the 1995 resolutions were introduced by Anzuluni Bembe, a Mubembe delegate who had previously been bought off by Mobutu.[40]

In response to these resolutions, the Banyamulenge began to arm themselves from 1995 onwards, using their old connections with the FAZ. In one of the many ironies indicating the decrepitude of the Zairian regime, Mobutu's son Kongolo was one of the dealers selling arms to the Banyamulenge.[41] They were also in contact with the new Tutsi-dominated government in Kigali, having previously contributed between 300 to 1,000 men to the RPF rebellion.[42] When, on October 8, 1996, the vice governor of South Kivu publicly gave the Banyamulenge an ultimatum to leave the Itombwe plateau, they had – together

[38] See Mamdani 2001, 247-9; Stearns 2011, 60-1. Strictly speaking, as a Munyamulenge was careful to point out to me, the Banyamulenge are not Kinyarwanda speakers, as their language is called Kinyamulenge (informal conversation in Kinshasa, July 12, 2011). Note that in Bantu languages the prefix "Mu-" indicates the singular, "Ba-" the plural.
[39] See Kisangani 2012, 69-70, 84; Prunier 2009, 51-3. On why these tensions did not escalate into full-scale ethnic conflict prior to 1996, see Kisangani 2012, 180.
[40] See Kisangani 2012, 124-5; Prunier 2009, 69; Mamdani 2001, 255.
[41] See Prunier 2009, 69.
[42] See Stearns 2011, 67.

with the Rwandan army – already launched the first attacks of what came to be known as the First Congo War.[43] It is to this external involvement that I now turn in greater detail.

October 1996: Rwanda, Uganda, and the Creation of the AFDL

According to its founding document, the *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre* (AFDL, Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire) – the rebel group that ended Mobutu's 32-year reign in May 1997 – was established in Lemera (South Kivu) on October 18, 1996.[44] In reality, however, the document was prepared in Rwanda's capital Kigali.[45] This forgery indicates that the AFDL and its leaders were first and foremost a "local cover for the Rwandese attack on Zaire, in charge of making a foreign invasion look like a national rebellion."[46]

In this section, I first analyze why Rwanda and Uganda, which also played a critical role in the creation of the AFDL, formed transnational alliances against Mobutu's Zaire (step 1 of the theory presented in Chapter 3). Then, I explain why the two governments chose the four Zairian rebel groups that together constituted the AFDL (step 2).

Alliance Formation

Rwanda

Although the AFDL officially came into existence only in October 1996, Rwanda had already begun to train Zairian rebels around March 1995, or at the latest in early 1996, with the explicit goal of eventually attacking eastern Zaire.[47] Giving a precise date for the formation of this anti-Mobutu alliance is complicated by the fact that, as mentioned above,

[43] See ibid., 57-8, 93-4; Reyntjens 2009, 48-50.
[44] The document is reproduced in De Villers et al. 1999, 20.
[45] See Stearns 2011, 88.
[46] Prunier 2009, 115. For almost identical statements, see Turner 2007, 126; Lemarchand 2009, 230; Reyntjens 2009, 48; Stearns 2011, 43.
[47] See Vlassenroot 2002, 508 (referring to the training of new Banyamulenge recruits in March 1995); Stearns 2011, 78 (pointing to the creation of two training camps in Gisenyi and Cyangugu in early 1996).

Zairian Tutsi had been fighting on behalf of the RPF between October 1990 and July 1994, when it was still a rebel group. According to AFDL co-founder Déogratias Bugera, who had recruited Zairian Tutsi for the RPF from 1993 onwards, the Rwandans "set their sights on invading Zaire" as soon as they conquered Kigali.[48] Bugera, himself a Congolese Tutsi, used his construction company in Goma to set up a network of RPF spies from August 1994 onwards.[49]

In order to explain what led the new government in Kigali to help create the AFDL and invade Zaire, it thus makes sense to trace in greater detail the period from the end of the Rwandan genocide in July 1994 to the start of the First Congo War in October 1996. I do so by focusing on the transnational threat posed by the ex-FAR/Interahamwe and their alliance with Mobutu. Then, I briefly discuss resource opportunities as well as nonsecurity motives. Despite the presence of the latter two factors, the retaliatory threat mechanism clearly provides the most convincing explanation for Rwanda's involvement.

Transnational Threats. What eastern Zaire experienced in July 1994 was much more than simply a chaotic influx of more than one million Rwandan Hutu refugees. Mobutu's then security advisor Honoré N'Gbanda described that he also "saw an entire government flee the war with the assets of the state, because not only did the whole Rwandan army cross the border with heavy and light weapons, but there was also the central bank that crossed, and everything else" – trucks, tanks, and even some helicopters.[50]

In fact, many regime loyalists simply considered their flight to Zaire as a tactical retreat,[51] and the leadership made no secret of their intentions: interviewed in Goma in November 1994, Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, one of the masterminds behind the Rwandan

[48] Quoted in Stearns 2011, 77.
[49] See ibid., 76-7.
[50] Film interview in El Tahri 2001. On these assets, which were also highlighted by three senior Rwandan officials (interviews #34, #35, and #40), see also Gribbin 2005, 142.
[51] See Stearns 2011, 20.

genocide, boldly vowed to "wage a war [in Rwanda] that will be long and full of dead people until the minority Tutsi are finished and completely out of the country."[52]

To that end, the Rwandan Hutu leaders used the refugee camps in eastern Zaire not only to re-organize ex-FAR soldiers as well as Interahamwe militia members but also to train new fighters recruited from among the refugee population.[53] By early 1995, they together numbered around 50,000.[54] By comparison, the new Rwandan military (the Rwandan Patriotic Army, RPA) had between 40,000 to 50,000 troops between July 1994 and December 1997.[55] In other words, even without taking into account Mobutu's support, the ratio was at least one to one, which underlines the magnitude of the challenge that the RPF government was facing.

Although Mobutu tried to appear neutral for the sake of international opinion, his support to the ex-FAR/Interahamwe was an open secret. He had been a long-term friend of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana's, whose plane was shot down as it prepared to land in Kigali on April 6, 1994, setting off the genocide. In 1990, Mobutu had sent Zairian troops to Rwanda in order to help Habyarimana in his fight against the RPF.[56]

After the arrival of the Rwandan Hutu in eastern Zaire, Mobutu met regularly with Augustin Bizimungu, who had become the chief of the FAR in the wake of Habyarimana's assassination.[57] He also entertained his late friend's wife, Agathe Habyarimana, even taking her and her brother to a state visit to China in October 1994, where they acquired weapons for the ex-FAR/Interahamwe.[58] Meanwhile, Zairian officials supplied arms to the Hutu rebels, helped establish contacts with international arms traders, and facilitated the

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[52] Quoted in HRW 1995, 2.
[53] See Orth 2001, 85-6; Rafti 2006, 57.
[54] See HRW 1995, 3. This estimate is also used in Reed 1998, 140; Stearns 2011, 55. Excluding some implausibly high estimates, the common upper-bound estimate for ex-FAR/Interahamwe forces in the period from July 1994 to October 1996 is 70,000 (see ICG 2001b, 5; Stearns 2011, 51).
[55] See Orth 2001, 108 (note 67).
[56] As yet another illustration of the Zairian military's decrepitude, Habyarimana soon asked Mobutu to send his soldiers back: not having been paid by Mobutu, they "engaged in systematic pillage and the rape of women and teenagers" (Gachuruzi 1999, 58; see also Waugh 2004, 51-2).
[57] See Prunier 2009, 28.
[58] See HRW 1995, 14-5; Prunier 2009, 27.

flow of weapons in Goma and Bukavu. The Zairian army also provided the rebels with access to military camps.[59]

Already by October 1994, ex-FAR/Interahamwe elements were infiltrating western Rwanda from eastern Zaire on a weekly basis, often staging nocturnal raids.[60] Between late 1995 and early 1996, the Hutu rebels adjusted their tactics, now primarily targeting civilians. In the first half of 1996, these attacks led to around one hundred deaths per month.[61] Roger Winter, former director of the nongovernmental US Committee for Refugees, suggests that three such incidents in June 1996 – one of them just outside Kigali – had a particularly significant impact: they "were perceived by the RPA and others in Rwanda as an attempt to restart the genocide."[62]

Throughout this period, the RPF government's position was clear. It considered the presence of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe in refugee camps located only a few kilometers away from the Rwandan border as a serious threat that "had to be dealt with; it could not stand like that."[63] In 1995, the government sent a letter to the United Nations, asking (1) that the refugees be moved further away from the border; (2) that armed elements be separated from the civilians; and (3) that those armed be disarmed.[64] The UN Security Council, however, failed to take action, leaving the UNHCR overwhelmed with the situation.[65]

In March 1996, Rwandan Vice President and Minister of Defense Paul Kagame spoke to US ambassador Robert Gribbin about his concerns regarding Mobutu's alliance with the Hutu rebels. Kagame was Rwanda's real ruler, with President Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu, primarily serving as a figurehead from 1994 to 2000. He told Gribbin "that if Zaire continued to support the ex-FAR/*Interahamwe* against Rwanda, Rwanda in turn could find anti-

[59] See HRW 1995, 9-14; AI 1995, 1-10; Reyntjens 2009, 18-9.
[60] See Stearns 2011, 29; Winter 2004, 112.
[61] See Gribbin 2005, 143; Winter 2004, 117.
[62] Winter 2004, 117.
[63] Interview (#40) with a senior Rwandan official.
[64] Interview (#35) with Tito Rutaremara.
[65] See Mills 2004, 166-82.

Mobutu elements to support," adding "that if the international community could not help improve security in the region, the RPA might be compelled to act alone."[66] He repeated this warning to US policymakers during high-level meetings in Kigali and Washington, DC, in May and August, respectively.[67]

Already in July 1996, Kigali reportedly sent a delegation to the Banyamulenge in South Kivu, informing them about impending military operations. At around the same time, some of the Rwandan-trained Banyamulenge began to infiltrate the province. RPA soldiers and equipment followed suit from September onwards. By late October, the First Congo War was in full swing: the RPA and their Zairian partners first attacked refugee camps near Uvira and then swiftly took the town. Almost simultaneously, the camps surrounding Bukavu and Goma were attacked, with both cities falling into 'rebel' hands within several days.[68]

The ex-FAR/Interahamwe's deadly incursions into Rwanda, the RPF government's requests and warnings given to the international community, and subsequent military operations in Zaire (see below) all clearly suggest that Rwanda's primary reason for forming an alliance with Zairian rebels was the transnational threat emanating from the refugee camps in eastern Zaire. The magnitude of this threat – with the Hutu rebels being numerically at least as strong as the RPA – explains why Rwanda deemed a simultaneous invasion necessary. In this context, as "quasi-Rwandese-but-still-Zaïrian-Tutsi, the Banyamulenge provided the perfect opportunity for a plausibly deniable intervention."[69]

Vice President Kagame's statements about Rwanda's goals in a Washington Post article published in July 1997 can thus be taken at face value: the first objective was "to dismantle the camps," the second to "destroy the structure" of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe, and

[66] Gribbin 2005, 144-5 (italics in the original).
[67] See ibid., 123, 175-76.
[68] For a detailed and well-documented account of these early developments, see Reyntjens 2009, 48-55.
[69] Prunier 1997, 383.

the third – less imminent – to topple Mobutu.[70] The assessment that the security threat emanating from the refugee camps was the main cause for Rwanda's involvement in the First Congo War was not only echoed by other senior Rwandan officials and Zairian rebel representatives but is also shared by leading international scholars.[71]

By contrast, nonsecurity motives may have played some minor role, but they were not decisive, as I show further below by discussing the timing of the alliance-*cum*-intervention. Resource opportunities, to which I now turn, also have little explanatory power.

Resource Opportunities. Zaire's natural resource wealth had been well-known ever since the days of Belgian colonialism. Especially in the east of the country, easily lootable resources such as alluvial diamonds, gold, and other minerals abound.[72] Furthermore, in 1996, Zaire's neighbors knew that Mobutu had lost the unconditional support of his extra-regional backers and that, as outlined above, his military was in tatters, having been "undermined by politicisation, nepotism, corruption and embezzlement."[73] Given that the ethnic tensions in eastern Zaire had already led to the creation of militias, the expected costs of supporting a rebel agent were thus small, whereas the potential resource benefits were large. Put differently, the supply side of the opportunity mechanism was present.

In the period from July 1994 to October 1996, however, the demand side was not. In the wake of the Rwandan genocide, the new RPF government was faced with a devastated country and a traumatized society.[74] US ambassador Gribbin perceptively describes the RPF in that period:

> Security lay at the core of the RPF's raison d'etre. The basic need was to ensure security for the RPF itself. It came to power as a minority by force of arms. It wanted to ensure that it retained control of

[70] Quoted in *Washington Post* 1997b.
[71] Interviews with Brigadier General Frank Rusagara (#1), Ambassador Zeno Mutimura (#34), Tito Rutaremara (#35), a senior Rwandan official (#40), and Emmanuel Kamanzi (#25). See also Banyamulenge leader Enoch Ruberangabo's statement quoted in Reyntjens 2009, 50. As for international scholars, see Lemarchand 2001, 96; Prunier 2009, 67, 73; Reyntjens 2009, 51; Stearns 2011, 55.
[72] See Turner 2007, 24-6.
[73] Reyntjens 2009, 108. See also Prunier 2009, 127-8.
[74] See Prunier 1997, 358-9; Reyntjens 2004, 178.

> power over both the short and long terms. Intertwined with that mission was its obligation to protect Tutsi, to ensure that the genocide was over, and that survivors and fifty-niners [i.e., Tutsi who had fled due to the Hutu takeover in 1959] could live their lives without fear.[75]

Although first cracks in the ruling party appeared between 1995 and 1996, these were primarily due to disillusioned Hutu members, who did not pose a serious coup threat to the *de facto* ruler Kagame; the RPF's old, battle-hardened Tutsi core remained intact.[76] It is therefore highly unlikely that Kagame considered supporting Zairian rebels in order to provide his key domestic backers with access to foreign resources. The ruling coalition's common focus was on the threat posed by the ex-FAR/Interahamwe and their rear bases in eastern Zaire, not on intra-elite wrangling.

Nonsecurity Motives. In different guises, the idea of a "Tutsi ethnic-expansionist nationalism"[77] is sometimes put forward as a driving force behind Rwanda's involvement in Zaire. This focus on ethnic bonds, especially between Zairian and Rwandan Tutsi, can be found both in a conspiracy theory that gained wide currency in the DRC at the start of the Second Congo War and in scholarly accounts based on a primordialist conception of ethnicity.

The first variant refers to the idea that the Rwandan, Ugandan, and Burundian leaders Kagame, Museveni, and Pierre Buyoya wanted to create a "Hima-Tutsi empire" by annexing eastern Zaire/DRC.[78] In this context, too much has been made of President Bizimungu's ill-judged presentation of maps at a press conference in October 1996, purportedly showing that parts of eastern Zaire had been tributaries of the former Rwandan monarchy, and his comment that if Zaire wanted to give back its 'Rwandan' population, "it should also give back the land on which it lives."[79] The second variant – the scholarly focus on

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[75] Gribbin 2005, 150.
[76] See ibid., 150-7. On the RPF's inner circle, see also Jones 2012, 237-8.
[77] Otunnu 2004, 31.
[78] Museveni is a Hima from southwestern Uganda, an ethnic group – sometimes also defined as a subgroup of the Banyankole – that is considered to have the same cultural roots as the Burundian and Rwandan Tutsi (see ibid., 32).
[79] Quoted in Prunier 2009, 71. On Bizimungu's presentation, see Gribbin 2005, 177-8. On Congolese perceptions and speculations regarding plans for a "greater Rwanda," see Lanotte 2003, 163-5.

shared ethnicity – is based on what Samuel Huntington, in his article on the "Clash of Civilizations," calls the "kin-country syndrome," to which Congo expert Emizet Kisangani refers approvingly, elaborating that "ethnic affiliations across international borders can make ethnic groups in one country become alarmed by the grievances of their brethren across borders."[80]

The myth of a Hima-Tutsi empire was arguably discredited, at the very latest, when the Rwandan and Ugandan armies fought each other repeatedly in the city of Kisangani between 1999 and 2000; it does not require serious consideration.[81] What about the general idea that the RPF supported Zairian Tutsi simply due to shared ethnic kinship? Reviewing Rwanda's involvement in eastern Congo from 1996 to 2010, Thomas Turner concludes that "ethnic solidarity is too fickle to have much explanatory value."[82] While ethnicity did play an important role in the choice of rebel allies (see below), I agree that it cannot itself explain Rwanda's alliance formation and invasion.

The timing of the attacks in October 1996 also supports this view: if ethnic kinship had been the decisive factor, should the RPA not have intervened earlier, as Zairian Tutsi in North Kivu had been systematically attacked from August 1994 onwards?[83] Instead, the Rwandans only made their move after being certain that the international community was unwilling to take action against the ex-FAR/Interahamwe and after learning that the rebels were preparing a major offensive.[84]

In sum, then, the transnational threat emanating from eastern Zaire provides a sufficient explanation for Rwanda's involvement in the First Congo War. By contrast, in the

[80] Huntington 1993, 35; Kisangani 2012, 126.
[81] See Lanotte 2003, 168-9.
[82] Turner 2013, 111.
[83] See above and, for more details, HRW 1996, 10-29.
[84] On this offensive, see Kagame's assertions in *Washington Post* 1997b. The Rwandan intelligence services had infiltrated the refugee camps, providing Kagame with daily briefings (see Stearns 2011, 50). Documents found in the Mugunga camp in November 1996 confirmed these invasion plans (see Orth 2001, 107, note 43; Reyntjens 2009, 47, note 6). Developments in neighboring Burundi, which I do not systematically cover here, also played a role in the timing (see Prunier 2009, 66-7; Reyntjens 2009, 41-2).

case of Uganda, to which I now turn, the reasons behind forming an alliance with the AFDL are somewhat more complex.

Uganda

The Ugandan government played a key role in the creation of the AFDL: it was President Museveni who introduced both Laurent-Désiré Kabila and André Kisase Ngandu to Rwanda's then Vice President Kagame. Museveni also helped the AFDL garner support – material and immaterial – from across the continent (see below). At the same time, however, Uganda was much less heavily involved in the First Congo War than Rwanda. While the Rwandan army did most of the fighting on behalf of the AFDL, Ugandan support was initially limited to providing some artillery as well as military trainers and advisors.[85] The Ugandan army – the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) – only entered eastern Zaire in larger numbers in late November 1996, in retaliation for an attack by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a Ugandan rebel group based in Zaire and supported by both Mobutu and the Sudanese government.[86]

Also taking into account Museveni's subsequent statements and diplomatic efforts, I argue that the reasons for Uganda's alliance with the AFDL differ slightly from those for the UPDF's limited invasion into Zaire. Whereas the invasion can be solely explained by transnational threats, the alliance also has to do with Uganda's relationship to the RPF as well as with Museveni's regional ambitions. Furthermore, I suggest that resource opportunities played a contributory role for Uganda's alliance with the AFDL. Once again, I pro-

[85] Uganda's military involvement is generally not as well documented as Rwanda's (see Reyntjens 2009, 58). On the provision of artillery, see Stearns 2011, 120; confirmed by Andrew Mwenda (interview #45). An early AFDL recruit from South Kivu said that while his chief trainer was Rwandan, the latter's deputy was from Uganda (interview #28). On military advisors, see the testimony by Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Lutaya, who assisted the RPA and the AFDL "in the rapid deployment on the waters and in the air," in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b (quote from p. 709). Moreover, two other former AFDL officials confirmed that Uganda's involvement was much more limited than Rwanda's (interviews #10 and #22).

[86] See Fahey 2011, 86-7.

ceed by first focusing on transnational threats, then discussing resource opportunities as well as nonsecurity motives.

Transnational Threats. In order to understand the transnational threats that Uganda was facing around October 1996, it is necessary to analyze its relations with both Zaire and Sudan since Museveni's coming to power in 1986. Although details remain unclear, it appears that already in the late 1980s Mobutu began to support the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), a rebel group created by Amon Bazira, the former intelligence chief of the government ousted by Museveni. In response, Uganda provided support to the *Parti de la libération congolais* (PLC, Congolese Liberation Party), a small anti-Mobutu guerrilla.[87]

But Museveni's government did not stop there. In 1993, Kahinda Otafiire, then head of Uganda's External Security Organization (ESO), met with Congolese opposition politician Jean-Baptiste Sondji in Brussels, trying to convince him that the democratization process in Zaire would be going nowhere without the use of force and affirming that "we are ready to help you."[88] Sondji then spoke to opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, who refused to be part of an armed struggle.[89] Tshisekedi remained adamant one year later, after Otafiire had started to support a new Congolese rebel group, the *Conseil national de résistance pour la démocratie* (CNRD, National Resistance Council for Democracy), led by long-time militant André Kisase Ngandu and operating in the Ruwenzori region, where the PLC had previously been active.[90]

[87] See Prunier 1999, 45 (note 3), 49 (note 14).
[88] Quoted by Jean-Baptiste Sondji (interview #10).
[89] Patrick Karegeya, Rwanda's intelligence chief from 1994 to 2004, confirmed Sondji's story in an interview with Jason Stearns (see Stearns 2011, 346, note 11).
[90] Interview (#10) with Sondji, Kinshasa, July 9, 2011. On Otafiire and Kisase, see *The Monitor* 1998a; Prunier 2004, 369. However, Prunier mistakenly refers to Kisase as "young" and argues that he was recruited as the PLC's new military leader; in fact, he had already fought in the Simba rebellion in the 1960s, and it appears that his group was separate from the PLC (see De Villers et al. 1999, 21-2; Reyntjens 2009, 104-6).

Meanwhile, with NALU severely weakened after the assassination of Bazira in Kenya in August 1993, other anti-Museveni groups began to spring up in Zaire from late 1994 onwards: first the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), created around November 1994, then the ADF, formed in September 1995 as a merger of several smaller groups, including NALU remnants (and thus sometimes designated as ADF/NALU).[91] Both of these groups received support not only from Mobutu's ailing regime but also from the militarily much stronger Sudanese government.[92]

Around 1993–94, Mobutu had granted the Sudanese free passage through northeastern Zaire.[93] This agreement has to be seen in the context of the indirect war that Sudan and Uganda were waging at the time, with Khartoum supporting the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda and Kampala supporting the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement / Army (SPLM/A) in southern Sudan. While there had been accusations of reciprocal support to each other's rebels from the late 1980s onwards, the situation escalated in 1994, when Sudan's assistance transformed the LRA into a serious threat.[94]

In August 1995, the Sudanese army and the WNBF crossed from Zaire into southern Sudan, taking the strategic border town of Kaya from the SPLA and launching incursions into northwestern Uganda.[95] According to Prunier, the UPDF and SPLA retaliated by jointly attacking the LRA inside Sudan.[96] In April 1996, Minister of State for Defense Amama Mbabazi informed the Ugandan parliament that from February 1996 onwards, the Sudanese army had begun "regular artillery bombardment of Ugandan territory," which had almost led to "an all-out war."[97]

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[91] See Prunier 2004, 367; ICG 2012, 3-4; Titeca and Vlassenroot 2012, 159.
[92] See ICG 2012, 4; Titeca and Vlassenroot 2012, 165-6; testimony by Chris "Benz" Tushabe (former ADF chief of staff) in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 801-3.
[93] Prunier (2004, 367) suggests mid-1994 for this agreement, whereas Emmy Allio (interview #43) claimed that Sudan and Zaire formed a "defense pact" as early as 1993.
[94] See AI 1997, 7; Prunier 2009, 80; Atkinson 2010, 205-6.
[95] See Minister of State for Defense Amama Mbabazi's statement in *Parliament of Uganda* 1996.
[96] See Prunier 2009, 87.
[97] See Mbabazi's statement in *Parliament of Uganda* 1996.

When the ADF rapidly grew in strength between 1995 and 1996, counting roughly 5,000 troops,[98] Museveni thus had good reasons to fear that Sudan was planning to "create a second front against us"[99] – the first being northern and northwestern Uganda (LRA and WNBF); the second, southwestern Uganda (ADF). At the time, this strategy was seen as an attempt to overstretch the UPDF.[100] It is in this context that one also needs to consider the ex-FAR/Interahamwe in eastern Zaire as an indirect transnational threat to Uganda; had its ally, the RPF government, lost control over its northern territory, Sudan and the ADF could have used it to expand the second front. Mbabazi explicitly made this connection when justifying Uganda's support to the AFDL:

> [W]hen Rwanda moved against the ex-FAR and Interahamwe in Congo, in Zaire then, it was with our knowledge; and it was part of a plan that we had worked out in response to the threat emanating from Zaire, with the collaboration of Sudan. And the threat was against Uganda as well because Sudan's job was to keep us engaged in order to prevent us from supporting Rwanda when the planned invasion of Rwanda was to take place.[101]

These strategic considerations highlight the complexity of regional alliance politics in that period. On the other hand, Museveni himself later pointed out that he sent Kabila to the Rwandans "because they had a sharper quarrel with president Mobutu than ourselves, the fact that Mobutu was by now in active collaboration with the Sudanese notwithstanding."[102] Put differently, while Museveni was interested in the overthrow of Mobutu, he did not see him as a sufficiently critical threat to justify a large-scale Ugandan invasion on behalf of the AFDL, especially given that the UPDF was already facing rebel groups on two fronts, all of them supported by Uganda's primary regional enemy – Sudan.[103]

However, as outlined above, the UPDF moved into northeastern Zaire in late 1996 to repel the ADF, whose attacks in November drove around 100,000 civilians from their

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[98] In 1996, according to Romkema (2007, 67), the ADF had "between 4,000-5,000 well-trained and armed members." Former ADF chief of staff Tushabe suggested that he commanded "about 6,500" troops in late 1996, which might well have been an exaggeration (testimony in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 802).
[99] Museveni's testimony in ibid., 546.
[100] Interview (#44) with Grace Matsiko.
[101] Mbabazi's testimony in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 307.
[102] Statement by Museveni on the "Background to the Situation in the Great Lakes Region", Harare, Zimbabwe, August 8, 1998, reprinted in *The Monitor* 1999a.
[103] For similar conclusions, see Prunier 1999, 48-9.

homes in southwestern Uganda.[104] Agreeing with the Ugandan government's assessment that the Sudan-sponsored ADF posed a serious threat in 1996, several scholars as well as many Ugandan journalists – the latter notably across the political spectrum – consider this transnational threat as the principal reason for Uganda's invasion.[105]

While the history of Mobutu's support for anti-Museveni rebels and his collaboration with Sudan together also provide a clear rationale for Uganda's alliance with the AFDL, additional factors are often highlighted in the literature. I discuss their relative importance in the following two subsections.

Resource Opportunities. Partly as a result of the UPDF's conduct in the Second Congo War, some scholars – and, of course, a great many Congolese – highlight the DRC's resource wealth as one of the main reasons for Uganda's involvement not only in the second but also in the first war. As already explained in the section on Rwanda's involvement, the supply side of the opportunity mechanism was certainly present in late 1996. Without reading history backwards,[106] however, there is no conclusive evidence suggesting that Museveni's decision to help form and support the AFDL was primarily driven by his need to provide key domestic backers with opportunities for enrichment.

On the other hand, the possibility that this need played at least a contributory role cannot be easily discarded. Museveni is known to have consolidated his power by "integrating large chunks of the political class into his vast patronage empire."[107] In particular, he "has

[104] See *Africa Confidential* 1996.
[105] See Lanotte 2003, 166; Prunier 2004, 375; Reyntjens 2009, 58-9; interviews #41, #43, and #44.
[106] This problem is particularly acute in Ogenga Otunnu's analysis, which largely refers to sources from 1998 and 1999 (at least one of them – the Executive Intelligence Review – highly dubious) that were written in the wake of Uganda's second, much broader invasion (see Otunnu 2004, 48-50). Even so, he concedes that resource opportunities were "not a decisive motive for Uganda's intervention" (ibid., 50).
[107] Mwenda 2007, 29. For studies analyzing Museveni's clientelist strategies in greater detail, see Green 2011; Lindemann 2011.

always sought to use the army to build his personal (less so the NRM's) political base," which highlights his being wary of potential challengers from within the ruling party.[108]

In turn, reports about UPDF corruption scandals abound. In an oft-cited analysis of the army that goes well beyond its involvement in the DRC, Sandrine Perrot conceives of leading UPDF officers as "entrepreneurs of insecurity."[109] One of her main examples is the crisis in northern Uganda, where conflict persisted from 1986 up to her article's publication: while the UPDF's efforts to end the violence seemed ambiguous, certain individuals were reaping benefits from continued insecurity. Of particular relevance here are Salim Saleh and James Kazini, both of whom would later become the focus of UPDF wrongdoings in the Second Congo War. Saleh, who is Museveni's brother, was the presidential advisor on the conflict in the north whilst holding contracts for army supplies. Kazini, then a division commander, and his deputy were accused of embezzling army funds.[110]

Andrew Mwenda explains the broader clientelist logic behind these phenomena. When Uganda, in the early 1990s, adopted the liberal economic reforms proposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the government lost much of its control over the budget-making process. These reforms thus limited Museveni's ability to use that process as a means for distributing favors to his key clients. Instead, he increasingly relied on defense and security budgets, which included large classified funds.[111] In this context, the rebellions in the north provided an opportunity to justify increased defense spending vis-à-vis Uganda's international donors.[112]

Given this background and the fact that especially in the late 1990s military corruption grew ever more rampant,[113] it is not surprising that some scholars suggest that Uganda's involvement in the First Congo War was motivated by Zaire's resource wealth. One obser-

[108] Mwenda 2007, 29. On Museveni's divide-and-rule strategy regarding the security forces, see ibid., 32.
[109] Perrot 1999.
[110] See ibid., 65-6.
[111] See Mwenda 2010, 50-1.
[112] See ibid., 51-2; Perrot 1999, 62.
[113] See Tangri and Mwenda 2003.

vation in particular led to such suspicions: Between January 1 and June 30, 1997, Uganda exported 6,591 kilograms of gold – despite producing only 6 kilograms inside Uganda in all of 1997.[114]

Gold exports had already increased between 1995 and 1996, with Congolese traders shifting their operations from Bujumbura to Kampala due to both political instability in Burundi and policy changes in Uganda.[115] However, even the 1,099 kg exported in the third quarter of 1996 pale in comparison to the 2,896 kg and 3,695 kg exported in the first two quarters of 1997. Where did all this gold come from? Dan Fahey highlights an *Indian Ocean Newsletter* article – discussed on the Ugandan newspaper *The Monitor*'s front page from September 21, 1997 – which states that Lt. Col. Andrew Lutaya (who assisted the AFDL rebellion, see above) "played a key role in the transfer of a large consignment of gold offered by Kabila to the Ugandan government in payment of services rendered."[116] This gold was then allegedly "distributed among President Museveni's inner circle of advisers and relations."[117] An alternative, or additional, explanation would be that the war created new opportunities for businessmen to buy gold in eastern Zaire, which they then sold in Kampala.[118]

Overall, then, it appears likely that Museveni's ruling coalition benefited from Zaire's resource wealth as the first war drew to a close. Considering resource opportunities as a *major* factor for Uganda's involvement would, however, neglect the importance of the transnational threats discussed above. As Andrew Mwenda put it, the Ugandan government got involved primarily not because of its relationship with Zaire but because of its relationship, first, with Sudan, and, second, with Rwanda.[119] As I will discuss in the following

[114] See Fahey 2011, 94.
[115] See ibid., 95.
[116] *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 1997.
[117] Fahey 2011, 96.
[118] See ibid. In April 1997, prior to the overthrow of Mobutu, the New York Times published an article titled "The Great Gold Rush in Zaire" (*New York Times* 1997a).
[119] Interview (#45) with Mwenda.

subsection, some see Uganda's alliance with Rwanda as a factor that went well beyond common security concerns.

Nonsecurity Motives. Given that Museveni passed Kabila on to the Rwandans when Kabila asked for his support in overthrowing Mobutu (see above), it is reasonable to assume that Uganda's alliance with the AFDL – in contrast to its subsequent limited invasion – was not fully determined by security issues. Otherwise, the UPDF would have likely played a more active role in supporting the rebellion. Under the rubric of nonsecurity motives, two factors deserve brief consideration: the Rwandan-Ugandan friendship and Museveni's grander regional ambitions.

Although it is true that, in 1996, the NRM and RPF governments still had a "relatively fraternal relationship,"[120] there had been some tensions from the late 1980s onwards between the NRM and those Rwandans who had fought in Museveni's rebellion and later became key RPF officers.[121] The friendship between Museveni and Kagame in particular, comrades-in-arms since the days of fighting Idi Amin, certainly influenced Museveni's decision to support the AFDL, but it is unlikely to have been the main reason, as John Clark would have it.[122]

This friendship also played a role in Museveni's regional ambitions. According to several observers, Museveni not only had the vision of a regional economic bloc, unleashing Zaire's economic potential, but also liked to think of himself as the main "regional power-broker."[123] In this context, helping to stabilize a friendly government in Kigali can be seen as an important issue. While it is impossible to know for sure how essential these aspira-

[120] Interview (#42) with General Jeje Odongo.
[121] See Waugh 2004, 40.
[122] See Clark 2001a, 267-8; for a critique, see also Prunier 2004, 374 (note 45).
[123] Interviews with a journalist (#41) and a political analyst (#46), both from Uganda. On Museveni's regional economic aspirations, see also Prunier 1999, 46; Otunnu 2004, 50-1; Fahey 2011, 76; Stearns 2011, 52.

tions were for Museveni's decision, there is no evidence suggesting that they outweighed the importance of the much more pressing security concerns, both internal and external.

In sum, resource opportunities, relations with Rwanda, and Museveni's regional ambitions likely contributed to Uganda's alliance with the AFDL, but the threat mechanism – with regard both to Mobutu's long-term sponsorship of anti-Museveni rebels and to the Sudanese operating via Zairian territory – provides the most fundamental and single most convincing explanation not only for Uganda's limited invasion but also for its support to the AFDL. Who exactly formed part of this Congolese rebel alliance, and why were they chosen? It is to these questions that I now turn.

Agent Selection

The AFDL was an alliance of four Zairian groups, formally founded in Colonel James Kabarebe's office in Kigali.[124] At the time, Kabarebe – then Chief of Plans, Operations and Training of the RPA – was preparing the Rwandan invasion into Zaire. Of the four groups, only Laurent-Désiré Kabila's *Parti de la révolution populaire* (PRP, Popular Revolution Party) could boast a longer history, having been created in 1967. Kabila was originally from Katanga – his father a Luba, his mother a Lunda – but the PRP's small *maquis* (hideout) had been based in the Fizi–Baraka area of South Kivu between 1967 and 1986.[125]

André Kisase Ngandu's CNRD was the second group that existed prior to 1996 (see above); he was a Tetela from Kasai. The two other groups "appear to have been created for the occasion."[126] Déogratias Bugera, a Congolese Tutsi from Masisi, officially led the *Alliance démocratique du peuple* (ADP, People's Democratic Alliance); Anselme Masasu Nindaga, whose father was a Shi from South Kivu whilst his mother was a Rwandan Tutsi

[124] This is by no means a contested claim: Bugera and Kabarebe admitted so themselves in El Tahri 2001.
[125] For summaries of Kabila's colorful past as a would-be revolutionary, see De Villers et al. 1999, 24-7; Stearns 2011, 82-6.
[126] Reyntjens 2009, 105. See also Prunier 2009, 113.

refugee, was said to preside over the *Mouvement révolutionnaire pour la liberation du Zaïre* (MRLZ, Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Zaire).[127]

Why did Rwanda choose these four individuals out of the many Zairian militia leaders and would-be rebels that existed in 1996? While the theory presented in Chapter 3 can easily account for Bugera, Masasu, and Kisase, the choice for Kabila has indeed partly to be seen as "an accident of history," as President Kagame later spitefully put it.[128] All four leaders were geopolitically relevant with regard to the transnational threat that Rwanda was facing: Bugera and Masasu hailed from the Kivus, Kabila's and Kisase's rebel groups had historically been based there. What about the level of trust the Rwandans had in them?

As described earlier, Bugera had recruited Congolese Tutsi on behalf of the RPF during the Rwandan civil war and afterwards helped set up the RPF's spy network in eastern Zaire. Masasu had himself fought for the RPF in the civil war.[129] Both thus not only shared their Tutsi group identity with the Rwandans but also had significant positive prior interactions with them. Given such high levels of trust, it was unsurprisingly these (and some other) Congolese Tutsi on whom the Rwandans would come to rely most heavily, despite Kabila and Kisase's seniority and nominally higher positions.[130]

Kisase was, like Kabila, introduced to the Rwandans by Museveni's aides.[131] The exact timing of this introduction remains unconfirmed. By one account, around 600 CNRD combatants were trained by the Rwandan army after the RPF took power in July 1994, allegedly having helped the RPF towards the end of its struggle.[132] If true, this suggests that the Rwandans should have had at least a modicum of trust in Kisase in October 1996. In any case, given his prior links to Ugandan security operatives such as Kahinda Otafiire,

[127] See De Villers et al. 1999, 21-4; Prunier 2009, 396 (note 4).
[128] Film interview in El Tahri 2001.
[129] See De Villers et al. 1999, 23; Prunier 2009, 396 (note 4).
[130] In his vivid description of the AFDL's initial meetings, based on an interview with Bugera, Stearns (2011, 88) notes that "Masasu skulked about in his neatly pressed fatigues, speaking mostly with the Rwandan officers who came in and out of the house, and keeping his distance from the two rebels thirty years his senior."
[131] See Museveni's 1998 Harare statement reprinted in *The Monitor* 1999a.
[132] See Willame 1999, 62-3.

Kisase was primarily seen as Uganda's man within the AFDL.[133] He was named the AFDL's military commander, not least because his CNRD was the only one out of the four groups that actually had troops.[134]

Why Kabila was initially chosen as the AFDL's spokesman can only be explained by my theory if one stretches the notion of geopolitical relevance beyond its originally narrow conceptualization that focuses on threats and opportunities. Questioned about their choice of Kabila, whose history as a would-be revolutionary was less than impressive, Rwanda's former intelligence chief Patrick Karegeya responded:

> You act like we had a lot of options! By 1996, Mobutu had co-opted or locked up almost all of his opposition, with the possible exception of Tshisekedi. Kabila might have been old-school, but he had not been bought off. We gave him some credit for that.[135]

Tito Rutaremara confirmed that Kabila was chosen primarily because he was the only one with the political "caliber" to head the rebellion – due to both his age and his decade-long history of opposing Mobutu.[136] Put differently, with regard to overthrowing Mobutu, Kabila was geopolitically the most important of the four leaders in the sense that he brought name recognition and could plausibly claim to represent more than just the Kivus.

However, there were some doubts about Kabila right from the start. Museveni, who had first met Kabila in the late 1980s, recalled that "we also knew that he was a poor organizer."[137] Similarly, Karegeya was not particularly impressed after his first meeting in Kabila's house in Tanzania.[138] The RPF government dealt with this lack of trust by making sure that Kabila would be surrounded by Rwandan officers – even after he took power in

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[133] See Prunier 2009, 116; interview (#22) with a former AFDL official.
[134] See Reyntjens 2009, 104-5; Prunier 2009, 113. Emmanuel Kamanzi (interview #25) confirmed that Kisase was officially in charge of operations.
[135] Quoted in Stearns 2011, 87.
[136] Interview #35. See also Gribbin 2005, 191; Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 32.
[137] Film interview in El Tahri 2001. On Museveni's interactions with Kabila, see *The Monitor* 1999a.
[138] See Stearns 2011, 86-7. It has been suggested that the former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere also played an important role in Kabila's choice (see Prunier 2009, 116). While it is true that Nyerere had long been critical of Mobutu and that Museveni contacted Nyerere prior to the invasion, Prunier seems to exaggerate the latter's role (see *The Monitor* 1999a; Stearns 2011, 203).

May 1997 (see below). Table 4.1 summarizes how Rwanda viewed the four rebel leaders, illustrating why the Rwandans felt that they had to monitor Kabila closely.

Table 4.1: Rwanda's Choice of AFDL Leaders

Geopolitics	Trust	Rank	Leader(s)
Relevant	High	#1	Bugera, Masasu
	Medium	#2	Kisase
	Low	#3	Kabila

Having reviewed the AFDL's creation, Jason Stearns concludes that as "ingenious as Kagame's military planners were, their political strategy ended up being simplistic and short-sighted."[139] This shortcoming was largely due to the fact that Rwanda's primary focus was on dismantling the ex-FAR/Interahamwe and their rear bases in eastern Zaire.[140] In fact, prior to Angola's decision to support the AFDL – to which I turn next – there were some doubts as to whether the Rwandans and their Congolese allies would go all the way to Kinshasa.[141]

February 1997: Angola Enters the War

In the first four months – from October 1996 to January 1997 – the AFDL and RPA forces conquered about 80,000 square kilometers, that is, less than five percent of Zaire's overall territory. Once Angola dispatched around 2,000 to 3,000 Katangan Tigers and started to provide logistics to the AFDL, however, the rebels swiftly captured the rest of the country within only three months, from mid-February to mid-May.[142]

Since there is universal consensus in the literature that the security concerns regarding Zaire's support to Jonas Savimbi's *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*

[139] Stearns 2011, 90.
[140] Interview (#19) with a Congolese analyst.
[141] See Reyntjens 2009, 61-2.
[142] See ibid., 64-5.

(UNITA, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) were the primary cause of Angola's alliance with the AFDL,[143] the analysis in the first subsection is limited to transnational threats. The second subsection then explains why the Katangan Tigers were Angola's logical choice as the supplement to the AFDL.

Alliance Formation

Transnational Threats. Angola had been at war ever since its independence in 1975. Even before taking power that year, the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA, People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) had been in confrontation with Mobutu, who had sponsored an MPLA rival in the Angolan war of independence. Once in power, the Soviet- and Cuban-backed MPLA retaliated by supporting the FLNC's Shaba I and II rebellions in 1977/78 (see above), while Mobutu later offered UNITA rear bases in western Zaire and – in coordination with Western intelligence services – provided the rebels with training as well as weapons.[144]

In the 1990s, Angola fluctuated between war and peace. On May 31, 1991, a peace agreement signed in Lisbon (Portugal) put a temporary halt to the conflict, but after presidential elections in September 1992 the peace process broke down and heavy fighting continued, followed by another complicated round of negotiations.[145] Meanwhile, although the conflict had lost its Cold War dimension in the early 1990s, Zaire continued to back UNITA. In November 1994, Human Rights Watch reported:

> Since the United States and South Africa ceased their major military assistance programs, Zaire has become the most important source of support for UNITA. UNITA uses Zaire as a transit area and conduit for diamond sales and weapons transfers, maintains a number of small rear bases in Zaire, and receives operational support from Zairian troops.[146]

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[143] See Clark 2001b, 76; Turner 2002, 75; Kennes 2005, 148; Nest et al. 2006, 23; Reyntjens 2009, 62-3; Prunier 2009, 131; Stearns 2011, 53. Both former AFDL and Katanga Tigers members also agreed that the UNITA—Zaire alliance was the reason for Angola's involvement (interviews #7 and #10).
[144] See Turner 2002, 78-80; Malaquias 2007, 206. On the Cold War dimension, see Westad 2005, chap. 6.
[145] For a summary of the Angolan civil war, see Hodges 2004, 6-20, who divides the later part of that conflict into "periods of peace (1991–92), war (1992–94), quasi-peace (1994–98) and war (from 1998 to the beginning of 2002)" (ibid., 18). See also Prunier 2009, 88-99.
[146] HRW 1994, 53.

That same month, the government and UNITA signed another peace agreement, the Lusaka Protocol, but its implementation was extremely slow and piecemeal. For 1996, the baseline strength of government and rebel forces was estimated at 97,000 and 62,000, respectively, which indicates UNITA's enormous military capability.[147] Immediately prior to Angola's entry into the First Congo War in February 1997, Angolan intelligence and foreign diplomats in Luanda agreed that – despite the demobilization process under the Lusaka Protocol – Savimbi still commanded "a well-equipped army of some 10,000–15,000 troops: too few for a large-scale offensive but plenty for a long guerrilla war."[148]

So how did it come to Angola's decision? In fact, the MPLA government first remained neutral when the AFDL emerged in eastern Zaire in October 1996.[149] On December 3, President José Eduardo dos Santos met Zaire's Prime Minister Kengo wa Dondo in Brazzaville and apparently agreed that Luanda would prevent the Katangan Tigers – an anti-Mobutu group that had been in Angola since the 1960s and had been partly integrated into the army (see below) – from crossing into Zaire, and that, in return, Kinshasa would prevent UNITA from using rear bases, thus ending its ability to export diamonds and receive arms via Zairian territory.[150]

However, several of Mobutu's close associates kept selling arms to UNITA. The MPLA secretary-general, Lopo do Nascimento, told a journalist that his government had proof that the Zairians "were tricking us one more time."[151] In response, at the end of December 1996, Dos Santos reportedly sent his security advisor and two generals of the Katangan Tigers to Rwanda for operational planning. Luanda's objective was clear: Kinshasa had to be taken so that UNITA would lose its ability to operate via southwestern Zaire.[152]

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[147] See *Military Balance* 1997.
[148] *Africa Confidential* 1997a.
[149] On Angola's initial caution, see Stearns 2011, 54.
[150] See Reyntjens 2009, 62.
[151] Quoted in Turner 2002, 81. See also *Africa Confidential* 1997b.
[152] See Reyntjens 2009, 63.

In mid-February 1997, Luanda then flew 2,000 to 3,000 Katangan Tigers to Kigali, from where they entered eastern Zaire in support of AFDL and RPA troops. One month later, Kisangani fell, sending shockwaves across the country. In late April, the Angolan army even got directly involved, entering southwestern Zaire and facing off with UNITA troops – who had fought on behalf of Mobutu at several occasions during the conflict – in the last real battle of the First Congo War in Kenge, one hundred kilometers east of the capital, in early May.[153] In the wake of Kinshasa's fall, which took place on May 17, *Africa Confidential* ran a story on Angola, its caption reading: "After Mobutu Sese Seko, UNITA is the biggest loser from changes in Central Africa."[154]

Agent Selection

Similar to the Rwandan refugees who fought in Museveni's rebellion, the Katangan Tigers were a peculiar transnational phenomenon. Originally known as the Katangan gendarmes, they had their roots in Katanga's war of secession in the early 1960s. After the secessionist struggle failed, many fled the country and helped the Portuguese government in its fight against the Mobutu-backed *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (FNLA, National Front for the Liberation of Angola). Under the leadership of Nathanaël Mbumba, the gendarmes were then transformed into the FLNC and their military forces became known as Tigers (*tigres*).[155]

Following the Portuguese revolution, the FLNC switched allegiances, now siding with the MPLA. This alliance was based on the Cossa Accords of December 17, 1974, which stated that, in return for their support to the MPLA, the FLNC would later be able to use Angolan territory as launching pad for an invasion into Zaire. It was this agreement that

[153] See ibid., 63; Turner 2002, 82; Stearns 2011, 125.
[154] *Africa Confidential* 1997c.
[155] See Larmer 2013b, 91-2.

preceded the Shaba I and II invasions in 1977/78.[156] Their failure, however, led to a break between the FLNC and the MPLA. As a consequence, "the gendarmes and their political leaders, shorn of a base from which to conduct their war against the Zairian state, lost their organizational and ideological moorings."[157] Nonetheless, many of the FLNC fighters were integrated into the Angolan army.[158]

While the exact composition of the Katangan Tigers that were sent to Kigali in February 1997 remains unclear, at least some of their generals had already been involved in 1977/78. Others, it seems, were refugees from across southwestern Zaire who had previously been recruited and trained in Angola to fight UNITA.[159] Given these historical links, it is self-explanatory that the government in Luanda chose its 'Zairian' regiments for the military operation against Mobutu. On the one hand, they had more trust in them than in the Rwandan-trained Banyamulenge elements of the AFDL. On the other, not sending 'proper' Angolan army forces to eastern Zaire – more than 1,000 kilometers away from the Angolan-Zairian border – enabled Luanda to deny an overt intervention.[160]

In terms of geopolitical relevance, the decision to form an alliance with Rwanda and the AFDL was also obvious. The rebellion was backed not only by Rwanda and Uganda but – to varying degrees – also by Eritrea, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.[161] The AFDL had thus effectively become the only game in town; individually supporting another Zairian rebel group would have potentially caused regional tensions, something the Angolans could not afford given their trouble with UNITA at home. Moreover, the synergy effects promised a swift drive to Kinshasa in order to take out Mobutu and install a leader who, indebted to the MPLA, would ensure that UNITA's supply lines were cut off.

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[156] See ibid., 93.
[157] Larmer 2013a, 161. See also Kisangani 2012, 113.
[158] See Larmer 2013a, 173; Reyntjens 2009, 63 (note 79). Others went back to Zaire; some of them later reportedly even fought on Mobutu's side in the First Congo War (see ibid., 112-3).
[159] See Turner 2002, 82.
[160] See Stearns 2011, 54.
[161] See Reyntjens 2009, 65-6; Stearns 2011, 55, 120.

It was the same strategic concern regarding UNITA that would lead the Angolans to come to Laurent Kabila's rescue in August 1998, when Rwanda and Uganda tried to overthrow the very leader they themselves had helped install one year earlier. How it came to this partial but monumental reversal of alliances is the question to which I now turn.

July–August 1998: Kabila's Gamble and the Creation of the RCD

On July 27, 1998 – fourteen months after Laurent Kabila had been catapulted into power largely by outside forces – a military commander made the following announcement on Congolese state television:

> The President of the Republic […] informs the Congolese people that he has just, this Monday, put an end to the presence of Rwandan soldiers, who helped us during the liberation of our country. He thanks, through these soldiers, all the Rwandan people for the solidarity that they have shown us up to this point. He congratulates the Congolese people for their nobility of soul for having tolerated, hosted, and assisted these soldiers during their stay in the Congo. This marks the end of the presence of all foreign military forces in our country.[162]

Six days later, on August 2, Sylvain Mbuki, the commander of the 10th Battalion of the *Forces armées congolaises* (FAC, Congolese Armed Forces) based in Goma,[163] announced that "the army" had taken the decision to remove President Kabila from power.[164] With Rwandan support, the mutineers quickly seized key towns in eastern Congo, including Goma, Bukavu, and Uvira.[165] On August 4, the Rwandans – led once again by James Kabarebe – launched an audacious airlift, hijacking a Boeing 707 at Goma's airport and having it flown more than 1,000 miles across the country to Kitona Air Base, just off the Atlantic Ocean. From there, the mutineers and their Rwandan supporters advanced towards

[162] Quoted in De Villers et al. 1999, 171 (my translation). See also IRIN 1998c.
[163] After Zaire was renamed DRC, the FAZ turned into FAC.
[164] See De Villers et al. 2001, 17. That same day, fighting also occurred in the capital Kinshasa, involving Congolese Tutsi unwilling to lay down their arms, afraid of what would happen to them given widespread anti-Tutsi sentiments (see the lively narrative in Stearns 2011, chap. 13).
[165] See Reyntjens 2009, 194-5; Stearns 2011, 188.

Kinshasa.[166] Meanwhile, on August 16, the new rebellion finally received a name – the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD, Congolese Rally for Democracy).[167]

Without the military interventions of Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe on Kabila's behalf (starting August 19–21), Kinshasa would likely have fallen within days.[168] Yet it appears that Kabila asked the Rwandans to leave the DRC *before* obtaining these countries' pledges of support.[169] So what drove Kabila into this dangerous gamble? To answer that question, I begin this section with an analysis of the alliance dynamics between the AFDL, Rwanda, and Uganda from the beginning of the first rebellion in October 1996 up to the television announcement in late July 1998. Then, I discuss which factors were most important in Rwanda's and Uganda's decisions to support the RCD and to invade eastern Congo once again. Finally, I explain why Rwanda chose the various individuals that together formed the RCD.

Alliance Dynamics: The AFDL, Rwanda, and Uganda

During the First Congo War, as an agent of Rwandan interests, Kabila had relatively little autonomy. However, this began to change when he became president in May 1997. In the fourteen months that followed, Kabila and his Rwandan and Ugandan allies slowly turned from friends into enemies, culminating in Kabila's alliance with the ex-FAR/Interahamwe and his subsequent order that Rwanda leave the country. How did it come this far? I argue that Kabila's gamble was caused by a particularly severe variant of the double security dilemma, which in turn was linked to his making use of the greater autonomy gained vis-à-vis his foreign patrons – especially Rwanda – after coming to power. From a principal-

[166] See Stearns 2011, 188-90; Prunier 2009, 181-4.
[167] See De Villers et al. 2001, 43 (note 3).
[168] These interventions took place following Southern African Development Community (SADC) meetings in which Zimbabwe urged member states to come to Kabila's rescue (see Prunier 2009, 183-4). Since these interventions represent inter-state alliances, I do not discuss them in detail here. As shown elsewhere (see Tamm 2010, 62-6), Angola's decision was based on considerations regarding transnational threats, Zimbabwe's on a resource opportunity calculus, highlighting that these two explanatory factors are relevant not only to transnational alliances (see also Conclusion).
[169] See Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 46-7.

agent perspective, it was thus Kabila's agency slack that led to the outbreak of the Second Congo War.

In other words, given Rwanda's continued attempts at controlling the AFDL even after it transformed from rebel group into ruling party, Kabila can be usefully analyzed as both a sovereign ruler *and* an agent of outside backers. This *external* dimension is analytically not sufficiently captured in Phil Roessler and Harry Verhoeven's otherwise excellent account of the period from May 1997 to July 1998, which conceives of the situation Kabila faced merely as an *internal* security dilemma.[170]

Rebellion: October 1996 – May 1997

Before focusing on the period of Kabila's presidency, however, a brief analysis of the alliance dynamics during the first war is in order. Using the analytic criteria developed in the third step of my theory of transnational alliances, Kabila and the other AFDL leaders arguably started at the lowest possible level of agent autonomy in October 1996.[171] First, they had little leverage: the Rwandans chose to unite four agents but could easily drop one of them, as they would soon prove; on the other hand, the AFDL leaders initially relied heavily on Rwandan forces without there being another government willing to provide the amount of firepower they needed to kick off the rebellion. Second, the four leaders were of course constantly monitored by the Rwandans that accompanied them.

The assassination of Kisase in January 1997 powerfully demonstrates the danger of any type of agency slack in such a context of minimal autonomy. Described by several observers as a fervent nationalist, Kisase had openly opposed and criticized Rwandan theft

[170] See ibid., 33-46; and also Roessler 2011, 312. This illustrates my broader critique of Roessler's – and also Svolik's – work outlined in Chapter 2.
[171] One former AFDL official (interview #22) went as far as saying that the four leaders were like *figurants* (extras) given Rwanda's extent of control over the rebellion.

of Congolese property – a huge strategic mistake.[172] As Prunier points out, the Rwandans "had never managed to keep him under control, while Kabila accepted the nonstop day-and-night presence of six to ten Tutsi 'guardian angels' around him."[173] There is general consensus that the RPA and Kabila teamed up to have Kisase killed: the RPA did not want a strong and independent Congolese leader; Kabila felt threatened by Kisase's growing popularity.[174]

Given his close relations with Ugandan security operatives (see above), Kisase's murder led to discontent among the Ugandan leadership, which at that time was already "worried about the direct involvement of the Rwandese troops in the combat role,"[175] feeling that it would prohibit the AFDL from becoming a proper political and military movement.[176] The Ugandans subsequently continued their limited material support to the rebellion but remained much less involved than the Rwandans.[177] The remainder of this discussion therefore focuses on relations between the AFDL and Rwanda.

In Power: May 1997 – July 1998

While Angola's involvement from February 1997 onwards somewhat increased Kabila's autonomy, the Rwandans made sure that the new government would ask Angolan troops to leave the country shortly after Kabila seized power in May.[178] One of his ministers later called it a "big mistake to expel the Angolans way too early."[179] Despite Rwanda's continued monitoring, however, Kabila's transformation into the ruler of a sovereign country significantly improved his leverage. Several states in the region now vied for influence with the new Congolese president, providing him – in Osita Afoaku's perhaps slightly hy-

[172] Interviews with a former AFDL official (#22) and a Congolese analyst (#19). See also Prunier 2009, 130-1.
[173] Ibid., 131.
[174] See ibid., 403 (note 113); Reyntjens 2009, 107-8; interview (#19) with a Congolese analyst.
[175] Museveni's 1998 Harare statement, reprinted in *The Monitor* 1999b.
[176] See also the concerns of one of Museveni's close aides quoted in *Mail and Guardian* 1997.
[177] See Stearns 2011, 239; *The Monitor* 1999b.
[178] Interview (#10) with Jean-Baptiste Sondji.
[179] Henri Mova Sakanyi (Minister of Transport) quoted in Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 35 (note 76).

perbolical terms – with "enormous room to play one state or group of states against another."[180]

In this new context of increased autonomy, Kabila faced an obvious dilemma: how could he maintain good relations with his foreign sponsors, especially Rwanda, and, at the same time, gain domestic legitimacy from a population that largely saw him as a puppet of outside powers? Put differently, Kabila's external backers were not only "his most critical asset" but also "the main source of his political problems."[181]

Even more important than being widely perceived as legitimate, Kabila had some reason to be concerned about his short-term political and physical survival. The Rwandans tried to control – and, at least in the beginning, protect – the president and his government by placing themselves or Congolese Tutsi, whom they considered their most trustworthy partners (see above), in key positions. Within the security apparatus, examples included Kabila's main bodyguard, Captain David, and the commander of the presidential guard, Captain Francis Gakwerere, both Rwandan nationals.[182] From the time of the rebellion, Kabila carried over his personal secretary, Moïse Nyarugabo, a Munyamulenge; Bizima Karaha, another Munyamulenge, officially became foreign minister, having previously played this role for the AFDL.[183] Perhaps most stunningly, James Kabarebe, the *Rwandan* mastermind behind the rebellion, was appointed chief of staff of the *Congolese* army.[184]

Given this "stranglehold," Roessler and Verhoeven rightly observe that "Kabila's first order of business was to bring in people he felt he could trust and start to insulate himself

[180] Afoaku 2002, 111. As long as Rwandan forces were in Kinshasa, one can argue that Rwanda still had the option of a coup d'état, thus – in theory – the pool of agents available to Rwanda still included multiple individuals, leading to medium agent leverage and thus, combined with principal monitoring, to the third (rather than the fifth) level of agent autonomy.
[181] Ibid., 113.
[182] See Stearns 2011, 177.
[183] See De Villers et al. 1999, 50, 52, 79, 86.
[184] See ibid., 93-4; Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 34. This appointment is even listed in Kabarebe's official curriculum vitae (see *Rwandan Ministry of Defence* 2013); it already began in May 1997, not in December as erroneously stated in Reyntjens 2009, 162.

from the RPF and their Conoglese [*sic*] Tutsi 'auxiliaries.'"[185] One of his first maneuvers was to remove Nyarugabo from his side by making him secretary-general of the Office of Ill-Gotten Goods, an anti-corruption agency officially created on July 16, 1997.[186] In late November, Kabila went one step further, arresting AFDL co-founder Masasu – officially due to military indiscipline, including alleged collaboration with the ex-FAR/Interahamwe, a truly implausible proposition. Given Masasu's enormous popularity among Congolese youth recruited during the rebellion (so-called *kadogo*), fighting erupted in Kinshasa for two days, pitting troops demanding his release against those loyal to Kabila.[187]

According to a Rwandan security operative, his government lost hope in Kabila when Masasu was arrested, highlighting that Masasu had "represented our interest more than anyone else."[188] This interest was still largely focused on eastern Congo. In fact, at the time of his arrest, Masasu had just returned from an extended visit to South Kivu, his home province. There, he had witnessed first-hand what worried his Rwandan allies: resentful of the disproportionate influence of Congolese Tutsi in local administrative affairs, "indigenous" ethnic groups from eastern Congo such as the Hunde had turned against the new government and begun to cooperate with ex-FAR/Interahamwe remnants.[189] The militias of these groups – already active during the ethnic conflicts in the early 1990s – were called Mai-Mai.[190] Heavy-handed military operations against them and the Hutu *génocidaires*, often led by RPA commanders, only reinforced the cycle of violence.[191]

At times, it may have been difficult to discern for the Rwandans whether Kabila was simply unable or perhaps, more ominously, unwilling to put an end to anti-Tutsi and anti-Rwanda alliances in the east. An anecdote from December 1997 illustrates this point:

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[185] Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 36.
[186] See De Villers et al. 1999, 103-4. Upon hearing the news from friends rather than from his boss himself, Nyarugabo was furious with Kabila: "That day, I decided to fight him" (quoted in Stearns 2011, 177). One year later, he would be one of the RCD's key figures (see below).
[187] See *New York Times* 1997c; IRIN 1997.
[188] Quoted in Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 40.
[189] See Prunier 2009, 174-5; Reyntjens 2009, 174.
[190] For a deeper analysis of this insurrection, which began in June 1997, see Kisangani 2012, 135-40.
[191] See Prunier 2009, 174; Reyntjens 2009, 145.

> [N]on-Tutsi elements of the FAC were less than enthusiastic in combating the mai-mai, ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* insurgents. Not only did they resent the killings of civilians by the RPA they witnessed first hand, but they also felt that the war was not theirs. Their (at least passive) complicity with the insurgents was made abundantly clear when on 11 December 1997 hundreds of Hutu combatants passed through Bukavu on their way to Rwanda. Knowing about this move, the rebel "Voix du Patriote" warned civilians to stay at home. This incident was presented as a mai-mai and ex-FAR attack successfully repelled by the FAC, but, in reality, the Congolese military let the Hutu rebels through, while firing into the air to convince their "colleagues" of the RPA that they were putting up a staunch resistance.[192]

Such episodes marked the beginnings of an interference dilemma for the Rwandan government, which began to suspect that Kabila may turn against it by collaborating with its archenemies. On the other side, Kabila faced a particularly dangerous combination of the coup and interference dilemmas: with the Rwandans having permeated both the government and the army, they could have easily supported potential rivals such as Masasu or Karaha in a palace coup.[193] Given this double security dilemma, it is not surprising that Kabila systematically marginalized the AFDL and its secretary-general Bugera in favor of a more personalist regime.[194]

In November, Bugera lost the right to attend meetings of the council of ministers.[195] That same month, according to Nyarugabo, Bugera and other Tutsi began to reach out to disgruntled Mobutists: "It was obvious by then that Kabila had to go[.] […] The easiest option would have been a coup d'état. But – believe it or not – at that point Rwanda didn't want to do that. It would have been easy! But for some reason, they didn't want to go that far. Not yet."[196] Meanwhile, Kabila continued to put personal friends, mostly from his home province Katanga, into key positions.[197]

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[192] Reyntjens 2009, 146.
[193] See the statements by She Okitundu, one of Kabila's advisors, in Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 36. For another argument that comes close to my focus on Kabila's double security dilemma as the cause of his fallout with Rwanda, see Baregu 2006, 62.
[194] Azarias Ruberwa (interview #14), a Munyamulenge and Karaha's chief of staff in the foreign ministry, even likened Kabila's maneuvering itself to a coup d'état against the AFDL.
[195] See De Villers et al. 1999, 127.
[196] Nyarugabo quoted in Stearns 2011, 178. Earlier publications suggest that Bugera was behind a plot to topple Kabila that "had existed at least since February 1998" (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 227), and that rumors indicated that "as early as January 1998, the intelligence chiefs of Angola, Rwanda and Uganda held discussions regarding the desirability of finding an alternative leader for the DRC" (Weiss 2000, 13).
[197] See Dunn 2002, 62; Reyntjens 2009, 159-60.

Between May and July 1998, the tensions between Kabila, Rwanda, and Uganda then finally escalated. Both the Rwandan and the Ugandan president declined Kabila's invitation to attend the celebrations of his one-year anniversary in power on May 17; adding insult to injury, the two instead met with the Eritrean president in Kigali.[198] While Rwandan intelligence officers would later claim that Kabila had begun to collaborate with the ex-FAR/Interahamwe as early as September 1997,[199] Roessler and Verhoeven's research suggests that Kabila started to provide them with supplies and logistical support in May 1998 at the latest.[200]

That same month, fearful of a coup, Kabila purged his presidential guard of all Rwandans.[201] Then, following a reshuffle on June 1, Bugera lost the position of AFDL secretary-general, instead obtaining a meaningless *pro forma* position in the president's office.[202] Finally, on July 11, Kabila replaced army chief of staff Kabarebe with his brother-in-law Célestin Kifwa. Given that Kifwa had been a Katangan Tiger, this appointment can already be seen as moving the regime closer to Angola.[203] Sixteen days later, as discussed above, Kabila then formally asked Kabarebe and his men to leave the country.[204]

Paul Kagame, Rwanda's real ruler, later told US Ambassador Gribbin that "he had agonized over what to do – defy the order, replace Kabila, or depart – but had concluded that Kabila held the upper hand at that moment."[205] In sum, it was Kabila's position as a juridically sovereign ruler that enabled him to dismantle, step by step, the control mechanisms that the Rwandans had set in place.[206] He was thus not only shaped by his strategic environment but also managed to shape it. However, while his final maneuver avoided a per-

[198] See Gribbin 2005, 274.
[199] See ICG 2000b, 12 (note 39).
[200] See Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 42.
[201] See ibid., 40-1.
[202] See De Villers et al. 1999, 167, 202.
[203] See Reyntjens 2009, 169. Previously, Kifwa had been in charge of the Congolese police, which had notably been formed with Zimbabwean support (see De Villers et al. 1999, 94).
[204] Kabarebe and several high-ranking Congolese officials recount these final days in El Tahri 2001.
[205] Gribbin 2005, 274.
[206] See Roessler and Verhoeven 2011, 45-6.

haps imminent coup, it came at the cost of a new rebellion fomented by his erstwhile foreign allies.

Alliance Formation

Rwanda

The timing of Sylvain Mbuki's statement in Goma on August 2, 1998, leaves little doubt that the Rwandan government's decision to help start a mutiny and create the RCD was a direct result of Kabila's decision to expel the army that had brought him to power. In the context of a large-scale insurgency launched by the ex-FAR/Interahamwe in Rwanda's northwestern prefectures, his alliance with these *génocidaires* constituted a serious transnational threat. Kabila had, as Kagame told Gribbin, "betrayed the trust" of his Rwandan kingmakers.[207]

While resource opportunities and motives such as standing and revenge likely also contributed to Rwanda's decision for yet another "invasion-in-the-guise-of-a-rebellion,"[208] it is hard to imagine that any combination of them would have led to this drastic move in the absence of Kabila's collaboration with the RPF's archenemies. In what follows, I therefore focus on tracing the evolution of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe threat since October 1996 before briefly assessing the complementary role of opportunities and nonsecurity motives.

Transnational Threats. When the RPA moved into eastern Zaire together with AFDL fighters in October 1996, it immediately began to attack the refugee camps run by the ex-FAR/Interahamwe. These military operations forced many Hutu rebels to flee into several directions inside Zaire, sometimes along with thousands of genuine refugees. They also caused a massive refugee return: within a few days in mid-November, an estimated

[207] Gribbin 2005, 275.
[208] Prunier 2009, 195.

600,000 refugees crossed the border into Rwanda.[209] Since this enormous stream of people included disguised militants, the RPA effectively "re-imported its civil war."[210] Around that time, the ex-FAR/Interahamwe came to be known as the *Armée de libération du Rwanda* (ALIR, Army for the Liberation of Rwanda).[211]

While the RPA tracked down – and often brutally murdered – many of those who fled across the country, others retreated to Masisi, where they received support from the local Hutu population.[212] After the fall of Kisangani in March 1997, ALIR forces then began to infiltrate northwestern Rwanda in greater numbers. *African Rights* estimated that 30,000 to 40,000 combatants crossed the border in the following months, with perhaps 5,000 remaining in Masisi and Rutshuru.[213] ALIR thus continued to be a serious threat to the Rwandan government, whose army numbered somewhere between 50,000 to 80,000.[214]

The rebellion, initially focused on the prefectures of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri (former Habyarimana strongholds), was met with fierce counterinsurgency operations. Nonetheless, in February 1998, the insurgents managed to expand their operations into the central prefecture of Gitarama.[215] While the RPA continued to hold the upper hand, adjusting its tactics in favor of a hearts-and-minds approach and also profiting from the integration of former ALIR commanders and troops, an attack during the night of the Football World Cup final on July 12, 1998, which killed thirty-four people in a hotel only twenty miles northwest of Kigali, underlined the insurgent threat. Most importantly, in this case and

[209] See ibid., 121. The exact number is an extremely contentious issue, as it is linked to estimates about how many refugees were later killed by the AFDL/RPA forces or perished on their trek across Zaire (see Gribbin 2005, 195-9; Prunier 2009, 121-5; Reyntjens 2009, chap. 3). For a good overview – moving but less opinionated than the accounts by Gribbin and Reyntjens in particular – see Stearns 2011, chap. 9.
[210] Reyntjens 2009, 84.
[211] There is disagreement about when this name was adopted: either already in 1995 (Orth 2001, 105, note 4), by late 1996 (Rafti 2006, 59), or only in 1997 (Romkema 2007, 33). Other acronyms used between 1995 and 1996 include RDR and PALIR (see ibid., 32-3).
[212] See Orth 2001, 88; African Rights 1998, 1.
[213] See African Rights 1998, 7, 37-42, 62-70. Continual recruitment, often forced, made up for many of the fatalities suffered during the First Congo War (see ibid.). Note, however, that a UN Commission of Inquiry estimated the ALIR forces inside Rwanda at only 10,000 to 15,000 (UNSC 1998, 5).
[214] In February 1998, Kagame even put the ALIR forces at 109,000, which was considered an exaggeration (for both estimates, see *Africa Confidential* 1998b).
[215] See Orth 2001, 88-94; African Rights 1998, 3-4, 10.

others that month, it appeared that ALIR units wore FAC uniforms and were in the possession of new types of weapons – strongly indicating Congolese support, which by then had already become systematic (see above).[216]

Against this background, the Rwandan government had every reason to fear that its permanent withdrawal from eastern Congo, as requested by Kabila on July 27, would have once again provided the *génocidaires* with a safe haven from which to reinvigorate their insurgency inside Rwanda.[217] In order to address this transnational threat, the government retaliated by instigating a mutiny within the Congolese army, re-entering the country, and helping to create the RCD. In line with this analysis, US Ambassador Gribbin "judged that Rwanda's real interest was also its stated interest – national security."[218] He further notes that, although "incensed by this second invasion," Washington accepted Kigali's security rationale "as legitimate."[219] While most scholars highlight the importance of the transnational threat Rwanda faced, they also evoke other factors, to which I now turn.

Resource Opportunities. Despite his insistence on the primacy of the ALIR threat, Gribbin himself also points to resource opportunities as a factor for Rwanda's reinvasion:

> Rwanda had discovered during the first war that war in Congo was relatively cheap – even profitable. Cheap, because the resources of the Congo itself […] could be used to pay for operations. Additionally, well-connected Rwandans in the private sector could seize opportunities to do business or otherwise accumulate wealth.[220]

In other words, he suggests that the demand side of the opportunity mechanism came into existence between October 1996 and July 1998. In fact, Prunier sees a direct link between "economic opportunities in the Congo" and "the infighting within the RPF."[221] After three ministerial reshuffles one year earlier, the RPF itself witnessed important changes in 1998.

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[216] See IRIN 1998b; Orth 2001, 94-5; Gribbin 2005, 285-6.
[217] Interview (#40) with a senior Rwandan official.
[218] Gribbin 2005, 282.
[219] Ibid., 276, 283.
[220] Ibid., 282-3. See also Longman 2002, 136.
[221] Prunier 2009, 195.

On February 8, the political bureau was dissolved; one week later, Paul Kagame emerged as new party chairman, sidelining Alexis Kanyarengwe, a Hutu who had occupied this post since 1990.[222]

Already in August 1997, some RPF members had published a memorandum that criticized "the inexplicable accumulation of wealth, the lack of accountability, arrogance, clientship, [and] political patronage," arguing that from 1994 onwards, "a group of individuals, members of the RPF, have monopolised the RPF by excluding the general membership."[223] In mid-1998, another document circulated in Kigali, referring to the ruling clique around Kagame as "the new *akazu*," a reference to former president Habyarimana's inner circle.[224] Around that time, according to a European intelligence agent interviewed by Prunier, Kayumba Nyamwasa – who had been named army chief of staff in January 1998[225] – came "close to trying a military coup against the *akazu*."[226] Therefore, Prunier argues, the idea of a short and successful war in the DRC was considered "a nice way out of that tension and an occasion for all to get their share of the spoils."[227]

Given the secrecy surrounding the RPF,[228] it is difficult to assess how important this factor was in Rwanda's decision-making regarding the DRC in August 1998. In any case, against the background of the political developments within the ruling coalition between 1996 and 1998, the resource opportunities that Congo offered provided an additional *security* rationale from Kagame's perspective as *de facto* ruler.

[222] See Reyntjens 2009, 186-7.
[223] Quoted in ibid., 187.
[224] See ibid., 187; Prunier 2009, 195.
[225] See IRIN 1998a.
[226] Prunier 2009, 195. On the source, see ibid., 423 (note 83).
[227] Ibid., 195.
[228] See Verhoeven 2012.

Nonsecurity Motives. Among the nonsecurity issues that Timothy Longman discusses in a book chapter on Rwanda's "complex motives" for its involvement in the DRC, "ethnic solidarity" and "political triumphalism" deserve to be briefly discussed.[229]

Ethnic solidarity was evoked by both Kagame and Rwandan minister Patrick Mazimhaka: Kagame told US Ambassador Gribbin that Rwanda had "felt honor bound to support [the Banyamulenge] on grounds of ethnic solidarity,"[230] while Mazimhaka accused Kabila of launching a genocide against the Congolese Tutsi, forcing Rwanda to intervene on their behalf.[231] Given the "genocide credit"[232] that the RPF enjoyed, such arguments may have been considered effective at silencing international criticism of its invasion. However, while the Rwandans wanted to protect certain Congolese Tutsi, their relations with a large portion of the Banyamulenge was already tense in 1998 and eventually led to active Banyamulenge opposition against Rwanda and the RCD.[233] As I have already argued in the section on Rwanda's involvement in the first war, ethnic solidarity *per se* has little explanatory power with regard to alliance formation.

By contrast, what Longman calls political triumphalism does appear to have played a complementary role in Rwanda's engagement. In June 1997, RPF secretary-general Denis Polisi boasted that his government's defeat of Mobutu had turned it into the "master player" of the Great Lakes region, ready to settle other regional problems.[234] Having gone from victory to victory (first in Uganda, then in Rwanda, finally in Zaire), the RPA may well have fallen victim to a "sense of invincibility."[235] As Stearns points out, Kabarebe's daring Kitona airlift in August 1998, launched without ensuring Angola's consent, was "a prime example of the hubris that had come to characterize the [Rwandan] regime."[236]

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[229] Longman 2002, 141, 130, 137.
[230] Gribbin 2005, 280.
[231] See Longman 2002, 131.
[232] Reyntjens 2004, 199.
[233] See Reyntjens 2009, 204-5; Stearns 2013b, 21-6.
[234] Quoted in Reyntjens 2009, 141.
[235] Longman 2002, 138.
[236] Stearns 2011, 191.

These considerations chime with Richard Ned Lebow's broader historical argument that *standing* and *revenge* are key causes of war.[237] Both are expressions of the spirit, which Lebow believes is of greater importance to international relations than reason, on which – in his view – rationalist theories are based.[238] He notes that revenge "is often aroused by slights to one's standing."[239] In fact, in the so-called Rwanda Briefing from August 2010, Kayumba Nyamwasa and three other important RPF leaders-turned-dissidents argue that "Kagame's ill-advised and ill-fated decision to launch the second invasion of the DRC" was "driven by spite more than any other factor."[240] Albeit clearly a self-serving statement, it is reasonable to assume that such emotional factors at least played a complementary role.

In sum, however, issues such as resource opportunities, standing, and revenge appear to be subordinate to the transnational threat that Rwanda faced. Without Kabila's betrayal in the form of his alliance with ALIR's *génocidaires*, it is difficult to imagine that Rwanda would have diverted so many of its military resources given the serious insurgency inside its own country.

Uganda

In contrast to the First Congo War, Uganda's role in the second war is much better documented, not least because of several pertinent cases at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC), as well as the UN Panel of Experts reports and the reactions they sparked. Despite allegations, there is no conclusive evidence as to whether Ugandan soldiers took part in the Kitona airlift on August 4, 1998.[241] While Uganda was less closely involved in the creation of the RCD than Rwanda, the UPDF sub-

[237] See Lebow 2010, 18.
[238] See ibid., 44-58.
[239] Ibid., 108.
[240] Nyamwasa et al. 2010.
[241] See ICJ 2005, paras. 62-71. For contrasting accounts, see Afoaku 2002, 115; Clark 2002b, 155.

sequently sided with the rebels, taking Beni on August 7 and Bunia on August 13.[242] As later sections and Chapter 5 will describe in detail, Ugandan troops came to play a major role in the second war, including several more localized conflicts within that larger war.

Uganda's engagement was heavily overdetermined. Transnational threats and resource opportunities went hand in hand, while relations with Rwanda as well as regional ambitions once again played complementary roles. Given the sometimes excessive focus on the UPDF's subsequent exploitation of natural resources in the DRC, it is important to recognize that there was in fact a serious threat at the start of the war. I begin by analyzing this threat, then outline how the demand side for resource opportunities opened up in the period prior to August 1998, and finally provide a brief discussion of nonsecurity motives.

Transnational Threats. When the second war started on August 2, there were still three UPDF battalions – around 2,000 soldiers – on Congolese soil, based around Beni and Butembo in North Kivu's *Grand Nord* and around Bunia, the capital of Ituri District in the southern part of Orientale Province.[243] These troops were stationed in northeastern DRC on the basis of a mutual understanding dating back to May 1997, reaffirmed by the Protocol on Security along the Common Border, a bilateral agreement signed on April 27, 1998, which aimed "to put an end to the existence of the rebel groups operating on either side of the common border."[244]

Despite the signing of this protocol in late April, relations between the DRC and Uganda were already far from cordial around that time. At a press conference on May 22, briefly after Museveni had turned down Kabila's invitation to attend the one-year anniversary celebrations, Congo's Minister of Economy Pierre-Victor Mpoyo accused Museveni

[242] See ICJ 2005, para. 79.
[243] See ibid., para. 76.
[244] Quoted in ibid., para. 46.

of insulting Kabila and "interfering in the nation's affairs."[245] That same month – according to unconfirmed Ugandan intelligence reports – Kabila secretly visited Sudan, where he agreed to provide Khartoum with access to airfields in northern and eastern DRC in order to facilitate its support to anti-Museveni rebels.[246]

While it is not fully clear whether Kabila's collaboration with Sudan actually began prior to the outbreak of the war, it appears that, throughout 1997 and 1998, Khartoum continued to supply the ADF and other Ugandan rebel groups based in northeastern DRC with arms through airdrops originating from Juba.[247] Due to both this support and the difficult terrain, the UPDF operations inside the Congo, which had started in November 1996 (see above), never managed to neutralize the ADF.[248] In fact, the rebels launched a series of deadly attacks in the western districts of Bundibugyo and Kasese between June and August 1998,[249] providing circumstantial evidence for Uganda's claim that the increased "frequency, intensity and destructiveness of cross-border attacks" was "a direct result" of Kabila's alleged May 1998 agreement with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir.[250]

General Jeje Odongo, who was appointed Uganda's Commander of the Army in January 1998, believes that the DRC's and Uganda's "parting of ways" was directly linked to Kabila's decision to turn on Rwanda: given the "friendship" between Kigali and Kampala, providing support to groups opposed to the former meant, "by extension," also to support those opposed to Uganda.[251] At the time, this reasoning went both ways – Kampala considered the ALIR forces an enemy of Uganda,[252] as evident in an official government statement summarizing the developments from May to August 1998: "Uganda's worst fears had materialised; President Kabila had followed in President Mobutu's footsteps by allying his

[245] AFP 1998a.
[246] See ICJ 2005, para. 125.
[247] See Prunier 2009, 196.
[248] See *Africa Confidential* 1997e; Prunier 2009, 177; Titeca and Vlassenroot 2012, 159.
[249] See ICJ 2005, para. 132. On the June 8 massacre in Kichwamba as a turning point, see Fahey 2011, 112.
[250] The quotations are from Uganda's Counter-Memorial in ICJ 2001, para. 38.
[251] Interview (#42) with General Odongo.
[252] According to a Ugandan newspaper, "Interahamwe" forces actually attacked the UPDF battalion stationed in the southwestern district of Kisoro on May 21, 1998 (*The New Vision* 1998a).

government with Uganda's enemies – the anti-Uganda insurgents, the ex-FAR and Interahamwe, and the Government of Sudan."[253]

Those who are skeptical of Uganda's argument that cross-border threats caused its involvement in the second war typically point to the fact that the UPDF moved deep inside the DRC whilst the ADF continued its operations alongside the border.[254] If one takes into account the early dynamics of the war, however, this observation does not clearly undermine the threat rationale. As several Ugandan officials, including President Museveni, highlighted in their testimony before the so-called Porter Commission – set up by Museveni in 2001 to investigate the UN Panel's allegations regarding Uganda's exploitation of Congolese resources – there was a real danger that enemies would use airports in northern and northeastern DRC to attack Uganda.[255] For instance, in mid-September 1998, Libyan planes began to fly Chadian forces to Gbadolite in northern DRC (more than one thousand kilometers from the Ugandan border), from where they tried to move eastwards to stop the UPDF and its Congolese allies.[256]

When the UPDF High Command officially launched Operation Safe Haven on September 11, 1998, its stated primary purpose was to "deny the Sudan opportunity to use the territory of the DRC to destabilize Uganda."[257] One of Uganda's leading military strategists explained that the operation was based on an expansive notion of such a "safe haven."[258] Further weakening the skeptics' view is the fact that the UPDF launched Operation Mountain Sweep in the border area in November 1999, which significantly weakened the ADF: by 2001, it "no longer posed any serious threat."[259] At the very least, then, trans-

[253] ICJ 2001, 39.
[254] See, for instance, Clark 2001a, 272.
[255] See the testimonies by Stephen Kavuma (former Minister of State for Defence), Brigadier Kazini, Ambassador Bataringaya, and President Museveni in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 42, 112, 155, 563-4.
[256] See Prunier 2009, 204. Chad sent troops largely as a favor to Sudan, then still one of its main allies (see ibid., 422, note 75).
[257] Quoted in ICJ 2005, 109.
[258] Interview (#47) with Major General Benon Biraaro.
[259] Titeca and Vlassenroot 2012, 160. See also ICG 2012, 5-6.

national threats were one of the main reasons – if not the central one[260] – for Uganda's engagement in the second war.

Resource Opportunities. In its first report from April 2001, the UN Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the DRC claimed that even if Uganda's political leadership may have had "security and political reasons" for entering the second war, "some top army officials clearly had a hidden agenda: economic and financial objectives."[261] As meticulously demonstrated by Dan Fahey, resource opportunities were indeed a main factor for Uganda's involvement right from the start. Supporting my focus on the ruler's survival strategy with regard to such opportunities, Fahey's conclusion deserves to be quoted at length:

> [T]he political and economic interests of President Museveni's key regime supporters contributed to his decision to immediately join the Rwandan-led 'rebellion' in Congo. Museveni's patrimonial system in Uganda required him to consider the desires of his family members (e.g. Salim Saleh), senior army officers, and regime insiders who, during the interbellum, openly sought access to natural resources and markets in Congo.[262]

Since the logic of clientelism in Museveni's Uganda, especially with regard to the UPDF, has already been outlined in the section on Uganda's engagement in the first war, I limit the discussion here to several examples showing that the demand side for resource opportunities opened up already prior to August 1998 and not, as some scholars suggest,[263] only after the start of the war.

After Kabila took power in May 1997, Ugandan entrepreneurs were quick to seize business opportunities in the DRC. In September around fifty Ugandan companies staged a trade exhibition in Goma, about which *The Monitor* reported in an article titled "Get your share of Congo."[264] Similarly, in November, *The New Vision* told Ugandan businesspeople

[260] See Prunier 2009, 196.
[261] UNSC 2001a, para. 28.
[262] Fahey 2011, 136.
[263] See, e.g., Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2004, 405.
[264] *The Monitor* 1997.

to "go for it" in the DRC.[265] Entrepreneurs active there included not only associates of Museveni's brother but also Saleh himself, who allegedly had already tried to obtain gold and diamond concessions in Orientale Province during the AFDL rebellion.[266] One of Saleh's business vehicles was Caleb International. As General Manager of this company, Muhoozi Kainerugaba – Museveni's son – went to Kinshasa in January 1998, looking for opportunities in the mining sector, which in the end failed to materialize.[267]

While the Porter Commission rightly noted that "these were genuine visits during peacetime to promote international trade,"[268] they highlight the fact that Museveni's family was already interested in the DRC's huge resource opportunities prior to the second war. In the press conference on May 22, 1998, referred to above, the DRC's Minister of Economy Mpoyo "also accused an unnamed top Ugandan government official of 'smuggling' timber, gold and diamonds from DRC."[269] True or not, it is believed that he meant Saleh, who was Overseer of Uganda's Ministry of Defence between January and August 1998.[270]

After Lieutenant Colonel Jet Mwebaze – James Kazini's brother – and an Israeli businessman employed by one of Saleh's companies died in a plane crash whilst on their way to Bunia to buy gold in early October 1998, the *New Vision*'s editorial board warned of a "conflict of interest," suggesting that resource opportunities played a key role early on:

> The danger is that the UPDF's military strategy in eastern Congo will become confused with subjective business interests. Many army officers are in business there. Uganda is genuinely threatened by rebels inside Congo who are sponsored by Sudan. The Ugandan incursion into Congo is justified for the time being. But if Ugandan army officers develop personal businesses in eastern Congo, they will eventually make military errors by acting in their self interest and not the national interest.[271]

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[265] *The New Vision* 1997.
[266] See Kennes 2000, 316-7, 328.
[267] See Kainerugaba's testimony in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 679-81. Note that Saleh's birth name is Caleb Akandwanaho.
[268] *Republic of Uganda* 2002a, 29.
[269] *The New Vision* 1998b.
[270] See Reyntjens 2009, 168.
[271] *The New Vision* 1998d.

In fact, within weeks of the start of the war, the UPDF had taken control of key gold mining areas in northeastern Congo and begun to manage the production process.[272] In sum, these observations clearly suggest that the demand side for resource opportunities was already present by August 1998.

Nonsecurity motives. As was already the case in Uganda's involvement in the first war, the Rwandan-Ugandan alliance and Museveni's regional ambitions played complementary roles. I have already shown above that Uganda considered Rwanda's enemies as its own. However, the importance of the friendship with Rwanda should not be overstated.[273] Subsequent developments suggest that Uganda got involved primarily for its *own* security.[274]

Given later events (especially the alliance with the MLC), it is hard to disagree with Reyntjens' argument that Museveni had an agenda of his own, which – going beyond strict security motives – aimed "to be part of the game and not to abandon the entire Congolese theatre to Kigali."[275] To what extent such ambitions were independent of, or more important than, the salient transnational threats and resource opportunities outlined above is a matter of speculation. Overall, I therefore argue that these threats and opportunities constituted the main reasons for Uganda's involvement in the second war.

Agent Selection

The RCD, cobbled together mainly by Rwanda but initially also supported by Uganda, represented a "collection of strange bedfellows,"[276] including former Mobutists *and* former AFDL members.[277] Several accounts suggest that there was a deliberate effort to bring to-

[272] See Fahey 2011, 123-5.
[273] See Reyntjens 2009, 196; Prunier 2009, 195-6 (both arguing against Clark 2001a, 281).
[274] See Museveni's address to the Ugandan Parliament, reprinted in *The New Vision* 1998c.
[275] Reyntjens 2009, 196.
[276] Afoaku 2002, 118.
[277] See De Villers et al. 2001, 49; Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 229-31; Stearns 2011, 207-8.

gether as many individuals from the Congolese elite opposed to Kabila as possible.[278] Against this background, the focus of explaining Rwanda's choice of alliance partners should be less on each and every individual that came to join the RCD and more on those who helped Rwanda bring them together, as well as on those who became the nominal leaders of the group, such as Ernest Wamba dia Wamba (president) and Arthur Zahidi Ngoma (initially spokesperson, then vice president).

As already discussed in the section on alliance dynamics, it was Congolese Tutsi from within Kabila's regime – Bugera and Nyarugabo – who began reaching out to those unhappy with the new president.[279] When he was still Congo's army chief of staff, Kabarebe apparently also made calls in this regard.[280] In line with my theory, the Rwandans thus relied on those individuals whom they had already most trusted at the beginning of the alliance with the AFDL, that is, Congolese Tutsi.[281] This group also received important positions within the RCD: Nyarugabo became second vice president alongside Zahidi Ngoma, Karaha switched from being Kabila's foreign minister to playing that same role in the RCD, Bugera was named member of the so-called Executive Council, and Emmanuel Kamanzi was put in charge of finances.[282] The "overrepresentation" of Congolese Tutsi in the RCD's key positions would lead to popular grievances throughout the war.[283]

Just like in the case of the AFDL, however, Rwanda also decided to put more representative figures at the helm of the RCD. On August 5, 1998, after the mutiny but before the RCD officially came into existence, the Rwanda News Agency reported that Zahidi Ngoma was nominated as leader of the rebellion. From Goma, he swiftly declared that the

[278] For instance, see Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 228 (who turned down his friend Wamba dia Wamba's invitation to join the RCD). Jean-Baptiste Sondji (interview #10), Kabila's Health Minister, turned down an invitation by Bugera. Both refused because they realized that Rwanda was behind the new rebellion.
[279] These two were also among the individuals that contacted Wamba around July 1998 (interview #5).
[280] Interview (#12) with Delly Sesanga, former secretary-general of Arthur Zahidi Ngoma's political party *Forces du futur* and RCD founding member, who said that Zahidi initially received a phone call from Kabarebe.
[281] See also Tull 2007, 118.
[282] See De Villers et al. 2001, 45-7.
[283] ICG 2003a, 15.

new rebellion was not a "Banyamulenge or Rwandan struggle," but "a struggle of the Congolese people."[284] Zahidi Ngoma, originally from Maniema Province, had an impressive track record, having opposed Mobutu as a student before going to France, where he obtained a PhD at the prestigious Sorbonne in Paris and then, for about twenty years, held important positions at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). After Kabila took power, he returned to the DRC and founded his own political party, only to be arrested and imprisoned by the new government from November 1997 to May 1998.[285]

Why, in the end, did he only become the RCD's vice president? After Zahidi Ngoma's initial declaration, the "motley crew of would-be insurgents"[286] gathered in Kabuga, on the outskirts of Kigali, to discuss the structure of what was to become the RCD.[287] According to one of Zahidi's closest associates, high-ranking Rwandan officials who were present at the meeting were concerned about Zahidi's close links with France – a country with which the RPF government had very tense relations due to past French military support to the Habyarimana regime.[288] At that moment, Wamba arrived in Kabuga and was soon elected president.

Only one year earlier, highlighting his international reputation, Wamba had received one of the Prince Claus Awards in the field of culture and development, sponsored by the Dutch government. Born in the western Bas-Congo Province, he had moved to the United States for his university studies and then taught at Brandeis and Harvard.[289] In 1980, Wamba became Professor of History at the University of Dar es Salaam, famous for its left-leaning students and academics who had a history of supporting revolutionary move-

[284] Quoted in IRIN 1998d.
[285] See De Villers et al. 1999, 107.
[286] Tull and Mehler 2005, 378.
[287] Interviews with Wamba (#5) and Sesanga (#12). See also Stearns 2011, 207.
[288] Interview (#12) with Sesanga. See also *Africa Confidential* 1998e.
[289] See Kreisler 2004.

ments across Africa.[290] Further adding to his credibility, he was arrested for "anti-Mobutist" activities whilst visiting Zaire in 1981 and imprisoned for about a year.[291]

But Wamba was not only a well-known public intellectual and, as a western Congolese, provided some regional balance to a leadership dominated by easterners, his probably most important attribute was the close relationship he had with former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere, lovingly known as *Mwalimu* (teacher) across central-eastern Africa.[292] In sum, choosing Wamba as figurehead made sense to Rwanda from a broader geopolitical perspective: regionally, it was hoped to "sway other African leaders such as Mandela, Museveni, and Graça Machel, the former first lady of Mozambique"[293]; internationally, in light of the fact that two of Rwanda's new key allies were Britain and the United States, Wamba provided an anglophone alternative to the francophone Zahidi.

The fact that Wamba only later learned that Rwandan Vice President Kagame had put forward Wamba's name in a secret meeting prior to the official election was suggestive of what US Ambassador Gribbin realized right away: once again, "Rwanda intended to control both the war and the politics of rebellion in the east."[294] At the same time, the cobbling together of extremely disparate individuals would later come to hurt Rwanda, as subsequent sections and the next chapter will show.

September 1998: Uganda and the Creation of the MLC

In late September 1998, Ugandan Operation Safe Haven Commander James Kazini, Congolese businessman Jean-Pierre Bemba, and two former FAZ officers flew to Kisangani, where they launched a recruitment drive for a new Congolese rebel group. Although officially created on September 30, the *Mouvement de libération du Congo* (MLC, Movement

[290] On the university's role, see Mampilly 2011, xi.
[291] See De Villers et al. 2001, 44.
[292] Interviews with Wamba (#5) and Sesanga (#12).
[293] Stearns 2011, 206.
[294] Gribbin 2005, 281.

for the Liberation of Congo) announced its existence only on November 7, following one month of military training by the UPDF in a camp near Kisangani.[295]

Surprised by Bemba's statement that it was the MLC that had ambushed a large group of Chadian soldiers near Aketi, a town close to the border between Equateur and Orientale provinces, Goma-based RCD vice president Zahidi initially denied this assertion, insisting that RCD troops were fighting on that front. While Bemba claimed that the two groups were allies, Zahidi "accused Bemba of having delusions of grandeur" and was quoted as saying: "My God, he has no forces."[296]

The RCD's irritation was shared by their Rwandan principals. Four days earlier, Kigali had already denied Ugandan reports about the formation of a joint Rwandan-Ugandan command in charge of coordinating military operations in the DRC.[297] This came on top of an article by the RPF-owned newspaper *The New Times* titled "Saleh reducing the UPDF to a thieving gang," which responded to UPDF allegations in *The Monitor* that RPA forces in the DRC were "indisciplined," "arrogant," and "colonialists."[298]

What led to these tensions between Rwanda, Uganda, and the RCD, which resulted in Kampala's support of the MLC? In this section, I first analyze the alliance dynamics between Rwanda and Uganda at the start of the second war. Then, I explain how and why Uganda chose Bemba as a counterweight to the Rwandan-dominated RCD.

Alliance Dynamics: Rwandan–Ugandan Tensions at the Start of the Second War

In an address to the Ugandan Parliament on August 30, 1999, President Museveni described how his government perceived the start of the second war:

> As far as the rebels of Congo were concerned, right from the beginning, our Rwandese brothers, without consulting us, spearheaded the formation of a political committee headed initially by Professor Zahidi Ngoma. Later we were told by the Rwandese that Ngoma had been replaced by Professor

[295] See Bemba 2001, 18-21; Carayannis 2008, 3; AFP 1998b.
[296] IPS 1998.
[297] See ibid; Leloup 2000, 135.
[298] Quoted in *The New Vision* 1998e.

> Wamba dia Wamba. All these meetings were taking place in Kigali and Goma and we gave our unconditional support. However, as our army continued to stay in Congo, we noted that the rebels were not mobilising the people. They were not administering the liberated zones. They were not providing social services, and they were not repairing the infrastructure, such as roads, and yet they were collecting taxes.[299]

This criticism was reminiscent of Museveni's earlier reservations about the extent to which the AFDL had relied on Rwandan support during the first war (see above), something he had reiterated on September 17, 1998, in his first address regarding Uganda's involvement in the second war: "Ideologically, it is repugnant to my understanding to have foreign troops defending me except for training and, if unavoidable, limited support roles."[300]

Museveni's conviction was rooted in his own experience from the NRM's "bush war" between 1981 and 1986.[301] Scholarly accounts in fact highlight the guerrilla's minimal external backing as well as its commitment to popular support, which over the course of the war even deepened into democratic village management.[302] Both aspects stood in stark contrast to the RCD: from the start, its governance record was abysmal,[303] and its Rwandan patrons, according to founding member José Endundo, "never accepted the idea that the Congolese had to solve issues themselves; everything was decided in Kigali."[304]

Despite Rwanda's dominant role in the creation of the RCD, Uganda's army commander Odongo explained that the relations with his Rwandan counterparts were very cooperative in the early days of the war.[305] Soon, however, there were doubts:

> As the rebellion continued, we realized that we did not seem to share the same perspective of the nature this rebellion should take. The Rwandans despised the Congolese, so they sought to give them a secondary role: 'We will do the fighting, we will hand it over to you.' Now, we differed on that. We said we must give the Congolese the ownership of this rebellion: It is their rebellion, they must run the show.[306]

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[299] Quoted in ICG 2000a, 9-10.
[300] Quoted from *The New Vision* 1998c.
[301] See *The Monitor* 1999b.
[302] See Weinstein 2007, 62-71; Kasfir 2005.
[303] See Mampilly 2011, chap. 6.
[304] Interview (#99) with José Endundo (my translation). Similar statements were made by founding members Sesanga (interview #12) and Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi (interview #15). See also Stearns 2011, 209-10.
[305] Furthermore, on August 21, 1998, an RCD delegation led by Wamba went to Kampala for discussions (see *The Monitor* 1998b).
[306] Interview (#42) with General Odongo. See also Reyntjens 2009, 206; Prunier 2009, 220; Stearns 2011, 224.

In sum, a strategic disagreement emerged between the Rwandans and the Ugandans, which resulted in Uganda's losing trust that the RCD would be able to deliver what Museveni envisioned. He therefore began to consider alternatives and swiftly found one in Bemba.

Agent Selection

In August 1998, according to his autobiography, Bemba had a meeting in Brussels with RCD military commanders Jean-Pierre Ondekane and Sylvain Mbuki, organized by "common Ugandan friends who hoped that we could work together."[307] Disappointed with the RCD's political discourse and lack of vision, Bemba instead began to develop a political program of his own.[308] Using his Ugandan contacts, he then managed to set up a meeting with Museveni in September. Indicative of Museveni's initial support of Rwanda's efforts, he asked Bemba to meet with Kagame in Kigali. At this meeting, on September 12, Kagame in turn asked Bemba to go to Goma and join the RCD.[309] However, due to his doubts about the RCD – whether for professed ideological reasons or perhaps for not being promised the role he desired – Bemba decided to return to Kampala, where he asked Museveni to help him "create a real alternative force to Kinshasa's dictatorial regime."[310]

This sequence of events, which culminated in the journey to Kisangani (see above), illustrates that the formation of transnational alliances is a two-way process. It was Bemba who "took the initiative" and the Ugandans who, given growing strategic concerns, finally "seized the opportunity."[311] Nonetheless, Museveni's choice of Bemba was hardly as accidental as this account of events appears to suggest. The Congolese businessman met both

[307] Bemba 2001, 8 (my translation).
[308] By contrast, according to Kamanzi (Goma, July 25, 2011), the RCD's understanding was that Ondekane had recruited Bemba into the RCD.
[309] See Bemba 2001, 8-10. Tito Rutaremara (interview #35) confirmed Rwanda's request.
[310] Ibid., 10 (my translation).
[311] Interview (#42) with General Odongo.

key requirements highlighted by my theory: he came from a region that was geopolitically important to Uganda's security and he had already interacted with Museveni's inner circle.

In terms of geopolitics, it is important to recall, first, the expansive notion of a security buffer that motivated Operation Safe Haven and, second, the fact that in mid-September – just as Bemba returned from Kigali to Kampala – Uganda's opponents began flying troops to Gbadolite, Mobutu's famous home town in northern Equateur Province (see above). Bemba was born in Bokada, located in the same province, about one hundred miles to the west of Gbadolite. His father, Jeannot Bemba Saolona, had been one of Mobutu's closest business associates and thus one of the richest men in Zaire. Jean-Pierre was groomed to succeed his father, running several of his companies, but fled into exile in 1997 before the AFDL arrived in Kinshasa.[312]

Given this background, Bemba could credibly promise to rally the population of northern Congo, Mobutu's former stronghold, behind him. This was of critical importance to the Ugandans, who – in General Odongo's words – "wanted an outfit in the DRC that not only understood us but that would be stable enough to exert itself and provide leadership and control in order to provide us with a safe backyard […] for a long period of time."[313] In fact, when the MLC arrived in Equateur, people lined the streets and chanted Bemba's name, considering him "a *mwana mboka*, a son of the soil."[314]

With regard to trust, the second criterion for the selection of rebel clients, Bemba's business activities had brought him to Uganda from 1994 onwards. By one account, his cargo company was doing business with Salim Saleh, Museveni's brother.[315] Bemba himself notes that these business contacts led to a first meeting with Museveni earlier in 1998,

[312] See Stearns 2011, 219-22.
[313] Interview (#42) with General Odongo.
[314] Stearns 2011, 228. See also Carayannis 2008, 7; Prunier 2009, 208.
[315] See De Villers et al. 2001, 91. While Bemba claims that he exported Lake Victoria perch to Europe, allegations suggest that Mobutu employed Bemba's cargo firm to ferry weapons to UNITA via Kampala (see Bemba 2001, 6-7; Carayannis 2008, 6).

where he learned about the president's growing concerns regarding Kabila's regime.[316] Whatever the exact nature of Bemba's business transactions, the relations he developed with key individuals such as Saleh thus certainly helped him earn Museveni's attention and likely led to at least a modicum of trust.

As the remainder of this chapter as well as the next one will show, Uganda's decision to back the MLC marked the beginning of a serious conflict between Kampala and Kigali, further turning the Second Congo War into a deadly stalemate.

May 1999: The RCD Split and the End of the Rwandan–Ugandan Alliance

From May 16 to May 20, 1999, a series of RCD meetings took place in Goma, resulting in the formal split of the RCD into two factions, initially known as RCD-Goma (RCD-G) and RCD-Kisangani (RCD-K). After the pro-Rwanda wing of the RCD met to first 'dissolve' the leadership and then reconstitute it with Emile Ilunga as new president and Ondekane and Nyarugabo as vice presidents, the pro-Wamba – and, effectively, pro-Uganda – wing held a rival meeting, reaffirming Wamba's presidency.[317]

Wamba, who had already moved his office to Kisangani in early April 1999 and was only in Goma to take part in negotiations,[318] blamed "elements in the Rwandan army for backing the coup against him."[319] Afraid of a rumored plot to assassinate him, he asked Kampala for help, which responded by sending a plane to Goma. The Ugandans, who had forces on the ground, also called the Rwandans, warning them that "if something happens to the plane, we have a problem."[320] Under Uganda's military protection, Wamba was then brought to the airport, from where he headed to Kisangani via Kampala, while members of

[316] See Bemba 2001, 7.
[317] Interviews with Wamba (#5) and Willy Mishiki (#26); IRIN 1999g; IRIN 1999h.
[318] See *The EastAfrican* 1999; *The New Vision* 1999a.
[319] *The New Vision* 1999d.
[320] Interviews with Wamba (#5) and Mishiki (#26).

his faction – together with UPDF troops and their heavy military equipment – left Goma by road, crossing into Uganda and eventually joining Wamba in Kisangani.[321]

Despite official declarations to the contrary,[322] these events in May 1999 consummated Rwanda's and Uganda's divide over the Second Congo War. In the following months, the tensions between the two RCD factions and their foreign patrons further escalated: in August, following several minor skirmishes in Kisangani between late May and early June, Rwandan-*cum*-RCD-G troops fought Ugandan-*cum*-RCD-K troops in a fierce battle for the control of the city.[323]

This section focuses on the RCD-K's agency slack vis-à-vis their Rwandan patrons, most evident in the faction's refusal of the Rwandan-backed dismissal of Wamba. The two mechanisms jointly explaining this uncooperative behavior are, first, the increase in agent leverage due to Rwandan-Ugandan disagreements (see also the previous section) and, second, the lessons Wamba and his supporters learned from cooperating with Rwanda between August 1998 and May 1999. In order to buttress this argument, the remainder of the section analyzes the alliance dynamics in that period within the RCD and between the RCD and its Rwandan and Ugandan backers.

Alliance Dynamics

It would be a mistake to conceive of the RCD as a unitary actor. Due to its extremely heterogeneous composition, the group was riven by infighting soon after its creation. As Stearns explains, most of the RCD leaders "had learned from the Mobutu and Kabila

[321] Interviews with Wamba (#5), Sesanga (#12), Mbusa (#15), and Mishiki (#26); *The New Vision* 1999d; *The New Vision* 1999e.
[322] See, e.g., IRIN 1999i.
[323] On the skirmishes, see *The New Vision* 1999b; *The New Vision* 1999c; IRIN 1999j; on the fighting in August, see *The New Vision* 1999f; *The New Vision* 1999g; and the six-page special in *The Monitor* 1999d.

school of governance: They thought power was developed through intrigue. Each leader developed his personal contact in Kigali."[324]

Looking back, senior Rwandan officials complained about the RCD's factionalism and claimed that they repeatedly asked the Congolese to get their act together.[325] There was, however, a contradiction in Rwanda's efforts, which US Ambassador Gribbin captures well: Kigali "wanted its proxy, the RCD, to consolidate its political position as a legitimate Congolese entity, but did not want it to stray far from Rwandan oversight."[326] Wamba thus soon learned that – despite being president – he had "no material autonomy," as the politicians were dominated by the military officers, who in turn were controlled by the Rwandans.[327]

The rebel professor also did much to arouse his colleagues' ire. For instance, staying true to his abstract ideals rather than adapting to the realities on the ground, he called for a financial audit and asked the rebel leaders to declare their income and belongings. These tensions reached a first high when Wamba gave a New Year's Eve radio address, in which he criticized not only the Mobutists within the RCD, but also its military leaders, as well as the degree of external interference.[328] An excerpt reveals Wamba's imprudence:

> There is zero oversight of the leaders of the rebellion. This is why even the most notorious incompetence does not elicit the slightest reprimand. The professional relationships have been transformed into a nepotistic politicking: Scratch my back and I will scratch yours.[329]

According to Wamba, in a first attempt to depose him, Bizima Karaha reacted to this speech – which the anti-Wamba wing had cut off – by calling Museveni and arranging a meeting in Kampala, which took place on January 2, 1999. This already suggests that the Wamba opponents may have seen Museveni as the main hurdle to removing their president. Museveni did not take a clear stand, however, and told the RCD leaders to go to Ki-

[324] Stearns 2011, 209.
[325] Interviews with Rutaremara (#35) and a senior Rwandan official (#40).
[326] Gribbin 2005, 283.
[327] Interview (#5) with Wamba. See also the statement by Endundo quoted above.
[328] Interview (#5) with Wamba.
[329] Quoted in Stearns 2011, 210 (from a written copy of the speech).

gali, where they had a long discussion with President Bizimungu and Vice President Kagame.[330] Like Museveni, the Rwandan leaders voiced their discontent with the constant infighting but did not support the idea of removing Wamba.[331]

Instead, the RCD was restructured in late January, formally giving more power to a ten-person political council. In an attempt to better integrate the military into the political structure, RCD army chief of staff Ondekane – a former FAZ officer, who hails from Equateur and had already fought on behalf of the AFDL in the first war – became second vice president alongside Nyarugabo. While Zahidi was demoted to vice president of the Assembly (whose president remained Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi, a Nande from North Kivu's *Grand Nord*), Bizima Karaha was promoted to deputy coordinator of the executive, which continued to be headed by Mobutu's former prime minister Lunda Bululu, a former law professor from Katanga.[332]

In short, although Wamba retained the presidency, military officers, Mobutists, and Congolese Tutsi also all stayed in – or even gained – key positions. Analysts noted that, similar to the set-up of the Rwandan government, both the political council and the executive committee had supposedly representative figures at their helms whilst their deputies were Congolese Tutsi.[333] Subsequently, Willy Mishiki, who had been involved in attempts to reform the RCD, publicly criticized the overrepresentation of Tutsi,[334] and Zahidi even quit the movement, denouncing its leaders as "petty puppets" of outside forces.[335]

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[330] Interview (#5) with Wamba; the meetings and their outcomes are confirmed in IRIN 1999a; IRIN 1999b.
[331] See Stearns 2011, 210-1. Given the intermittent sourcing in Stearns's book, it is difficult to establish whether his summary of the meeting also draws only on an interview with Wamba or whether he has additional sources. It is worth noting that, obviously, the kind of anecdotal account Stearns presents often comes with a certain degree of embellishment. For example, while Stearns (2011, 210) – apparently drawing on an interview with Wamba – suggests that Zahidi cut off the radio address, Prunier (2009, 221) – also drawing on an interview with Wamba – suggests it was Lunda Bululu, while Wamba told me that it was Nyarugabo. Apart from such minor details, however, Wamba's statements in my interview matched those he made elsewhere (including newspaper interviews from as far back as 1998) very closely.
[332] See IRIN 1999c; De Villers et al. 2001, 45-6, 51-2, 66-7.
[333] See De Villers et al. 2001, 67.
[334] See IRIN 1999d.
[335] Quoted in IRIN 1999e.

In the following months, Wamba moved closer to Uganda and its main ally, Bemba's MLC, eventually shifting his office in early April from Goma to Kisangani, where the UPDF's Operation Safe Haven headquarters was located. Speaking to a Kenyan newspaper, he hinted at his disagreements with the pro-Rwanda faction: "Some people think the only place to stay is Goma. […] They have even blocked others who want to move, saying nobody should move out of Goma."[336] What happened in Goma one month later (see above) was a direct result of these tensions. In fact, Wamba had already seen it coming when he relocated: "Those who are trying to replace me should do so officially. There is no coup d'état, but there is some malaise in Goma."[337]

It is critical to highlight that Wamba had sought a rapprochement with the MLC as soon as it had emerged on the political scene in November 1998. He met with Bemba in Kampala on November 16, telling the *Associated Press* afterwards that "[f]rom now on, there is no Bemba issue," whilst a Rwandan official anonymously criticized Bemba for not having joined the RCD.[338] After moving to Kisangani in April 1999, Wamba again met with Museveni and Bemba in Kampala and once more declared that he hoped for a "real rapprochement" with the MLC.[339]

From Kigali's perspective, Wamba's move to Kisangani and his attempts to link up with Bemba need to be understood as cases of agency slack. Once Wamba became too independent, the Rwandans thus helped orchestrate the coup in May, cleverly putting forward Ilunga – a Katangan – as figurehead while also dismissing Lunda Bululu.[340] That the wing of the RCD which deemed Rwanda's excessive interference increasingly "unacceptable"[341] was able to refute this maneuver and create the RCD-K in Kisangani can only be explained by the fact that Rwanda and Uganda had turned from a collective principal into

[336] Quoted in *The EastAfrican* 1999.
[337] Quoted in ibid.
[338] AP 1998.
[339] Quoted in IRIN 1999f.
[340] See De Villers et al. 2001, 68.
[341] Interviews with Sesanga (#12) and Mbusa (#15).

two separate ones with diverging agendas. As Ugandan investigative journalist Andrew Mwenda argued, the split of the RCD was a *result* – not a cause – of the Rwandan-Ugandan differences: "If there had been a unity of purpose among Rwanda and Uganda, the split wouldn't have been successful. One faction would have received support from both, the other would have soon faltered."[342]

In sum, the creation of the RCD-K was due to the combination of, first, the pro-Wamba wing's learning that their Rwandan patron was too controlling for them to build up the domestic legitimacy that they felt they needed to reach Kinshasa, and, second, the changing strategic environment that led to an increase in agent leverage.

Conclusion

The split of the RCD and the subsequent fighting in Kisangani marked a watershed in the Second Congo War: the military stalemate was now even less likely to be overcome by the anti-Kabila forces. Consequently, local cleavages in northeastern and eastern Congo became increasingly important. Before analyzing these developments in greater detail in the next chapter, however, a summary of the arguments made in this one is in order.

Table 4.2 shows that although this chapter has analyzed five distinct turning points in the history of the two Congo Wars, the number of transnational alliances that were covered amounts to eight. The first three were directed against Mobutu, the next two against Kabila due to his gamble of switching alliances in the summer of 1998. Finally, the last three resulted from the dynamics of the two initial anti-Kabila alliances between Rwanda, Uganda, and the RCD. As the summary explanations given in the table indicate, these eight cases illustrate the explanatory power of the three-step theory of transnational alliances advanced in the previous chapter.

[342] Interview (#45) with Mwenda.

First, with regard to alliance formation, the First Congo War was clearly caused by transnational threats. The decisions of both Rwanda and Angola, which each provided critical material support to the AFDL, can be solely explained by the threat mechanism. Uganda's decision, too, was at least primarily due to this factor, while the opportunity mechanism and two nonsecurity motives played secondary roles. In the case of the Second Congo War, Rwanda's alliance with the RCD was also primarily caused by transnational threats, with resource opportunities as well as the more 'emotional' issues of standing and revenge as secondary factors. Uganda's decision to back the RCD was heavily overdetermined, but threats were arguably at least as important as resource opportunities; the friendship with Rwanda and Museveni's regional ambitions were complementary factors whose importance appears less critical but is difficult to assess definitively. In sum, to adopt Benjamin Miller's terms to the present context, both conflicts started first and foremost as "wars of insecurity," not as "wars of profit" or "wars of expansion."[343]

Second, with regard to agent selection, all the alliances have shown the importance of geopolitics and trust. However, given the extent to which the AFDL and RCD were both created and, at least initially, controlled by the Rwandan government, the narrow notion of geopolitics from Chapter 3 had to be broadened to include considerations concerning legitimacy and representativeness.

Third, with regard to alliance dynamics, the five cases from the second war all resulted more or less from the agency slack by a preceding client. The last three are also inextricably linked to the inter-state tensions between Rwanda and Uganda that turned the two allies from a collective principal into two individual and rival ones. Overall, then, these cases demonstrate the feedback effects highlighted by my theory, underlining how studying the process of alliance politics – their making and unmaking – can lead to important insights.

[343] Miller 2007, 126, 124.

Table 4.2: Summary of Case Studies in Chapter 4

Alliance	Explanation (including all steps analyzed)
October 1996	
(1) Rwanda—AFDL	Formation due to transnational threats (Zaire—ex-FAR/Interahamwe); Congolese Tutsi as geopolitically most relevant and most trusted allies, Kabila as presentable figurehead; As president, Kabila gained agent leverage and, due to a double security dilemma, betrayed Rwandan principals by allying with ex-FAR/Interahamwe.
(2) Uganda—AFDL	Formation primarily due to transnational threats (Sudan and Zaire's support to ADF and WNBF), secondary factors: resource opportunities, friendship with Rwanda, and Museveni's regional ambitions; Kisase as "Uganda's man" in AFDL; As president, Kabila allied with Sudan and ADF due to the Rwandan-Ugandan friendship and the reasons stated above.
February 1997	
(3) Angola—AFDL	Formation due to transnational threats (Zaire—UNITA); Sending of trusted Katangan Tigers to ensure the AFDL's overthrow of Mobutu.
July–August 1998	
(4) Rwanda—RCD	Formation primarily due to transnational threats (DRC—ALIR), secondary factors: resource opportunities, standing, and revenge; Congolese Tutsi again most important partners, Wamba and Zahidi as presentable figureheads; Wamba's agency slack as a result of (1) learning about Rwanda's excessive control and (2) increased leverage due to Rwandan-Ugandan disagreements.
(5) Uganda—RCD	Formation at least equally due to transnational threats (DRC—Sudan—ADF) and resource opportunities, complementary roles: Rwandan-Ugandan alliance and Museveni's regional ambitions; Not directly involved in selection; Loss of trust in RCD due to Rwandan dominance.
September 1998	
(6) Uganda—MLC	Need for additional agent due to loss of trust in RCD; Selection of Bemba because he could credibly promise to mobilize northern Congolese and was already known by key Ugandan decision makers.
May 1999	
(7) Rwanda—RCD-G	Attempt to marginalize Wamba faction due to agency slack.
(8) Uganda—RCD-K	Refusal to accept continued Rwandan control of RCD.

Chapter 5: Local-Cleavage Transnational Alliances in the Second Congo War

Introduction: Wars Within the War

> For what was happening in Kisangani was only a portent of things to come: the disintegration of a "rational" war into myriad "privatized," socially and economically motivated subconflicts.
>
> —Gérard Prunier[1]

> "The national level and the local level are two different things in Congo," said Fabienne Hara, co-director of the Africa program at the International Crisis Group, a think tank based in Brussels. "Signing a national peace deal is not enough for peace to happen on the ground. That's more difficult."
>
> —*New York Times*, April 9, 2003[2]

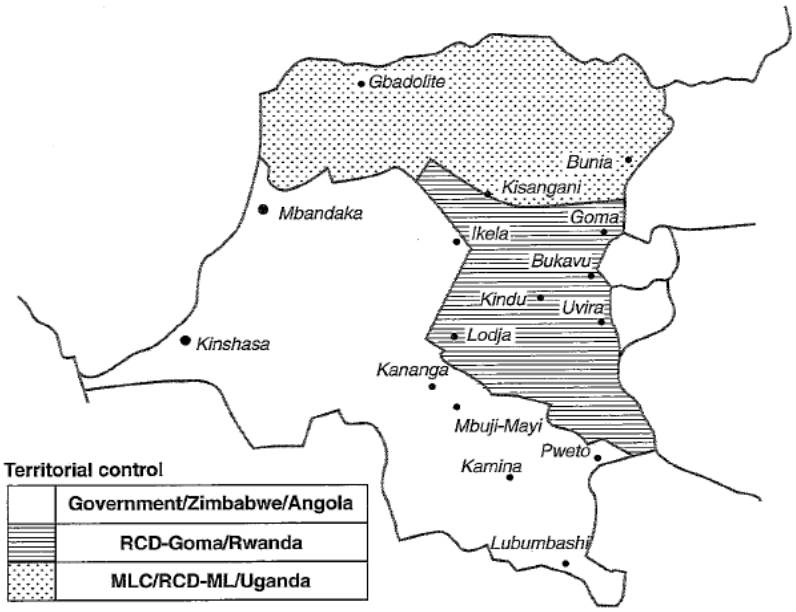
The fighting in Kisangani between May and August 1999, pitting Rwanda and the RCD-G against Uganda and the RCD-K, took place in the context of what Prunier calls the "Lusaka 'peace' charade."[3] While the DRC, Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, as well as Rwanda and Uganda all signed a ceasefire agreement in Lusaka, Zambia, on July 10, 1999, the two RCD factions disagreed over whether Ilunga or Wamba should sign on behalf of the group, and MLC president Bemba refused to sign unless Wamba was allowed to do so.[4]

After the inconclusive three-day battle for Kisangani from August 14 to 17, international pressure finally led to a compromise, with fifty founding members – including individuals from both wings – signing for the RCD. As a show of good will, Bemba had already signed on August 1.[5] However, the Lusaka Agreement indeed represented a charade in the sense that fighting continued unabated on all fronts until Laurent Kabila's assassination on January 16, 2001.

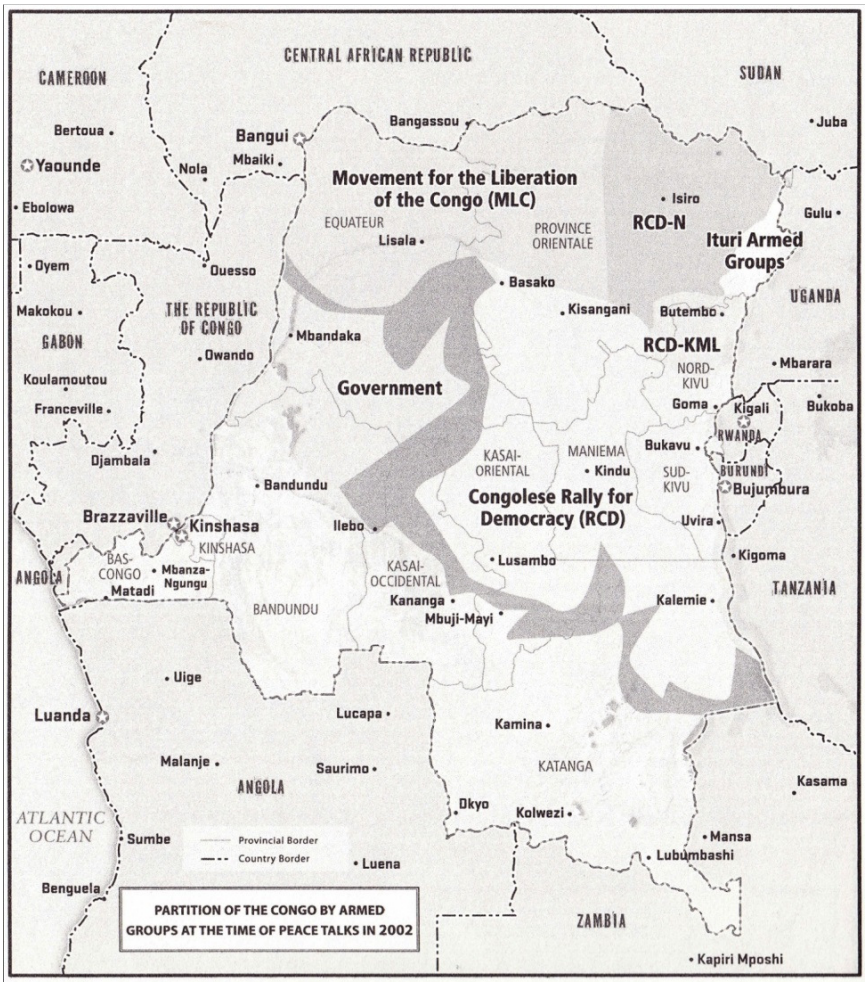
Having taken Gbadolite in early July 1999 with Ugandan support, the MLC moved its headquarters there and then set its sights on Mbandaka, a strategically important town that

[1] Prunier 2009, 225.
[2] *New York Times* 2003.
[3] Prunier 2009, 223.
[4] See IRIN 1999k.
[5] See IRIN 1999l; IRIN 1999m.

Map 5.1: Areas of Control in the DRC, early 2000 (reprinted from Reyntjens 2009, 200)



Map 5.2: Areas of Control in the DRC, late 2002 (reprinted from Stearns 2011, xvi)



would have opened the way towards Kinshasa. Kabila responded by launching two major offensives along the Ubangi River in late 1999 and mid-2000, which both failed. Nonetheless, the MLC never managed to capture Mbandaka, not least due to Zimbabwe's involvement and the specter of Angolan airpower.[6] A comparison of Maps 5.1 and 5.2 reveals that, overall, the Equateur front largely remained the same from 2000 to 2002.

The maps show the same for the Kasai front, where – despite heavy fighting throughout 2000 – the Rwandan army and the RCD-G failed to wrestle the strategically critical towns of Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi from the Congolese army and its allies. On the Katanga front, the RPA and RCD-G never moved beyond Pweto, which they took on December 3, 2000, following one of the war's major battles.[7] In the wake of Laurent Kabila's murder in January 2001, Rwanda decided against a further push towards Lubumbashi, partly due to diplomatic pressure, especially from the incoming George W. Bush administration, which wanted to give the new Congolese President Joseph Kabila a chance to reignite the peace process.[8]

Rather than on the war fronts, this chapter focuses on what Prunier calls "subconflicts" in the areas under Rwandan and Ugandan occupation. While the Lusaka Agreement did not mark the end of fighting, it was considered a diplomatic success for the two neighbors and their Congolese allies. On the one hand, it made reference to Rwanda's and Uganda's security concerns, thus in a sense legitimizing their military presence.[9] On the other hand, the accord called for "inter-Congolese political negotiations with a view to installing a new political dispensation which will bring about national reconciliation and the early holding of free and fair democratic elections."[10] For the rebel groups, which were given "equal

[6] In 2000, Zimbabwe had around 11,000 troops in the DRC, Angola around 2,000 (see ICG 2000b, 4). On the fighting along the Equateur front, see ibid., 4-5; Prunier 2009, 231-4.
[7] On the Kasai and Katanga fronts, see ICG 2000b, 6-8; Prunier 2009, 234-5. On Pweto in particular, see Stearns 2011, 271-6.
[8] See ICG 2001a, 9-10; Prunier 2009, 235. On Joseph Kabila, Laurent's son, see Stearns 2011, 307-16.
[9] See Reyntjens 2009, 249.
[10] UNSC 1999, Annex C.

status" alongside the Congolese government, this "National Dialogue" effectively held the promise of sharing state power at least for a transitional period prior to elections.[11]

In this new context, local political control within the occupied areas became of critical importance to the rebels, as it not only provided them with material resources but also enhanced their position in what soon came to be known as the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD).[12] It follows that although the national and local levels in the DRC were *different*, as Fabienne Hara rightly pointed out (see the epigraph above), they were not completely *separate* from each other. This, in fact, is the very point of Kalyvas's work on the disjunction between center and periphery in armed conflicts: much of the action is "*simultaneously* decentralized *and* linked to the wider conflict."[13]

In this chapter, I provide a selective analysis of local-cleavage subconflicts in northeastern and eastern Congo, focusing on six turning points that relate to transnational alliances whose immediate end became local rather than national control over territory. The first four relate to Uganda and its allies in Ituri District and North Kivu's *Grand Nord*: (1) Mbusa's partly successful coup in Bunia against RCD-K/ML president Wamba in November 2000; (2) the failure in November 2001 of Uganda's attempt to unite its Congolese allies in one umbrella organization; (3) the UPC's takeover of Bunia in August 2002 with UPDF *and* secret Rwandan support; and (4) Uganda's counterbalancing against Rwanda and the UPC, resulting in the UPDF's capture of Bunia together with FNI and PUSIC forces in March 2003.

The last two turning points address Rwanda and its allies in North Kivu's *Petit Nord*: (5) Kigali's shifting of support from the RCD-G to North Kivu's Governor Eugène Serufuli, reaching a new level in October 2002; and (6) Kigali's subsequent decision to turn away

[11] For this interpretation, see Reyntjens 2009, 250; De Villers 2009, 113. The quotations are from UNSC 1999, Annex A, Chapter 5.
[12] On the broader logic of how the notion of inclusion in such power-sharing agreements can reproduce insurgent violence, see Tull and Mehler 2005, esp. 393.
[13] Kalyvas 2006, 383 (emphasis in the original).

from Serufuli and instead focus its support on renegade general Laurent Nkunda around August 2005.

November 2000: UPDF's Role in the RCD-K/ML Leadership Struggle

On Friday, November 3, 2000, rebels loyal to Mbusa Nyamwisi took over Radio Candip in Bunia, the capital of Ituri District in Congo's northeastern Orientale Province, and announced that he had just replaced Wamba as RCD-K/ML president.[14] Over the weekend, fighting then ensued between the two camps, both initially supported by different UPDF officers.[15] In an interview with the Ugandan newspaper *The Monitor*, Wamba presented his view of these events:

> Unlike a few UPDF officers who divert from President Museveni's directives, Col. [Charles] Angina has been following the orders properly. A few hours before Mbusa's army attacked us, two junior UPDF officers started driving UPDF tanks out of our camp. Col. Angina tried to prevent them but they defied his orders, claiming they had direct orders from Brig. James Kazini from Kampala to drive the tanks away. […] No sooner had the tanks been brought back than Col. Edson Muzoora came the same night to replace Col. Angina as Bunia sector commander. Angina was ordered to leave for Kampala, and a few minutes later, Mbusa's army attacked us. […] From all those actions, we believe some UPDF individual officers were behind this Mbusa coup which Museveni is against.[16]

When Wamba gave this interview on November 9, he was effectively under house arrest in Bunia – around three hundred pro-Mbusa fighters surrounded his residence, which was protected by UPDF troops.[17] Five days later, Mbusa confidently explained the situation on the ground to that same newspaper:

> As we talk now, Prof. Wamba is celebrating his ninth day as prisoner. […] We're just being lenient to Wamba and we still respect the request from our ally UPDF who requested that we should give him some more time. […] By referring to himself as president, Wamba is only playing drama. He is a prisoner and I am president. If he is not, just tell him to move anywhere in Bunia or just five metres outside his residence. He is supposed to be shot if he misbehaves.[18]

[14] See AFP 2000a. The new suffix (K/ML) is explained further below.
[15] See IRIN 2000b.
[16] Quoted in *The Monitor* 2000d.
[17] See ibid.
[18] Quoted in *The Monitor* 2000f.

After another exchange of fire between the pro-Mbusa and pro-Wamba rebel factions on November 15, President Museveni ordered the two rivals to Kampala,[19] where negotiations eventually resulted in the formation of the FLC (see next section).

As this and the next section will show, several events both before and after Mbusa's coup attempt in November 2000 demonstrate that individual UPDF officers often sided with specific rebel factions, thus increasing the leverage of renegade agents such as Mbusa. While many Congolese erroneously believe that all these events were centrally orchestrated by an all-powerful government in Kampala,[20] I will make the case that they in fact represent cases of *double* agency slack: renegade rebels cooperated with renegade UPDF officers.[21] As explained in the theory chapters, a weak state ruler is in a clientelist relationship with his military; certain tasks are delegated to specific officers, who – especially if they are stationed in a foreign country – do not always strictly follow the orders they were given. This slack, in turn, might well be accepted by the ruler to a certain extent, as he needs to keep his military happy; looking the other way whilst officers enrich themselves in a neighboring country is arguably an easy way to do so.[22] However, this slack means that, from the rebel agent's perspective, the government and its military officers effectively turn from a collective principal into multiple individual ones, thus increasing agent leverage.

The remainder of this section analyzes the alliance dynamics between the RCD-K/ML and Uganda (that is, both the Ugandan government and individual UPDF officers) from the group's move to Kisangani in May 1999 up to the coup attempt in Bunia in November

[19] See IRIN 2000c.
[20] Several interviewees in Ituri (August and December 2012) were adamant that there was some kind of master plan behind the various acts of corruption by UPDF officers. On the Congolese academic front, see, e.g., Mbavu Muhindo 2005, 83. Mbavu, a Congolese historian born in Bukavu and at the time teaching in Goma, goes as far as suggesting that Uganda planned to annex Ituri. As Stearns (2011, 283) explains, the numerous popular conspiracy theories in the DRC – often involving Western powers allegedly pulling the strings behind Rwanda and Uganda – can partly be understood as a way of coping with a history of humiliation.
[21] See also Veit 2010, 120-2, who argues that "the Ugandan army and its superiors in the government did not seem to form a centralized hierarchy" (ibid., 122). This perspective is broadly shared by the prominent Congolese scholar Alphonse Maindo (see Maindo Monga Ngonga 2003, 190).
[22] For a similar argument with regard to the UPDF in Ituri, see Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2004, 402-3.

2000. In the process, I also provide some background to Ituri and North Kivu's *Grand Nord*, which is essential to understanding the developments analyzed in this and the next three sections.

Alliance Dynamics: The RCD-K/ML and Uganda from May 1999 to November 2000

Uganda's First Failed Attempt to Bring the MLC and the RCD-K Together, June to September 1999

After the skirmishes between the RCD-G and the RCD-K in Kisangani from late May to early June 1999, the Rwandan and Ugandan governments initiated a meeting in Kabale, southwestern Uganda, between the two factions and Bemba's MLC, hoping to form a "united front" ahead of the imminent ceasefire talks in Lusaka.[23] Due to the subsequent fighting in Kisangani (see the previous chapter), there was no follow-up to this effort until December 1999, and even then it merely resulted in a third and final meeting in January 2000 without any substantial consequences.[24]

Meanwhile, in the context of another set of negotiations regarding the Lusaka Agreement, the MLC and the RCD-K – the two Ugandan-backed rebel groups – concluded a separate agreement in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on July 30, 1999. The deal, signed in the presence of James Kazini (UPDF Operation Safe Haven commander), Noble Mayombo (Museveni's *aide-de-camp*), and Kahinda Otafiire (senior advisor to Museveni on the DRC), stipulated that all financial revenues would be shared, with seventy percent going to Bemba's MLC and thirty percent to Wamba's RCD-K.[25]

Only one week later, however, Wamba sent a letter to the administrators of the territories under RCD-K control, instructing them not to apply the accord.[26] The disagreement focused on North Kivu's *Grand Nord*, where MLC officials tried to take over the financial

[23] AP 1999; interview (#14) with Ruberwa.
[24] See De Villers et al. 2001, 108-9.
[25] See ibid., 107; Bemba 2001, 152; HRW 2001, 27.
[26] The letter is in large parts reproduced in De Villers et al. 2001, 107.

administration, including the lucrative customs post of Kasindi between the DRC and Uganda.[27] After one month of tensions, Mbusa managed to convince the Ugandans that he – on behalf of the RCD-K – and not the MLC should be in charge of the administration in the *Grand Nord*, thus effectively nullifying the agreement made in Tanzania.[28]

What had happened? According to Bemba himself, whose account of the basic facts appears credible in light of other information as well as subsequent events, Kazini had first encouraged him to administer the revenues of both rebel groups in early July, prior to the Dar es Salaam agreement. The UPDF operational commander highlighted how the income generated in eastern Congo would help the MLC consolidate its success, which in turn would enable the UPDF to begin withdrawing its forces from Equateur. Bemba, however, suggests that Kazini's primary motive was a different one: "In reality, the general fears losing control over the Ugandan commanders based in Beni and Butembo. Local traders buy their loyalty, which risks breaking the chain of command within the UPDF."[29]

In mid-July, Bemba sent two of his trusted aides to Beni in order to investigate the financial situation in the *Grand Nord*. These investigations confirmed Kazini's suspicions: after initially being blocked by RCD-K officials, who had received instructions from Mbusa not to share any information with Bemba's men, the MLC delegation learned about an "illegal" system of pre-financing that had allegedly collected about 1.5 million US dollars between May 22 and July 4, 1999, which Mbusa, "acting like a warlord,"[30] had then shared among a clique of local allies and Ugandan officers stationed in the area.[31]

Before moving on to the subsequent tensions between the MLC and the RCD-K in August, it is important to provide some context on Mbusa and his role in the region. The

[27] For decades, Kasindi "rated second in customs revenue only to Matadi, Congo's main port on the Atlantic Ocean" (HRW 2001, 51).
[28] See De Villers et al. 2001, 108; Bemba 2001, 152-3.
[29] Bemba 2001, 150 (my translation).
[30] Ibid., 151.
[31] This paragraph is based on ibid., 151. The delegation's visit to Beni is also confirmed in Mbavu Muhindo 2005, 157. While the amount of money cannot be verified, the existence of such a pre-financing system, organized between the RCD-K and local businessmen from 1999 onwards, is amply documented in Raeymaekers 2007, 122-9.

Nande, Mbusa's ethnic group, are the most powerful community in the territories of Beni and Lubero, which together constitute North Kivu's *Grand Nord*. A network of Nande transborder traders has long dominated the region's economy, connecting it with global markets.[32] After completing a degree in sociology at the University of Kisangani, Mbusa himself became involved in trading, whilst also being introduced to the world of politics by his older brother, Enoch Nyamwisi Muvingi, who had been a minister under Mobutu prior to being assassinated in 1993. Significantly, Muvingi had not only backed local Mai-Mai groups and helped Mobutu provide support to NALU, he had also collaborated with Museveni's government in trafficking arms to Mobutu's opponents.[33]

As this and the following sections show, Mbusa would adopt his brother's dangerous strategy of forming contradictory alliances. While Mbusa's local connectedness explains his predominance in the *Grand Nord* during the war, one should not make the mistake of conceiving of the Nande as a homogenous entity. In fact, there has historically been an intra-Nande conflict between different clans from Beni and Butembo, which was related to the Catholic Church in Butembo. The Catholic clergy opposed Mbusa, a Protestant, and later collaborated with Bemba's MLC and some Mai-Mai groups (see also below).[34]

Following the Dar es Salaam agreement in July 1999, Bemba again sent a delegation to Beni, which quickly began to take over the administration in collaboration with the new UPDF sector commander, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Lyangombe. In response, Mbusa's local allies launched a propaganda campaign against the MLC and Lyangombe, which eventually forced the Ugandans to side with Mbusa, fearing that they might otherwise face a Nande revolt.[35] Bemba's explanation for this apparent change of heart is telling: "In fact,

[32] See Raeymaekers 2004; Raeymaekers 2007; Raeymaekers 2010.
[33] See Mararo 2005, 200; De Villers 2009, 122; ICG 2012, 3 (note 15).
[34] See Mathe Maghaniryo Mulondi 2007, 127-31; Raeymaekers 2007, 109-10.
[35] See Bemba 2001, 152-3. In late August, local leaders wrote a memorandum to RCD-K president Wamba, demanding the expulsion of Lt. Col. Lyangombe (see *The Monitor* 1999c).

the rigorous management imposed by [MLC finance secretary] François Muamba annoys a group of Ugandan officers used to the amenities generously provided by Mbusa."[36]

Conveniently, in this context, Bemba fails to mention his own business connections with Kazini. The Porter Commission – set up by Museveni in 2001 to investigate the UN Panel's allegations regarding Uganda's exploitation of Congolese resources – refers to a letter, dated June 26, 1999, in which Kazini

> instructed UPDF Commanders in Isiro, Bunia, Beni, Bumba, Bondo and Buta to allow one company, La Societe Victoria, to do business in coffee, diamonds, [and] gold uninterrupted in areas under their control as it had been cleared of taxation by the President of MLC, Jean Pierre Bemba. He concluded by saying that: "Anything to do with payment to you in form of security funding, it will be done through OSH-Tac HQS" [Operation Safe Haven, Tactical Headquarters], i.e. his office.[37]

As the Commission points out, this letter "leaves little doubt that some of the UPDF Senior Officers expected money from Congolese for security purposes."[38] Moreover, the fact that Kazini instructed commanders in areas under RCD-K control, such as Bunia and Beni, to exempt a company from taxes because it had already paid the MLC shows that he tried to help the MLC usurp the RCD-K's authority even prior to the Dar es Salaam agreement.

In July, Kazini forwarded the instructions concerning the Victoria Group to the governor of Kisangani, whose allegiance was with the RCD-G, and concluded with a veiled threat: "Let me hope that I have been clearly understood."[39] The Porter Commission notes that this "letter was inflammatory, and calculated to upset the appointed administration, RCD Goma and its ally, Rwanda."[40] Given that the Victoria Group was allegedly linked to Salim Saleh (Museveni's brother) and his wife, it may now become clear why many analysts believe that the competing interests of Ugandan and Rwandan army officers in Kisangani's diamond trade were one of the major reasons for the fighting there in August.[41]

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[36] Bemba 2001, 153 (my translation).
[37] *Republic of Uganda* 2002a, para. 20.3. The date is provided in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 1000.
[38] *Republic of Uganda* 2002a, para. 20.3.
[39] Quoted in ibid., para. 21.3.4.
[40] Ibid., para. 21.3.4.
[41] See Prunier 2009, 222-3; Vlassenroot and Perrot 2012, 46.

It was this fighting that forced the RCD-K to shift its headquarters to Bunia. When Wamba arrived there, he immediately faced the challenge of having to resolve an ongoing inter-communal conflict between Hema and Lendu, which was about to play into the hands of his internal rivals. Before focusing on the rivalry between Wamba, on the one side, and Mbusa and his ally John Tibasima, on the other, I first present a brief analysis of Ugandan involvement in the early Hema-Lendu clashes, which provides additional evidence for the fragmented and privatized nature of the UPDF's engagement in northeastern Congo.

Uganda's Role in the Start of the Ituri Conflict, April to August 1999

Between 1999 and 2003, Ituri District in the DRC's northeastern Orientale Province became the scene of some of the worst violence of the Second Congo War.[42] At least 55,000 people were killed and more than 500,000 displaced in a conflict that involved not only the RCD-K/ML, the UPDF, and local militias, but also the Congolese and Rwandan governments, eventually leading the UN Security Council to authorize a multinational intervention force in May 2003.[43]

This conflict, whose escalation will be traced in this and the next three sections, began in April 1999 with a land dispute at the Leyna concession, located between Linga and Kpandroma in the *collectivité* of Walendu Pitsi (Djugu territory). Lendu villagers accused Singa Kodjo, the Hema owner, of illegally expanding his concession into surrounding Lendu-owned land. The exact chain of events remains contested, but it appears that Kodjo appealed to local police for assistance, triggering a Lendu attack. Similar events occurred in localities nearby, one involving the murder of a Hema concession owner.[44] At the end of May, Kodjo and other influential Hema paid Captain Anthony Kyakabale, the UPDF sector

[42] This and the next subsection draw on my two Usalama Project reports (Tamm 2013a; Tamm 2013b).
[43] On these estimates, see HRW 2003, 1.
[44] See Fahey 2011, chap. 5.

commander based in Bunia, to expel Lendu occupying their concessions and to arrest several prominent Lendu leaders.[45]

In order to understand the origins of these inter-ethnic tensions, which escalated into large-scale violence largely due to their militarization by the UPDF, it is necessary to provide a brief historical outline of relations between Ituri's communities.[46] There are more than a dozen ethnic groups in Ituri. In late 2002, around 3.5 million people lived in the district, with Hema and Lendu probably accounting for 40 percent of the population. Some consider the Alur to be the single biggest group, others the Lendu.[47] In any case, Hema and Lendu were the main protagonists in the tragedy that ensued.

Scholars generally agree that the Lendu arrived in Ituri earlier than the Hema – the Lendu around the sixteenth century, the Hema in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.[48] Both groups settled primarily in Djugu and Irumu territories, which were also the areas most seriously affected by the post-1998 violence. Northern Hema (from Djugu) are also called Gegere, whereas southern Lendu (from Irumu) are also known as Ngiti. While the extent of inequality prior to colonization is contested, it is clear that Belgian administrators helped Hema to achieve socio-economic and political dominance over Lendu.

After Congolese independence in 1960, violence regularly flared up in Irumu territory, largely due to disputes over administrative borders. By contrast, Djugu territory, where large parts of both Hema and Lendu live in enclaves, remained relatively peaceful up to the 1990s. The roots of conflict there lie in land disputes related to the General Property Law of 1973, which abolished, at least officially, customary tenure and declared all land to be state property. Some Hema elites took advantage of this law and their privileged access to the state bureaucracy, acquiring land that many Lendu considered to belong to their ancestors. The law stipulated that land titles would not enter into force until two years after they

[45] See UNSC 2004, para. 19; interview #103.
[46] For a more detailed historical overview up to 1999, see Fahey 2013.
[47] See IRIN 2002f.
[48] This and the next paragraph synthesize Pottier 2008, 429-36; Pottier 2010, 33-48; Fahey 2011, chap. 2.

were bought, so buyers often kept their certificates secret until it was too late to challenge them. RCD-K/ML president Wamba regarded this "injustice" as "the real source of the conflict" in Ituri.[49] Likewise, the anthropologist Johan Pottier suggests that class, not ethnicity as such, triggered the crisis.[50]

Returning to the situation around May 1999, Hema soon began to form *autodéfense* (self-defense) groups due to the growing insecurity. While the Lendu community reciprocated with its own militias, the Hema groups were generally better organized. According to one former member, each group may have had around three or four assault rifles, typically bought from the UPDF, which sold weapons left behind by Mobutu's and Kabila's armies. The UPDF also deployed some of its own soldiers – usually around a dozen – to each farm, often in the pay of landowners.[51]

The "self-defense" label was somewhat misleading, as both Hema and Lendu mounted offensive operations. While the Hema were fewer in number, they enjoyed superiority in weaponry, thanks both to their wealth and to the support from the UPDF.[52] Just as heavy fighting broke out in June 1999, UPDF operational commander Kazini appointed the Hema politician Adèle Lotsove as governor of Kibali-Ituri Province. This new province – which recreated an entity that had existed in colonial times – combined the districts of Ituri and Haut-Uele, both very rich in gold. Many Iturians interpreted Kazini's decision, which had not been authorized by Kampala,[53] as a clear signal that Uganda favored the Hema. Although Lotsove organized a pacification commission in August, she was soon criticized for exacerbating the conflict in Djugu territory.[54]

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[49] Interview (#5) with Wamba.
[50] See Pottier 2008, 433.
[51] Interviews #110, #111, and #112. See also HRW 2001, 37.
[52] Interviews #110, #111, and #112.
[53] The matter was brought up at a meeting of the UPDF High Command, which reprimanded Kazini for getting involved in Congolese administrative issues (see the testimony by Lt. Col. Mayombo, Maj. Gen. Odongo, and President Museveni in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 373, 436, 568).
[54] See HRW 2001, 34-5.

Similar to the situation in Beni analyzed in the previous subsection, the UPDF was in fact also divided in the case of the early Hema-Lendu clashes in Ituri. Although the majority of UPDF officers sided with Hema, there were occasional interventions to protect Lendu villages – most notably by Colonel Peter Kerim.[55] In at least one incident, UPDF units that supported opposing camps even exchanged fire.[56] This explains why some Hema leaders accused the Ugandan army of exploiting ethnic tensions by selling weapons to both sides in order to make money.[57]

Uganda's Involvement in the Leadership Conflict of Wamba vs. Mbusa and Tibasima, September 1999 to November 2000

In September 1999, RCD-K president Wamba, provisionally based in Kampala following his departure from Kisangani, announced the transfer of his group's headquarters to Bunia and the concomitant name change to RCD – *Mouvement de libération* (RCD-ML). However, the group subsequently used both the old and the new acronym.[58] Since Iturians have come to adopt the term RCD-K/ML, which still exists under this label as a national political party today, the remainder of the chapter follows this usage.

One month later, Wamba formed a new "government" in Bunia. Mbusa became the commissioner-general, equivalent to the idea of a prime minister, while Ateenyi "John" Tibasima Mbogemu was appointed Mbusa's deputy and also put in charge of the RCD-K/ML's budget, finance, and mining portfolios. Tibasima, a local Hema, had held similar positions for the RCD prior to its split.[59] Before the war, he had been chief executive of the state-owned mining company *Office des mines d'or de Kilo-Moto* (OKIMO, Office of the Gold Mines of Kilo-Moto). In 2004, industry experts still considered OKIMO's concession

[55] Ibid., 38-9; UNSC 2004, para. 23; interview (#124) with Herman Ndrugboma Kranjedu.
[56] See HRW 2001, 39; UNSC 2001a, 180.
[57] Interviews (#51, #66, and #98) with former UPC officials.
[58] See De Villers et al. 2001, 78; HRW 2001, 16; De Villers 2009, 122.
[59] See De Villers et al. 2001, 82.

– spanning the Ituri and Haut-Uele districts – "one of the most exciting, and potentially the largest, unexplored gold reserve in Africa."[60]

One of Wamba's first actions was to set up a Commission for Security and Peace in Djugu Territory. Two months later, convinced that Governor Lotsove had exacerbated the conflict, Wamba replaced her with Ernest Uringi Padolo, an Alur who was considered more neutral. Also in December, President Museveni invited representatives from Ituri to Kampala for discussions, subsequently replacing sector commander Kyakabale with Lieutenant Colonel Arocha.[61] At around the same time, Colonel Kerim sent a letter to Museveni, criticizing Lotsove as well as some unnamed UPDF officers and prophetically concluding that "we may come back home with [an] embarrassing situation like [the] Americans in Somalia or Vietnam."[62]

The violence continued, however, and Wamba – who, as a westerner from Bas-Congo Province, was considered an outsider by Iturians – soon found himself embroiled in a leadership conflict with Mbusa and Tibasima. From late 1999 onwards, Wamba's rivals began to stake out their areas of influence. Tibasima began recruiting youth for military training at the Rwampara camp near Bunia, while Mbusa did the same at the Nyaleke camp close to Beni. Both recruited largely along ethnic lines, although Mbusa's soldiers primarily included both Nande and Lendu. In both camps, recruits were trained by UPDF officers.[63] Like Bemba and Lotsove before them, Mbusa and Tibasima were accused of securing Ugandan support by forging business relationships with Kazini and Saleh.[64]

Mbusa also continued to buy off Ugandan officers stationed in the *Grand Nord*. When Major Reuben Ikondere – who had initially been in charge of training Wamba's rebel army

[60] HRW 2005, 14.
[61] See HRW 2001, 35-40.
[62] Reprinted in Danssaert and Johnson Thomas 2006, Annex 1. The authenticity of this letter is confirmed by Col. Kerim's testimony in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 784-5.
[63] See HRW 2001, 16.
[64] See UNSC 2001a, 88-9. While the Porter Commission criticized both Kazini and Saleh for wrongdoings, it did not find conclusive evidence supporting the business links with Mbusa and Tibasima (see *Republic of Uganda* 2002a, section 18.5.2).

in Kisangani – was killed in an attack by local Mai-Mai in Beni on November 14, 1999, he had already been relieved of his duty. General Odongo, the overall army commander at the time, explained that Ikondere had been given the responsibility "to provide protection, but in so doing he overstepped his mandate." When the UPDF then sent another officer to take over, Ikondere effectively "became a personal security officer of [Mbusa] Nyamwisi."[65]

Although the two training camps in Rwampara and Nyaleke were officially used for the RCD-K/ML army, the *Armée populaire congolaise* (APC, Popular Congolese Army), Wamba was unhappy with Mbusa's and Tibasima's efforts. Neither of them had a formal mandate to recruit soldiers, as Wamba held not only the presidency but also the defense portfolio.[66] When he tried to curtail his rivals' influence in April 2000, they launched their first coup attempt, allegedly supported by individual UPDF officers.[67] President Museveni quickly intervened, bringing the three together in Kampala and asking them to reconcile their differences.[68]

The truce, however, did not last. In July, Hema APC commanders launched a mutiny in protest against what they perceived as Wamba's pro-Lendu stance, calling themselves the *Chui* (Leopard) Mobile Force (CMF), to which I will return in more detail in the section on the UPC. Wamba swiftly blamed this revolt on Tibasima. Once again, Museveni was forced to step in: some of his most trusted advisors went to Bunia and negotiated a deal that led to the mutineers' surrender in return for military training in Uganda.[69]

Meanwhile, the political crisis at the heart of the RCD-K/ML continued. During the CMF mutiny, Wamba tried to suspend Mbusa and Tibasima, accusing them of treason.[70] In response, the two troublemakers hinted at the possibility of rejoining the Rwandan-backed RCD-G if their wishes were not accommodated by Uganda, thus cleverly exploiting the

[65] Interview (#42) with General Odongo. On the attack, see *The New Vision* 1999h.
[66] See HRW 2001, 16-7.
[67] See *The Monitor* 2000a.
[68] See *The Monitor* 2000b; *The New Vision* 2000a.
[69] See Tamm 2013a, 19-20.
[70] See HRW 2001, 18-9.

additional leverage that the enmity between Kampala and Kigali provided.[71] Another round of negotiations between the three rebel leaders followed, this time facilitated not only by Uganda but also by Mozambique and Tanzania, resulting in an agreement, brokered in Kampala on October 12, 2000, that made Mbusa and Tibasima first and second vice presidents of the RCD-K/ML.[72]

Back in Bunia, however, Mbusa did not honor this deal. In early November, in the events described at the start of this section, he used remnants of his battalion trained at Nyaleke camp to attack Wamba's residence, while the UPDF was once again divided.[73] According to an International Crisis Group report published in December 2000, these incidents illustrated "the disarray of Ugandan policy" with regard to the RCD-K/ML: "UPDF units intervened on both sides of the conflict – reflecting different interests within Ugandan ranks and the lack of overall control by the Commander in Chief."[74]

In sum, then, Mbusa's and Tibasima's creation of rival power bases within the RCD-K/ML was made possible by the complicity of UPDF officers on the ground, whose actions often appeared to be at odds with Museveni's diplomatic efforts in Kampala, which, at least up to and including the October deal, aimed to save Wamba's presidency. In this sense, the fragmentation of the RCD-K/ML and of the UPDF were interdependent: renegade rebels collaborated with renegade officers.[75] As the Porter Commission points out, however, the UPDF High Command did react to some of the allegations leveled against Ugandan commanders in Bunia, recalling Captain Kyakabale (in December 1999), Lieu-

[71] See *Indian Ocean Newsletter* 2000.
[72] See HRW 2001, 21.
[73] See ibid., 21; Maindo Monga Ngonga 2003, 190.
[74] ICG 2000b, 36 (both quotations).
[75] In addition to General Odongo, another senior UPDF officer (interview #37) conceded that individual officers had sided with different rebel factions in northeastern Congo and thus exacerbated conflicts.

tenant Colonel Arocha (in April 2000), and Colonel Angina (in November 2000).[76] Put differently, it did rein in some of the officers' slack that had enabled the rebels' slack.

At the same time, the constant infighting between Wamba, Mbusa, and Tibasima frustrated the Ugandan leadership in Kampala. In General Odongo's words, the RCD-K/ML "stopped being a rebel movement heading to take state power but [instead] became a rebel movement for survival. And that was very disillusioning for us."[77] As a result, the Ugandans initiated the FLC in January 2001, finally ending Professor Wamba's hapless time at the helm of a rebellion.

November 2001: The Failure of the Ugandan-Imposed FLC

On November 19, 2001, exasperated by countless attempts to undermine his authority in Ituri and the *Grand Nord*, Jean-Pierre Bemba declared that the MLC "has decided to pull all its military forces from Ituri province."[78] This decision was the final nail in the coffin of the *Front de libération du Congo* (FLC, Front for the Liberation of Congo), Uganda's attempt, launched in January 2001, to unite all the Congolese rebel groups it supported – the MLC, the RCD-K/ML, and Roger Lumbala's RCD-*National* (RCD-N)[79] – in an "umbrella organisation"[80] led by Bemba.

Once again, it was Mbusa who, with the support of some UPDF officers, had effectively managed to kick out Bemba first from the *Grand Nord* (in June 2001) and then from Ituri. A *New Vision* news report illustrates the disarray at the end of November 2001:

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[76] See *Republic of Uganda* 2002a, 22.4.1. While the first two were replaced partly due to Wamba's complaints, the third was recalled despite his enthusiastic praise (see above; HRW 2001, 40-1), perhaps indicating Wamba's changing fortunes in Kampala.
[77] Interview (#42) with General Odongo.
[78] Quoted in AFP 2001b.
[79] After defecting from the RCD-G to the RCD-K/ML in early 2000, Roger Lumbala had created the RCD-N in Bafwasende (between Kisangani and Bunia), controlling the nearby diamond mines (see Prunier 2009, 229, 431 [note 5]). Former MLC interior minister Augustin Baharanyi accused UPDF operational commander Kazini of having installed Lumbala in order to profit from the natural resources in the area (interview cited in Belaid 2008, 76-7; see also Bemba 2001, 159; De Villers et al. 2001, 90).
[80] Quoted from an official document in English in De Villers et al. 2001, 110.

> Mbusa Nyamwisi and John Tibasima Ateenyi recently moved to Bunia and proclaimed themselves president and vice-president of the RCD-Kisangani Liberation Movement. The UPDF acting army commander, Maj. Gen. James Kazini, said the UPDF will not intervene in the clashes. […] Mbusa's move to proclaim himself the ruler in Ituri province was in defiance of a directive by Uganda's senior presidential adviser on defence and security, Lt. Gen. David Tinyefuza, and state minister for regional co-operation, Col. Kahinda Otafiire. The officers had worked out a frame-work for cooperation among the wrangling rebel chiefs. "We had envisaged problems in that region if Mbusa tried to extend (his influence) northwards from Beni. He went ahead to do things his own way in league with Tibasima. Now we have heard over 50 could have died in the past five days," a security source said yesterday. […] Sources said President Yoweri Museveni met Bemba last Sunday and asked him not to withdraw his troops.[81]

In short, it seemed that things had come full circle. Despite Museveni's initial backing, Bemba, an ethnic outsider in northeastern Congo, was ousted by an alliance between local Hema and Nande – just like Wamba had been one year earlier.

This section analyzes the evolution of the FLC, starting with the negotiations in Kampala in late 2000 and ending with the MLC's withdrawal from Bunia in November 2001. Analytically, this period is remarkable in that all four theorized mechanisms causing agency slack were present at the same time – a further increase in agent leverage, a decrease in principal monitoring, as well as learning from both cooperating and fighting. Taken together, they explain why the Ugandans did not interfere right away with Mbusa's takeover of Bunia.

Alliance Dynamics: Uganda and the Troubled History of the FLC

From Wamba's Ouster to Bemba's Local Peace Conferences, November 2000 to May 2001

At the time of Mbusa's coup attempt against Wamba in November 2000, Wamba's faith in the UPDF's chain of command was so low that he initially refused to be evacuated to Kampala by the new Operation Safe Haven commander Brigadier Edward Katumba Wamala, who had replaced Kazini in July 2000 after renewed fighting between Rwanda

[81] *The New Vision* 2001g.

and Uganda in Kisangani.[82] Wamba demanded to first talk to Kahinda Otafiire, then still Museveni's advisor on the DRC. In response, Otafiire personally flew to Bunia to take Wamba and about sixty other "Bunia leaders,"[83] including Mbusa and his entire cabinet, to Entebbe in four small planes. Having explained this airlift to the *Monitor*, "Otafiire added that Bunia *wananchi* [citizens] are now free from trouble because as from yesterday [November 19], UPDF took over Bunia administration after chasing away all fighting groups in the troubled town."[84]

Given that the stand-off between Mbusa and Wamba had been partly the result of divisions within the Ugandan military, observers felt that Otafiire's attempt to present the UPDF as the guardian of the Congolese people smacked of hypocrisy. In fact, this sequence of events was one of many that explain why local human rights activists claimed that "Uganda alternated the roles of the arsonist and firefighter"[85] in Ituri.

At this point, a word of caution is in order. While Wamba and his supporters within the RCD-K/ML openly blamed Mbusa's coup in Bunia and subsequent infighting in Beni in late November on manipulations orchestrated by Kazini,[86] I have found no conclusive evidence to prove these allegations. There is a problematic tendency in the academic literature to take the early UN Panel of Experts reports at face value, which – as already discussed above – consistently link key Congolese actors such as Lotsove, Bemba, Mbusa, Tibasima, and Lumbala to Kazini and Saleh. The first of these reports describes Kazini, "the right hand of Salim Saleh," as "the master in the field; the orchestrater, organizer and manager of most illegal activities related to the UPDF presence in north and north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo."[87]

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[82] On Kazini's replacement, see *The New Vision* 2000b.
[83] Quoted in *The Monitor* 2000e.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Quoted in HRW 2001, 40.
[86] See *The Monitor* 2000c; AFP 2000b.
[87] UNSC 2001a, para. 89 (both quotations).

Although the Porter Commission found proof for some of the specific accusations leveled against Kazini and Saleh, and even went as far as saying that Kazini had "shamed the name of Uganda,"[88] it also amply documented that some of the specific UN Panel accusations were plainly wrong. In fact, some of these mistakes suggest a worrisome standard of evidence used by the Panel.[89] It cannot be excluded that the Panel at times simply relied on information from some of the rival protagonists on the ground, without sufficiently cross-checking that information.

In the case of Kazini and Saleh, the problem is that they both already had track records of corruption prior to the Congo Wars (see Chapter 4), and that Kazini in particular had been found guilty of creating Kibali-Ituri Province and appointing Lotsove as its governor without authorization from Kampala. Therefore, it was of course easy for Wamba and others to blame misbehavior by UPDF sector commanders or lower-ranking officers on some master plan orchestrated by Kazini. In a brief discussion of the failure of the FLC, Prunier follows this line of reasoning, claiming – without any evidence – that Mbusa simply offered a greater cut to Kazini and Saleh than Bemba did, thus swinging them to his side.[90]

By contrast, in the absence of any substantial evidence, my argument in this section is again limited to highlighting that actions on the ground demonstrated divisions within the UPDF and between UPDF officers and Kampala. The key analytic point is that such divisions increased the agent leverage of Congolese rebels, independent of whether some Ugandan high-level officials were behind them or whether they were simply due to the corruption of individual renegade officers.

Before turning to the creation of the FLC in January 2001, it is worth to pause briefly and take stock of the broader context within which the MLC, the RCD-K/ML, and the RCD-N came together for negotiations in Kampala in December 2000. Philip Winter, who

[88] *Republic of Uganda* 2002a, section 44.2.
[89] See ibid., section 6.2.
[90] See Prunier 2009, 282.

was closely involved in the then flailing Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD), provides a good summary of the overall situation at the time (see also the introduction to this chapter):

> The stalemate looked bad: in the DRC itself, the ceasefire was not working; the MLC was threatening to take Mbandaka, the defense of which Angola was said to have taken over from Zimbabwe; the RCD leader Emile Ilunga had resigned; Wamba dia Wamba was under siege by Mbusa Nyamwisi, one of his lieutenants, in his own headquarters; the Congolese government had deceived the Zambian government into allowing the transit of "fishing boats" which turned out to be small gunboats for use on Lake Tanganyika; and there had been a resurgence of fighting in Katanga, between government troops and the RCD and their Rwandan allies. […] We [the office of the ICD Facilitator, Botswana's ex-president Ketumile Masire] had been in existence for nearly ten months, the ICD was no closer and the Congo lay in ruins, its peace agreement rejected by its own government and its leaders engaged in a new round of war, or so it seemed.[91]

Furthermore, under increasing international pressure following the renewed Rwandan-Ugandan clashes in Kisangani in May and June 2000, Kampala had withdrawn five UPDF battalions – around 4,000 troops – from the DRC between June and August.[92] Estimates of UPDF troop numbers vary, but according to Kazini's testimony before the Porter Commission, the UPDF had twelve battalions (around 9,600 troops) in the country prior to June.[93]

In this context, it is important to highlight that the Ugandans had been much less involved in the political management of the MLC than in that of the RCD-K/ML. Already by early 1999, Bemba and his associates had largely become "the masters of their own rebellion, expanding their rebel force from 150 to around 10,000 troops within two years."[94] In stark contrast to Wamba, Bemba was an unrivalled leader, clearly in control of his movement.[95] It was partly the MLC's successful recruitment drives that enabled the UPDF to withdraw some of its troops from northern Congo.[96]

Back in August 1999, President Museveni had reportedly explained his sponsorship of both the RCD-K and the MLC to Ugandan members of parliament by referring to the local

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[91] Winter 2012, 53.
[92] See ICJ 2001, para. 85. One UPDF battalion had around 800 soldiers, according to Kazini's testimony in *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 81-2. The fact that about 4,000 troops had been withdrawn by August is also confirmed in *The New Vision* 2000d. Drawing on the *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, Prunier (443, note 61) suggests that the UPDF had even withdrawn 6,000 troops by late 2000.
[93] See *Republic of Uganda* 2002b, 94.
[94] Stearns 2011, 225.
[95] See ibid., 227-8; Reyntjens 2009, 243.
[96] See *The New Vision* 2000d.

proverb that "you feed all the puppies because you can't know which one will become the best hunting dog."[97] The creation of the FLC on January 16, 2001, first seemed to indicate that Museveni had finally decided to focus – rather than diversify – his support. In the words of his advisor Otafiire, from a statement made to the press one week earlier:

> We are trying to put the groups together to unify the rebellion. It makes it easier for us and easier for the rebellion and that way the Congolese people can take care of their own matters[.] […] We are tired of running the show for them. Let them assume their own responsibility entirely[.][98]

It was not surprising that Museveni's choice for FLC president fell on Bemba, who had proven to be a successful rebel chief, and not on the ineffective Wamba or the unwieldy duo of Mbusa and Tibasima, especially given that the partial UPDF withdrawal in mid-2000 foreshadowed a successive pullout in the near future, implying a relative decrease in Uganda's ability to monitor its rebel agents.[99]

Wamba, who was supposed to be vice president, refused to sign the FLC agreement and subsequently moved to Dar es Salaam, still claiming to be the legitimate RCD-K/ML president. Mbusa was named FLC executive coordinator, Tibasima became its national secretary of mining. In other words, despite all their attempts to depose Wamba and take over the rebellion in northeastern Congo, they ended up with positions almost identical to those they were given when the RCD-K/ML first moved to Bunia.[100] For Mbusa, this was the final proof that the Ugandan government was no longer willing to accept his "autonomist spirit."[101] Shortly after signing the agreement, he went into exile in South Africa.[102]

Coincidentally, the signing of the FLC deal in Kampala took place on the same day that Laurent Kabila was assassinated in Kinshasa by one of his bodyguards.[103] This murder

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[97] Quoted in *The Monitor* 1999e.
[98] Quoted in *The Monitor* 2001a.
[99] The remainder of this section draws and significantly expands on Tamm 2013a, 21-3; Tamm 2013b, 21-2.
[100] See De Villers et al. 2001, 110; HRW 2001, 28.
[101] Interview (#15) with Mbusa (my translation).
[102] Ibid.
[103] It remains unclear who was behind the assassination. According to one theory, it was the Angolan government, one of Kabila's allies, who was fed up with his refusal to strike a peace deal and worried about reports that, in desperate need of money, he had begun to allow UNITA to sell diamonds through Kinshasa. Another theory holds that Rwanda pulled the strings. In either case, the primary motive of the perpetrator(s)

was to have significant consequences for both Mbusa (see below) and Bemba. As for the latter, he was immediately pressured by the US State Department – which, as he notes in his autobiography, "plays a major role in the policies of our Ugandan ally"[104] – not to take any military initiative on the Equateur front. Given this request and the continued Angolan and Zimbabwean defense of Mbandaka and Kinshasa, Bemba decided to focus his energy on pacifying Ituri and the *Grand Nord*, the new areas under his rule.[105] While Joseph Kabila, Laurent's son, tried to gain a foothold both domestically and internationally, Bemba thus tried to demonstrate his own leadership credentials by successfully administering the FLC-controlled territory.

At least in the early months of the FLC, it seemed as though Bemba may succeed in this challenge. In Ituri, the inter-ethnic conflict had spread to the *collectivité* of Walendu Bindi in the southern territory of Irumu in early January 2001, with the UPDF – under the new sector commander Muzoora – becoming heavily involved.[106] Having learned of this escalation, the new FLC president flew to Ituri in early February to personally lead peace negotiations. After a meeting in Nyankunde, just outside Walendu Bindi, Bemba invited representatives from all communities to Bunia's football stadium, where Hema and Lendu signed a ceasefire agreement and ceremoniously buried machetes on February 17, 2001.[107]

The agreement was followed by a temporary lull in fighting, and the FLC followed up with several administrative changes in Ituri.[108] Bemba subsequently turned his sights on the *Grand Nord*, first attending the so-called International Symposium for Peace in Africa, organized by several churches, in late February, then organizing a roundtable on the Mai-Mai phenomenon in March, both held in Butembo. At the time, there was significant unrest

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appears to have been to avenge the execution of popular AFDL co-founder Masasu by Kabila's henchmen on the front line at Pweto on November 27, 2000 (see Stearns 2011, 277-82).

[104] Bemba 2001, 160 (my translation).

[105] See ibid., 161.

[106] For details, see Tamm 2013b, 21.

[107] Interview (#53) with Didi Angaika; see also Bemba 2001, 171-8.

[108] See ibid., 178-86; HRW 2001, 47-8; UNSC 2004, 55.

in the region, related to the continued insecurity caused by Mai-Mai attacks, concerns about the MLC's effective financial takeover through the FLC, and complex tensions between the UPDF, Mbusa's top aides, some Wamba loyalists, and the broader population.[109] It was in this complicated context that the FLC began to unravel. Given the MLC's subsequent failure to integrate the Mai-Mai militias, even the Catholic Church – Mbusa's local rival, which had initially welcomed Bemba – soon turned against the FLC president.[110]

From the Fighting in Beni to the MLC's Withdrawal from Bunia, June to November 2001

Before discussing why Mbusa's local associates were able to chase Bemba from Beni in June, the consequences that Laurent Kabila's death had on Mbusa need to be outlined. When Mbusa went to South Africa in early 2001, the government in Pretoria was already in the process of getting more involved in the wider peace negotiations. Prior to the assassination of Kabila, President Thabo Mbeki's name had even been floated as a possible replacement for Masire, the ICD Facilitator who had reached an impasse.[111] Once Joseph Kabila came to power and made clear that he wanted to pursue the ICD more vigorously than his father, Mbusa – who claimed that he was helping the South Africans understand what was happening in the DRC[112] – saw an opportunity for yet another risky game of alliances. Apart from misdating Mbusa's realization to the Sun City peace conference in April 2002, Prunier correctly argues that Mbusa "became persuaded that the Kinshasa government would eventually succeed in reuniting the country and he decided to bet on becoming Kinshasa's man in the north-east."[113] This realignment process in fact already began in 2001: between April and May, Mbusa travelled twice to Luanda, first to talk to the Ango-

[109] See HRW 2001, 58-67.
[110] See Mathe Maghaniryo Mulondi 2007, 130.
[111] See Winter 2012, 52.
[112] Interview (#15) with Mbusa.
[113] Prunier 2008b, 192.

lans, then to meet with Joseph Kabila and some of his key advisors. As Mbusa put it himself, by June he had already become an "important item" (*pièce importante*) for Kabila and his regional allies.[114]

Mbusa's realignment decision was clearly the result of learning from both cooperating and fighting. First, the FLC agreement taught him that his Ugandan allies did not want to give him the leadership role he desired. Second, it had become unlikely that the military stalemate could be overcome by the rebels and their allies, especially once the rise of Joseph Kabila led African and Western governments to push for a political settlement. Moreover, whereas Bemba's MLC was actually confronting the Congolese government at the Equateur front, the RCD-K/ML had been consumed by infighting ever since relocating from Kisangani to Bunia and Beni.

Since Mbusa's troops were not directly fighting the government – but merely some Mai-Mai groups seen as Kinshasa's proxies – Joseph Kabila thus became an unlikely potential principal for Mbusa, providing him with further agent leverage. The fact that a Congolese "rebel" leader was entertaining relations with both the Congolese and the Ugandan governments highlights how blurred some of the lines in the Second Congo War had become.

It is against this background that the FLC infighting between troops loyal to either Mbusa or Bemba in Beni in early June 2001, as well as its consequences, need to be analyzed. The fighting started on June 3, when MLC troops tried to disarm Mbusa's security detail consisting of around eighty fighters who had pitched camp outside the residence of their absent boss.[115] According to both Bemba – who was in Beni at the time – and local reports, Mbusa's RCD-K/ML associates in the *Grand Nord* considered the MLC as in-

[114] Interview (#15) with Mbusa. Broadly in support of this chronology, a *Monitor* article from June 14, 2001, reported the rumor that Mbusa was "quietly trying to ally with DR Congo president, Joseph Kabila's government" (*The Monitor* 2001b). Moreover, meetings between Mbusa and Kabila prior to September 2001, including in Luanda, are also confirmed in Leloup 2002, 94 (note 71).
[115] See *The New Vision* 2001c; Bemba 2001, 208-9.

vaders who wanted to take away their income from controlling the lucrative Kasindi customs post; they joined up with the Ugandan commander stationed in Beni, Lieutenant Colonel Burundi, who had lost much of his monthly "bonus" after the MLC took over (reportedly receiving only $8,000, compared to $30,000 under the RCD-K/ML).[116]

After the death of one of Bemba's military commanders in the clashes on June 3, Burundi thus interfered in support of the RCD-K/ML: he managed to buy off two other MLC commanders who had been ordered by Bemba to proceed with the disarmament of Mbusa's security guards. These defections put Bemba on the defensive, forcing him to call the Ugandan government. President Museveni responded by ordering the replacement of Burundi with a new officer and by sending Kazini, then acting army chief of staff, to Bemba's rescue.[117]

While the RCD-K/ML-*cum*-Burundi coup against Bemba failed, the Ugandan government subsequently invited Mbusa to Kampala for talks, which resulted in an agreement between Bemba and Mbusa on August 16 that gave Mbusa control over the areas from Isiro to Butembo, thus including Bunia, while Bemba was to return to his headquarters in Gbadolite, of course remaining in charge of the territories originally under MLC control. Nonetheless, the FLC was to remain as an umbrella organization with one army.[118]

Even after this agreement, Mbusa continued to voice his dissent. At Entebbe Airport (near Kampala), in the context of a petty disagreement with Bemba over the right to board a UN plane taking delegates to ICD negotiations in Botswana, Mbusa fumed that "Uganda should stop imposing Bemba on the Congolese," adding that he would "intensify armed

[116] See Bemba 2001, 207-8; Mbavu Muhindo 2005, 167; De Villers 2009, 124-5. Mbusa (interview #15) denied that his supporters had any UPDF support, but his alternative explanation – that it was an act of God – was hardly convincing.
[117] See Bemba 2001, 209-11; *The New Vision* 2001a; *The New Vision* 2001b.
[118] See IRIN 2001c.

struggle on the terrain where I am popular. Bemba is unpopular and Congolese do not want a leader imposed on them."[119]

From this episode on August 20 up to the MLC's withdrawal from Bunia in November, several clashes were reported between Bemba and Mbusa loyalists in northeastern Congo. In a truly revealing intelligence report from Noble Mayombo – at the time heading Uganda's Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence (CMI) – to President Museveni in October, which was leaked to the press, Mayombo wrote that "the Mbusa group conspired with some UPDF officers" in attempts to take over Aru and Isiro and hinder MLC officials from collecting money. These UPDF officers, he warned, were acting "for personal interests in total disregard of legitimate national concerns."[120]

The report then moves on to an assessment of the two Congolese protagonists. On Bemba, it notes, among other things, that he "is now disenchanted with Uganda/UPDF due to loss of the revenue from Beni following the return of Mbusa backed by UPDF elements." As for Mbusa, he is described as:

> Very ambitious, unreliable, treacherous and [a] cheap populist. […] Realises that his constituency in UPDF is small and may not last and therefore retains overtures towards both Kinshasa […] and towards Rwanda. *Uses proximity to Uganda's border along with his principal backers within UPDF to continuously hold us at ransom and over-amplify and even tribalise his relevance to Uganda's security concerns*. Whenever he wants to fuel trouble, he moves out of the country. He is presently recruiting the Mai-Mai to boost his military capacity and harbours intentions of taking over the ALC [i.e., the MLC's army] Units in eastern DRC through bribery and/or compulsion by denial of food.[121]

Given this scathing assessment of Mbusa's personality and his ability to corrupt UPDF officers, the obvious question is why Kampala not only failed to punish his agency slack but even effectively awarded him both Ituri and the *Grand Nord*. There are at least three plausible explanations, which are not necessarily in contradiction to each other. The first focuses on the continued importance of the opportunity mechanism and its link to agent leverage: Mbusa may indeed have been able to buy off high-ranking UPDF officials whom

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[119] Quoted in *The New Vision* 2001d.
[120] This and the previous quotation are from *The Independent* 2011a. The report was first cited in parts in *The Monitor* 2002.
[121] Reprinted in *The Independent* 2011b (my emphasis; I also deleted a few misplaced commas).

Museveni needed to keep happy, possibly – as Prunier suggests (see above) – Kazini and Saleh.

Second, given the progressive withdrawal of UPDF forces that continued in 2001, Kampala may eventually have accepted that Mbusa – due to his Nande network in the *Grand Nord* and the alliance he formed with the Hema-dominated UPC in Ituri in the second half of 2001 (see next section) – was in a superior position to Bemba in northeastern Congo. The Ugandan government may have caved in fearing a popular revolt against the UPDF and additional casualties. It may have also feared that Mbusa could form an even closer relationship with Kinshasa or a new one with Kigali.[122] This explanation highlights the joint role of increased agent leverage and decreased principal control qua monitoring.

Third, based on an interview with a Congolese government representative, the International Crisis Group suggests that Kampala eventually supported Mbusa due to bilateral negotiations with Kinshasa (which are further explored in the next section):

> [T]he rekindling of relations between the Congolese government and Uganda in March 2001 did not necessarily work in the MLC's favour. During his bilateral negotiations with Uganda, Joseph Kabila asked his counterpart to neutralise Jean-Pierre Bemba in favour of Mbusa Nyamwisi, a regional negotiator whom he saw as more malleable, less ambitious, easier to handle and having greater authority over the troubled region of Beni-Butembo.[123]

While it is likely that Kabila made such a request, it is doubtful that Kampala changed its support only for this reason. The first and/or second explanation(s) probably played a more important role. In any case, Mbusa's learning from both cooperating and fighting were key to his decision to launch a realignment process with Kinshasa, and his increased agent autonomy – due to increased leverage and decreased monitoring – were crucial for Uganda's decision not to stop Mbusa's takeover of Beni and Bunia.

[122] The threat of a Rwanda–Mbusa alliance is put forward as the main reason in Leloup 2002, 94-5.
[123] ICG 2002b, 16.

August 2002: The UPC's Ugandan-Backed Takeover of Bunia

On August 9, 2002, after three days of fighting, the Hema-dominated *Union des patriotes congolais* (UPC, Union of Congolese Patriots) and the UPDF together chased the RCD-K/ML Governor of Ituri, Jean-Pierre Molondo Lompondo, out of Bunia.[124] The UPC's takeover of Ituri's capital was accompanied by targeted killings of Lendu and Nande – by then seen as the main backers of Mbusa's RCD-K/ML – as well as the looting and destruction of some of their homes and shops.[125] This first battle for Bunia marked a dramatic escalation of violence in Ituri, as competition between alliances of regional governments and local armed groups intensified, fueling a downward spiral of vicious propaganda and reciprocal massacres.[126]

The UPDF's backing of the UPC first seemed somewhat schizophrenic, as Ugandan authorities had arrested UPC president Thomas Lubanga and several members of his delegation when he came to Kampala for negotiations in June 2002.[127] Indicative of improving relations between the Congolese and Ugandan governments, these UPC members had been transferred to Kinshasa, where they were first imprisoned and then placed under house arrest. In fact, Lubanga only returned to Bunia at the end of August – around two weeks after his associates had taken over Bunia – arriving with Congolese Human Rights Minister Ntumba Luaba, who wanted to convince Ituri's traditional leaders to participate in a peace conference. The UPC seized the opportunity, taking Luaba hostage and exchanging him for Lubanga's delegates, who were still in Kinshasa.[128]

One of the masterminds behind this kidnapping was Yves Kahwa, customary chief of the Bahema Banywagi *collectivité* in Djugu territory. Chief Kahwa had also been in Kampala in June. Suspicious of Uganda's intentions, he and Lubanga's security advisor Richard

[124] See AFP 2002a. In the remainder of this chapter, I follow my Iturian interviewees in referring to Molondo by his *postnom* Lompondo.
[125] See HRW 2002b, 5; HRW 2003, 21.
[126] This section draws on my Usalama Project report on the UPC (Tamm 2013a, esp. chaps. 2-3).
[127] See AP 2002.
[128] See IRIN 2002c; IRIN 2002d.

Beiza had already fled Kampala prior to Lubanga's arrest and gone to Kigali, where they asked the Rwandan government for support in their struggle against Mbusa's troops and the Lendu militias. The Rwandans agreed, seizing the opportunity to gain influence in Ituri, their Ugandan rival's backyard. Initially without Uganda's knowledge (or so key UPC members believe), Rwanda began to supply the group through airdrops to their training center in Mandro, the main town in Chief Kahwa's *collectivité*.[129]

It was this involvement of Rwanda that would lead to the next turning point, namely, Uganda's alliance with local armed groups that were opposed to the UPC and backed by Kinshasa, resulting in the UPC's ouster from Bunia in March 2003 (see the next section). While this section focuses on the relations between Uganda and the UPC up to August 2002, it also highlights that Uganda's role in northeastern Congo between late 2001 and mid-2003 can only be understood in the context of both its hostile relations with Rwanda *and* its improving but fragile relations with the DRC; the latter were largely a result of the former.

In order to explain the complex origins of the UPC, which was officially founded in September 2000, the following subsection first goes back all the way to the CMF mutiny against Wamba in July of that same year. Then, it analyzes the growing tensions pitting Mbusa and his surrogate Lompondo against Lubanga and other Hema leaders from January to August 2002; by putting this conflict in the context of Uganda's ambiguous relations with the Congolese government, the analysis also explains why Uganda first had UPC members transferred to Kinshasa in June but then helped the group defeat the Kinshasa-backed RCD-K/ML in Bunia two months later, finally punishing Mbusa for all his agency slack from previous years. In short, the UPC came to benefit from the Ugandans' loss of trust in the RCD-K/ML.

[129] See UNSC 2004, para. 29; interview with Kahwa cited in HRW 2003, 17. The fact that Rwanda began to support the UPC *before* the latter took Bunia in August 2002 has been independently confirmed by interviews with Richard Lonema (#56), Dieudonné Mbuna (#80), and another former UPC official (#54).

Alliance Dynamics: Uganda's Role in the Rise of the UPC in Ituri, July 2000 to August 2002

The Origins of the UPC, July 2000 to December 2001

The creation of the UPC dates back to the aftermath of the CMF mutiny in July 2000. According to several mutineers and Hema community representatives, this mutiny began when rumors spread that Wamba had asked UPDF sector commander Colonel Angina – who had replaced Lieutenant Colonel Arocha in April 2000 – to arrest Hema APC commanders, accusing them of exacerbating the inter-ethnic violence.[130]

Commander Bagonza was the first to mutiny with his troops, attacking APC positions in Nyankunde and Marabo. Other Hema commanders, including Floribert Kisembo, joined Bagonza in the bush. So did several Congolese Tutsi APC commanders, including Bosco Ntaganda. These APC mutineers worked together with Chief Kahwa and, for a short period, were based in Mandro, which later became the UPC headquarters (see above).[131] All of them also played important roles in the April 2002 mutiny against Mbusa and Lompondo (see below). In September 2002, when Lubanga formally created the *Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo* (FPLC, Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo) as the UPC's armed wing, he rewarded these commanders with key positions.[132] So how had the CMF leaders and Lubanga come together?

In response to the CMF mutiny, President Museveni ordered the deployment of UPDF reinforcements, prompting the Hema community to dispatch a delegation in August 2000 to plead with the Ugandan president not to attack its "sons who are demonstrating against injustice."[133] One of the delegates was Lubanga, who had studied psychology at the University of Kisangani and who, at 40, was no stranger to politics. In the 1990s, he had been an active member of Etienne Tshisekedi's famous opposition party *Union pour la dé-*

[130] Interviews #98, #105, #106, #107, and #108.
[131] Ibid. The involvement of these individuals in the CMF is confirmed in ICC 2012, para. 82.
[132] See Tamm 2013a, 28-9.
[133] Quoted in *The New Vision* 2000c.

mocratie et le progrès social (UDPS, Union for Democracy and Social Progress). He also served Bunia as a member of the provincial parliament during Adèle Lotsove's short-lived governorship – a position that may explain the oft-repeated but false claim that he is Lotsove's nephew. Before RCD-K/ML deputy commissioner-general John Tibasima asked him to join the delegation to Kampala, Lubanga was a trader in Bunia's main market.[134]

Accompanied by a group of high-ranking Ugandan officials, the delegation travelled back to Bunia to negotiate the CMF's peaceful surrender; in return, the Ugandans agreed to provide military training to the mutineers. Seizing the opportunity, Hema community leaders in Djugu and Irumu territories quickly launched a recruitment drive, inflating the number of mutineers from around 300 to nearly 700.[135] Among these recruits were 163 children, aged between nine and seventeen.[136] Before being flown from Bunia airport to Uganda at the end of August, some mutiny leaders stayed in Lubanga's house and, acknowledging his courage and political acumen, chose him as their spokesman.[137] Following their departure, he assembled a group of educated Iturians, many but not all of whom were Hema. On September 15, 2000, they created the UPC and named Lubanga as president.[138]

Some of its co-founders argued that the UPC began as a purely political movement with the aim of developing ways to end the inter-ethnic violence in Ituri.[139] However, Lubanga's involvement with the CMF immediately prior to the founding of the UPC suggests that the group had military aims from the outset. Moreover, Lubanga, who spent some time in Uganda between 2000 and 2001, maintained close links to the former mutineers while the Ugandans trained them in Kyankwanzi and Jinja.[140] The UPC co-founder Richard Lonema in fact already saw them as UPC's armed wing at the time.[141]

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[134] Interviews with Lonema (#56), John Tinanzabo (#109), and another former UPC official (#94).
[135] See HRW 2001, 19.
[136] See BBC 2001.
[137] Interviews #98, #105, #106, #107, and #108.
[138] See ICC 2012, para. 81.
[139] Interviews with Tinanzabo (#109) and Daniel Litsha (#49).
[140] He was reportedly even undergoing training himself (see ICC 2012, paras. 1031-6).
[141] Interview (#56) with Lonema.

When the FLC was formed in January 2001 (see above), Lubanga became deputy national secretary of youth, sports, and leisure. According to Daniel Litsha, who became UPC secretary-general in 2002, the UPC was invited to the signing of the FLC accord but not allowed the right to sign, as the MLC and RCD-K/ML wanted to avoid a new competitor. Some months later, the UPC's office in Bunia was vandalized, its flag burned, and all its documents destroyed. It then stopped having official meetings and entered an underground phase.[142]

After the RCD-K/ML chased Bemba out of Beni in June 2001 (see above), however, Mbusa sought an alliance with Lubanga in order to force the MLC out of Bunia, too. The first indication of this collaboration was the appointment of Lubanga as RCD-K/ML minister of transport in August.[143] Tibasima's role in these developments is contested. By one account, he had become too close to Bemba, so Mbusa joined forces with Lubanga against the two. According to another, overall more plausible version, Mbusa, Tibasima, and Lubanga initially worked together to force the MLC out of Bunia; afterwards, however, Lubanga became angry that a fellow Hema (Tibasima) accepted that a Nande (Mbusa) would be in control of Ituri. Lubanga thus allegedly threatened Tibasima, who then left Bunia and focused on the peace negotiations in South Africa, eventually obtaining the ministry of urban planning in the transitional government.[144]

Following the MLC's withdrawal from Bunia, Mbusa named Lubanga as the new RCD-K/ML minister of defense. For UPC co-founder Lonema, this appointment represented the "recognition of our strength."[145] However, Mbusa did not want Lubanga to use the UPC label and refused to allow him to formally register as a political party, probably fear-

[142] Interview (#79) with Litsha.
[143] See *The New Vision* 2001e.
[144] Interviews #50 and #83. On November 20, 2001, one day after the MLC announced its withdrawal, Tibasima reportedly chaired a meeting in Bunia that led to an announcement on a local radio station thanking the MLC and outlining a restructuring of the RCD-K/ML (see IRIN 2001d); this lends credence to the second version of events.
[145] Interview (#56) with Lonema (my translation).

ing that the UPC could then have demanded a seat at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. When it became clear that Mbusa envisioned Lubanga as a mere figurehead without any real power, their relationship quickly deteriorated.[146]

The RCD-K/ML–UPC Conflict in the Context of Uganda's Ambiguous Relations with Kinshasa, January to August 2002

In January 2002, against the background of these increasing tensions, Lubanga asked Mbusa for a written partnership agreement between the RCD-K/ML and the UPC. This request, according to Lonema, marked the beginning of what observers initially perceived as an internal RCD-K/ML power struggle.[147] In February, Mbusa – who continued to spend most of his time at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in South Africa – appointed Lompondo, an outsider from Kasai in southwestern Congo, as the new Governor of Ituri and commander of the APC, effectively demoting Lubanga.[148]

The tensions escalated two months later. On April 17, in a political declaration, Lubanga and others accused Mbusa of selling out Ituri to the Congolese government, planning a Nande takeover of Bunia, and siding with the Lendu in the inter-ethnic conflict.[149] Meanwhile, troops loyal to Lubanga staged another mutiny within the APC and killed the head of Mbusa's presidential guard. They managed to cut Bunia into two parts, with one area controlled by Lubanga, the other by Lompondo. This stalemate persisted from April up to the events in August 2002 described at the start of this section.[150]

As mentioned above, the fighting in April marked the return to prominence of the commanders who had been behind the earlier CMF mutiny. Following their training in

[146] Interviews with Lonema (#56) and Litsha (#49).
[147] Interview (#56) with Lonema. In July, the spokesperson of the UN Mission in the DRC still claimed, erroneously, that the fighting in Bunia was "strictly an affair within the RCD-ML" (quoted in IRIN 2002a).
[148] See HRW 2002b, 4.
[149] See ICC 2012, para. 1089. In early April, Lompondo and UPDF Colonel Kerim – seen as pro-Lendu since 1999 – had met Ngiti (i.e., southern Lendu) representatives in Gety, from where the Ugandan army together with Hema militias had been launching attacks against Ngiti villages in Walendu Bindi (see UNSC 2004, para. 42; interview [#53] with Didi Angaika).
[150] Interview (#95) with a former UPC intelligence officer. See also HRW 2002b, 4; HRW 2003, 5.

Kyankwanzi (for new recruits) and Jinja (for officers), most of them had been sent to Equateur Province to join the MLC's armed wing. After some months of fighting for Bemba, the soldiers had grown increasingly frustrated. They knew that fellow Hema were still dying in Ituri's inter-ethnic clashes, and they felt that the MLC treated them "like dogs."[151] After the break-up of the FLC in November 2001, these soldiers – led by Floribert Kisembo – rebelled in Equateur, demanding to be sent back to Ituri. Bemba gave in and let them return to Bunia, where they rallied to Lubanga's side.[152]

The UPDF troops stationed in Bunia remained relatively neutral between April and August 2002, although an RCD-K/ML official accused them of siding with the pro-Lubanga mutineers in a firefight in July.[153] Similarly, a former key UPC intelligence officer interpreted the UPDF's behavior as implicit backing: if the Ugandans had wanted to stop the UPC, he argued, they could have shut down its training center in Mandro, where Bosco Ntaganda and others were training a large number of recruits from April onwards. Furthermore, he claimed that the UPDF warned the UPC of impending APC attacks.[154]

Bearing in mind that, before the UPDF eventually helped the UPC take control of Bunia in August, Ugandan authorities arrested Lubanga and several of his delegates in Kampala and flew them to Kinshasa in June (see above), what explains Uganda's seemingly contradictory role in the conflict between Mbusa and Lubanga?

First, a brief review of Uganda's relations with Rwanda after their renewed clashes in Kisangani in May and June 2000 is in order. While there was some respite between July 2000 and February 2001, tensions significantly increased once again in March. Early that month, the Ugandan government added Rwanda to its list of hostile countries, which also included Sudan and the DRC. This decision took place in the context of the impending presidential election, in which Museveni faced former regime insider Kizza Besigye,

[151] Interview (#63) with Floribert Kisembo's former *aide-de-camp*.
[152] See ICC 2007, para. 173.
[153] See IRIN 2002a.
[154] Interview (#95) with a former UPC intelligence officer.

whose campaign was allegedly bankrolled by Kigali.[155] It was in this same month that, partly in response to the tensions with Rwanda, the rekindling of relations between the DRC and Uganda took place (referred to at the end of the previous section).

Two statements from the second half of 2001 illustrate just how tense Rwandan-Ugandan relations were becoming. On August 28, the re-elected Museveni sent a letter to Clare Short, the British Secretary of State for International Development, informing her that "[w]e have no doubt that Rwanda is planning aggression against us either using proxies or, even, directly. There are some Ugandan army officers who ran from here, jumping bail or fleeing potential prosecution for a number of crimes, to Rwanda."[156] On October 17, Rwanda in turn warned all diplomatic missions in Kigali that Uganda was planning to attack the country within forty-eight hours. Both countries subsequently accused each other of military buildups.[157] Ten days after Rwanda's warning, Bemba's MLC formed a temporary alliance with the RCD-G following talks in Kigali. This "surprise agreement,"[158] which likely was a result of Bemba's discontent with Uganda's support to Mbusa after the fighting in Beni in June, led the UPDF to halt its withdrawal from the DRC.[159]

Against this background, it should become even clearer why the Ugandans accepted Mbusa's effectively chasing the MLC out of Bunia in November 2001, even though Kampala was well aware of his *rapprochement* with Kinshasa.[160] Meanwhile, from November onwards, Clare Short launched several mediation efforts between Museveni and Kagame, which succeeded at preventing an outbreak of direct hostilities.[161] By the time the Sun City Agreement was signed in South Africa on April 19, 2002, opening the way for a transitional government, Rwanda found itself isolated on the Congolese stage: Bemba had come to

[155] See Leloup 2001, 86-7.
[156] Quoted in Leloup 2002, 84.
[157] See ibid., 87-8.
[158] AFP 2001a.
[159] See *The New Vision* 2001f.
[160] See also Leloup 2002, 94.
[161] See ibid., 88-91.

an understanding with President Kabila and thus, like Mbusa, signed the document, leaving the Rwandan-backed RCD-G alone in its refusal of the deal.[162]

Shortly after the start of the mutiny in Bunia, which was launched only two days prior to the signing of the Sun City Agreement, Mbusa thus appeared as a firm ally of Kinshasa; it had become unlikely that he would switch to Rwanda as long as the Congolese government honored the power-sharing deal made in South Africa. Given, first, that Kampala had tolerated Mbusa's takeover but certainly did not trust him after all the trouble in previous years, and, second, that the majority of Ugandan officers had sided with the Hema since 1999, it is not surprising that the UPDF failed to interfere when a Hema counterweight to Mbusa emerged in the form of the pro-Lubanga mutineers.

The central question in explaining Uganda's ambiguous behavior between June and August 2002 – first arresting Lubanga in Kampala but then siding with his commanders in Bunia – is whether there was once again a division between different factions in government and army, or whether there was a coherent Ugandan policy whose apparent contradictions were due to having to maneuver between mending relations with Kinshasa whilst also ensuring continued control over the areas of northeastern Congo under its occupation.

According to the first perspective, propagated in an International Crisis Group report, "Lubanga was heavily supported by Uganda's [army commander] Kazini, whose commercial and financial interests were threatened by [Mbusa] Nyamwisi."[163] In turn, the arrest of Lubanga and several of his delegates in Kampala in June is argued to have been ordered by "Ugandan authorities opposed to Kazini's manipulations."[164] Although not explicitly stated, the implication is that the UPDF support to the UPC in August shows that Kazini eventually got his way. Given that Lubanga was supported by Kazini's old ally Lotsove, who

[162] See ibid., 94-5; ICG 2002b, 7, 15. For details of the negotiations, see Winter 2012, chaps. 16-7.
[163] ICG 2003c, 5.
[164] Ibid., 5 (note that the report erroneously dates these arrests to July).

became the UPC's national secretary in charge of finances in September 2002,[165] this interpretation cannot be excluded. However, as discussed in the previous section, Kazini had also become a convenient scapegoat for any and all shady events in northeastern Congo; an *Africa Confidential* report from October 2002 claims that he and Saleh were still backing the RCD-K/ML whilst "[o]ther Ugandan officers" were supporting the UPC.[166]

By contrast, the second perspective suggests that the arrest of Lubanga and his associates as well as their transfer to Kinshasa in June were first and foremost an attempt by Uganda to improve relations with the Congolese government, especially in light of the continuing tensions with Rwanda. As Mbusa himself put it at the time, "[t]his transfer of prisoners is evidence the alliance between Congo and Uganda now works."[167] According to a senior international analyst, Kampala decided to end its ambiguous position and support the pro-Lubanga mutineers when it learned that Mbusa and the Congolese army were setting up a military command center, the *État-major opérationnel intégré* (EMOI, Integrated Operational Headquarters), in Beni in mid-2002.[168] Former UPC secretary-general Litsha shared this assessment, believing that Uganda's backing of the takeover of Bunia in August was a message to Kinshasa that it could have the *Grand Nord* but not Ituri.[169]

In either case, the pro-Lubanga mutineers were only able to split from the RCD-K/ML and turn the UPC into a politico-military movement because of the Ugandans' loss of trust in Mbusa. After more than two years of his continued manipulation attempts, the emergence of the UPC finally provided them with a means of getting back at him. Soon, however, the Ugandans would learn that the UPC had already betrayed them, too.

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[165] See Tamm 2013a, 27, 49.
[166] *Africa Confidential* 2002b. This issue of the magazine includes coverage of the 2002 UN Panel of Experts report, which sometimes presents allegations from obviously biased protagonists as facts (for an example relating to Ituri, see UNSC 2002a, para. 123).
[167] Quoted in AP 2002. See also Prunier 2008b, 193 (note 33).
[168] Interview #38. In a public statement on March 14, 2003, Ugandan Minister of Defence Amama Mbabazi noted that Kampala had "repeatedly" told the Congolese government that the latter's presence in Beni was in violation of several inter-state agreements (quoted in *The New Vision* 2003c).
[169] Interview (#49) with Litsha. An almost identical argument was also made by a former PUSIC official (interview #81).

March 2003: Rwanda, Uganda, and the UPC's Expulsion from Bunia

On March 6, 2003, after months of growing tensions, the UPDF and the UPC clashed in Bunia,[170] resulting in the UPC's expulsion from the town.[171] In this operation, the Ugandans received some support from two Ituri-based armed groups that they had helped create since November 2002, namely, the Lendu-dominated *Front des nationalistes intégrationnistes* (FNI, Front of Integrationist Nationalists) and the *Parti pour l'unité et la sauvegarde de l'intégrité du Congo* (PUSIC, Party for Unity and Safeguarding of the Integrity of the Congo) dominated by southern Hema under Chief Kahwa's leadership.[172]

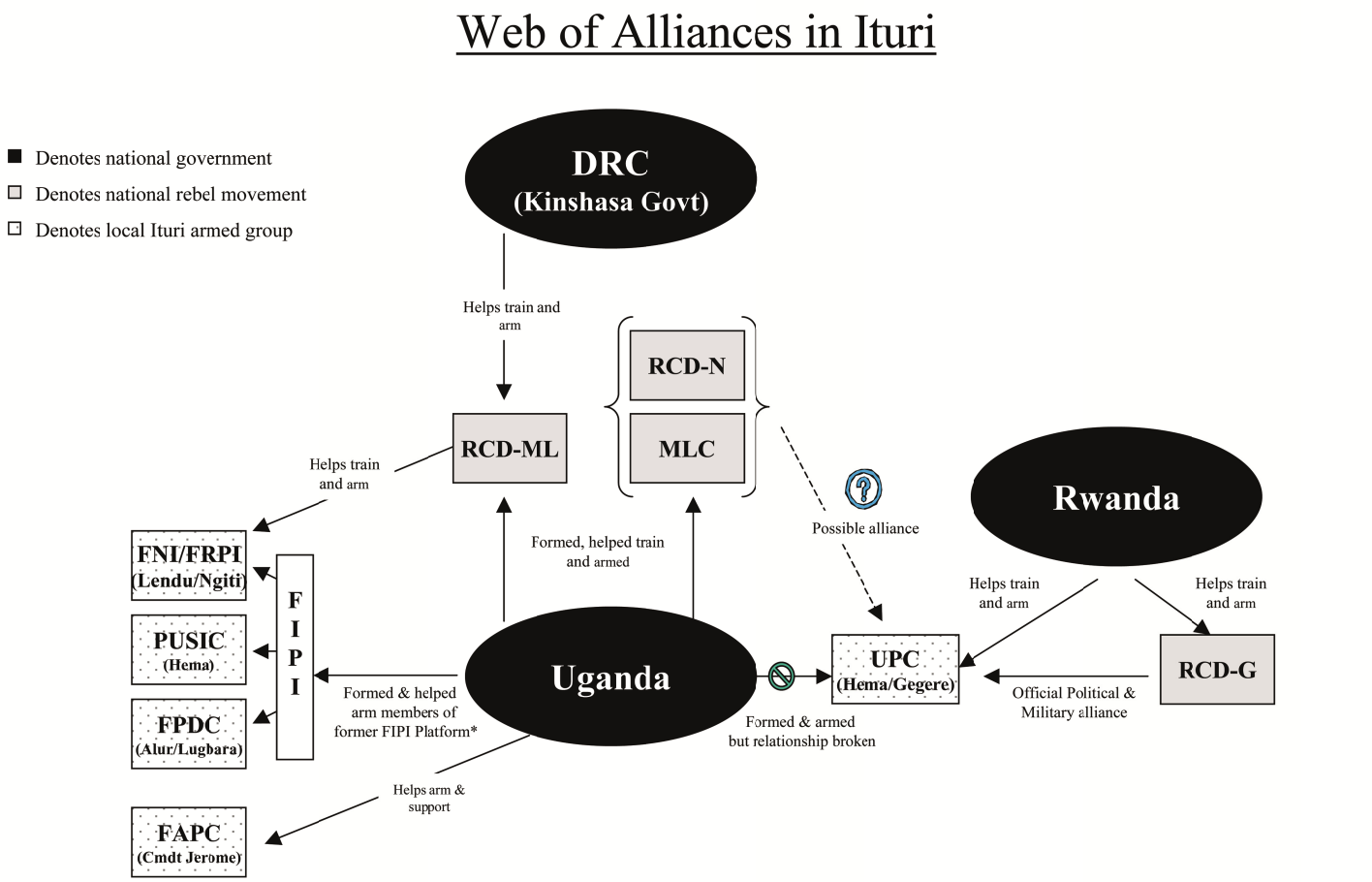
As PUSIC's involvement shows, Uganda had not merely switched its support from Hema to Lendu but also managed to divide the UPC. First, in late 2002, it exploited a leadership conflict between Lubanga and Kahwa, which was representative of broader tensions between northern Hema (Gegere) and their southern counterparts.[173] Second, two days before the fighting in Bunia,[174] Uganda convinced – or perhaps forced – Jérôme Kakwavu to break away from the UPC and create his own group, the *Forces armées du peuple congolais* (FAPC, Armed Forces of the Congolese People), in Aru and Mahagi territories. Kakwavu, a Congolese Tutsi and former APC commander in charge of the gold mining region of Durba (Haut-Uélé), had joined forces with the UPC in November 2002 after being forced to retreat to Aru due to attacks from the MLC and RCD-N.[175]

In contrast to the actions analyzed in previous sections, there was no ambiguity about Uganda's new alliances and its fight against the UPC, all of which was clearly in retalia-

[170] Unsurprisingly, each actor accused the other of having attacked first (see *The New Vision* 2003b).
[171] This section also draws on my two Usalama Project reports (Tamm 2013a; Tamm 2013b).
[172] A senior UPDF officer (interview #37) who was in Bunia at the time minimized the role of these groups, arguing that they were weak and divided and that it was the UPDF that "did the whole job." However, the contribution by some of these groups was recognized by UPDF Brigadier Kale Kayihura at the time (see HRW 2003, 16) and confirmed in several other reports (see, e.g., UNSC 2004, para. 73), as well as in numerous interviews in Bunia in August and December 2012.
[173] See HRW 2003, 21-2; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2004, 399.
[174] See UNSC 2004, 70; confirmed by an interview (#54) with a former UPC official.
[175] See HRW 2005, 25.

tion against the UPC's alliance with Rwanda. The next subsection first discusses why Rwanda chose to support the UPC and how this cooperation developed; then, it does the same for Uganda's alliances with PUSIC, FNI, FAPC, and the ineffective *Force populaire pour la démocratie du Congo* (FPDC, Popular Force for Democracy in the Congo). Prior to this subsection, in order to guide the reader through the ever-thickening alphabet soup, I reprint Human Rights Watch's excellent diagram on alliances in Ituri (see Map 5.3). Finally, a concluding subsection provides a short postscript on the role of external actors in Ituri after March 2003.

Map 5.3: Web of Alliances in Ituri (reprinted from HRW 2003)



Agent Selection and Alliance Dynamics

Rwanda's Alliance with the UPC, June 2002 to March 2003

As described in the previous section, Chief Kahwa and Richard Beiza fled Kampala prior to Lubanga's arrest in June 2002 and instead went to Kigali to ask for support in their struggle against Mbusa's troops and the various Lendu militias roaming Ituri's countryside. This decision was largely grounded in the perception that Uganda, by arming both sides, had played a nefarious role in the deadly Hema-Lendu conflict since June 1999.[176]

But why did Rwanda decide to support a group fighting in a district two hundred kilometers away from the Congolese-Rwandan border? Rwanda's alliance with the UPC needs to be understood primarily in the context of its hostile relations with Uganda. In the period following the renewed Kisangani clashes in 2000, several Rwandan dissidents fled to Kampala, representing a threat to the government in Kigali. In May 2001, an expert on regional politics argued that "today there is no doubt that some of [these dissidents] are planning to destabilize Rwanda, in connivance with several high-ranking Ugandan officers," notably, Kazini, Saleh, and Mayombo.[177] He thus gave credence to a Rwandan statement from March 2001, which had responded to Uganda's listing of Rwanda as a hostile nation by accusing Kampala of "not only harbouring elements hostile to Rwanda but also mobilising and actively training them to destabilise Rwanda."[178] Kigali later called Uganda's support to such elements – allegedly including former *génocidaires* – a "direct security threat."[179]

Such accusations and counter-accusations were part and parcel of Rwandan-Ugandan relations from early 2001 to March 2003. In short, there clearly was a transnational threat dimension to the alliance with the UPC, but it related more to Kampala than to Kinshasa.

[176] This view, however, masks the fact that the Hema profited from Ugandan support to a far greater extent than the Lendu (see previous sections).
[177] Leloup 2001, 16 (my translation).
[178] Quoted in IRIN 2001a. This accusation was of course swiftly denied by Uganda (see IRIN 2001b).
[179] Quoted in *The EastAfrican* 2003.

In fact, as outlined below, Kigali later used the UPC to transfer weapons to the anti-Museveni People's Redemption Army (PRA), which had a rear base in northern Ituri.

Given the extent to which the Second Congo War was already seen through a "conflict minerals" lens at the time, much has also been made of Rwanda's interest in Ituri's gold.[180] Resource opportunities may have indeed played a complementary role, but they were not a key factor. Even the importance of transnational threats needs to be qualified. Based on numerous interviews and press statements, I believe that the *initial* tensions between Rwanda and Uganda, which first escalated in Kisangani in August 1999, are hard to reconcile with the rational baseline for weak state ruler behavior that I put forward in Chapters 2 and 3. In Kisangani, in a context in which both countries were on the offensive and under no existential threat, their political and military leaders, who had fought together in the Ugandan civil war in the 1980s, fell out for very personal reasons that had much more to do with slights to each other's standing – to draw once again on Richard Neb Lebow (see Chapter 4) – than with security narrowly conceived.[181] In a nutshell, RPF leaders, now themselves in power in Kigali, were insulted that the Ugandans still treated them as their juniors, while the Ugandans saw their counterparts as disrespectful.[182]

Against this background, Kahwa's request for support in June 2002 provided Rwanda with an opportunity to open yet another front in its "war of nerves"[183] with Uganda and also to undermine the broader peace negotiations, in which Kampala and Kinshasa had largely isolated Kigali (see above). In other words, the UPC was geopolitically relevant to Rwanda; this trumped potential trustworthiness concerns regarding the historically closer relations between Hema and Ugandan Hima, Museveni's ethnic (sub)group. The alliance

[180] For instance, see HRW 2005, 21, 33 (to be fair, the report presents this as one among multiple interests).
[181] I will develop this argument in much greater detail in a forthcoming paper. For evidence and arguments supporting this interpretation, see Leloup 2000; *Africa Confidential* 2003c; Leloup 2005.
[182] In a critical reflection on Kazini's role in the first Kisangani clashes, the Ugandan army commander at the time, General Odongo (interview #42), explained that the Rwandans "felt they were now no longer boys, they were men. And therefore nobody should be telling them what to do. At any rate, they were an independent country, with a right to take their own, independent decisions. So this personal clash of egos played into the parting of ways."
[183] Leloup 2003, 246 (my translation).

between Rwanda and the UPC also provides a good example of the situational and strategic nature of ethnic identities (see Chapter 3): in the negotiations, Hema likened themselves to the Rwandan Tutsi – as a minority being slaughtered by a majority group.[184] Many UPC members also conceived of Tutsi in general as fellow *nilotiques* – a value-laden and historically problematic term – and thus as supposedly natural allies.[185]

Starting with air drops to the UPC's training center in Mandro in mid-2002, Rwanda's support grew larger over the next months. While continuing to drop arms, ammunition, and uniforms at Mandro,[186] the Rwandan army reportedly also helped plan and direct the UPC's takeover of Mongbwalu in November 2002, an important gold mining town in Djugu territory that was still held by Mbusa's APC and Lendu militias. In subsequent months, mortars, machine guns, and ammunition were sent from Rwanda to the UPC in Mongbwalu.[187] In addition, more than one hundred UPC fighters received training in Rwanda between September and December 2002, especially in how to handle the heavy weaponry provided by Rwanda to the UPC.[188]

On January 6, 2003, this alliance was indirectly made public when the UPC signed an official agreement with the Rwandan-backed RCD-G, which in contrast to the UPC was party to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (see above). The new partners asked ICD Facilitator Masire, the international community, and all other parties "to consider the urgency and necessity of including the UPC-RP in the [peace] process,"[189] which had come to a preliminary conclusion with the Global and Inclusive Agreement on Transition signed in Pretoria

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[184] In Chief Kahwa's own words: "In June 2002 I decided to go to Rwanda to find help for our defense. They had lived through a genocide so they knew what it was like. They understood me and provided us with weapons and logistics." (Quoted in HRW 2003, 17.)
[185] Interviews #81, #86, #94, #96, and #97.
[186] See HRW 2003, 11.
[187] See HRW 2005, 25-7.
[188] Interview (#54) with a former UPC official; see also ICC 2012, para. 554; HRW 2005, 24.
[189] Quoted in IRIN 2003a. Note that, from September 2002 to November 2003, the UPC used the suffix RP. "UPC-RP" apparently emerged as a compromise between the Lubanga group detained in Kinshasa, which began using the label *Front pour la réconciliation et la paix* (FRP, Front for Reconciliation and Peace), and those UPC members who refused to give up the original name (interview [#79] with Litsha). For the sake of simplicity, I use "UPC" throughout this dissertation.

on December 17, 2002.[190] The RCD-G and UPC also demanded the complete withdrawal of all foreign military forces from the DRC, an obvious reference to Uganda.[191]

At this time, however, the UPC already suffered from internal divisions. At some point in the second half of 2002, the Rwandans had asked the UPC to help deliver weapons to a PRA camp near Kpandroma, a Lendu stronghold close to the Ugandan border. Lubanga grudgingly accepted, which frustrated his deputy minister of defense Chief Kahwa.[192] Due to the camp's location, Kahwa felt that the Rwandans were indirectly collaborating with the Lendu. Former UPC members also suggested that Kahwa thought he deserved a more important position within the movement, given that he had secured Rwandan backing and that the UPC's main power base, Mandro, was in his chieftaincy. When Kahwa proposed to negotiate with the government in Kinshasa, some UPC elements reportedly plotted his assassination, leading him to flee to Kampala. It is to this and other alliance shifts that I now turn.

Uganda's Retaliatory Alliances with PUSIC, FNI, FPDC, and FAPC, November 2002 to March 2003

It is not fully clear at what point Uganda became convinced that the UPC was working with the Rwandans. According to a chronology put together by the United Nations, Lendu militias attacked the UPC training camp in Mandro on June 7, 2002, and afterwards claimed that they had killed Rwandan trainers.[193] Dieudonné Mbuna, UPC founding member and Lubanga's chief of staff after his return from Kinshasa, recalled that, prior to August 2002, Lompondo also accused the UPC of receiving Rwandan support, but, in Mbu-

[190] See Winter 2012, 232-3.
[191] See IRIN 2003a.
[192] Interviews (#54 and #98) with former UPC officials; UNSC 2004, para. 29. The remainder of this paragraph is based on interviews #54, #81, #94, and #98. See also the interview with Kahwa cited in HRW 2003, 17.
[193] See UNSC 2004, 57. In this context, it is worth highlighting that many "indigenous" Congolese tend to refer to those of Rwandan descent simply as "Rwandans," so the Lendu may have referred to Congolese Tutsi such as Ntaganda rather than actual Rwandan citizens. The Ugandans were likely aware of this issue.

na's opinion, the Ugandans did not believe Lompondo.[194] By contrast, another former UPC member believed that the Ugandans had in fact already known about these links by August and only helped the UPC take Bunia in order to "infiltrate" them and learn more about Rwanda's exact role.[195] In late August, prior to being taken hostage, Congolese Human Rights Minister Luaba also publicly condemned "the infiltration of Rwanda in Ituri."[196]

In any case, internal documents reveal that, on September 18, 2002, the MONUC team in Bunia informed its Kinshasa headquarters that Rwanda had airdropped arms, ammunition, and uniforms at Mandro two days earlier.[197] On October 7, the team reported that "Ugandan army Major David Muhoozi states that the RPA are in Bunia and are expected to be in Mandro training camp. They are small in number and in civilian clothes."[198] Two weeks later, the Ugandan *New Vision* wrote about alleged links between the UPC and the PRA.[199] Subsequent statements by Ugandan Minister of Defense Amama Mbabazi indicate that Kampala was convinced that Kigali "was scheming to destabilise Uganda"[200] from Ituri by September at the latest.

That same month, on September 6, President Museveni and President Kabila signed the Luanda Agreement, in which the two governments agreed to put in place, with UN assistance, an Ituri Pacification Commission (IPC). Uganda also agreed to withdraw its troops from Bunia within eighty days of the inauguration of the IPC.[201] In this context of improving relations, Museveni facilitated contacts between Kahwa and Kabila, which resulted in the idea of creating a new armed group to weaken the UPC. Thus, Kahwa's PUSIC was born, albeit first only on paper.[202]

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[194] Interview (#80) with Mbuna.
[195] Interview #105.
[196] Quoted in IRIN 2002b.
[197] See HRW 2003, 11.
[198] Quoted in ibid., 11 (note that, by that time, the RPA had officially already been renamed RDF, as detailed below).
[199] See *The New Vision* 2002.
[200] Statement from March 14, 2003, reprinted in *The New Vision* 2003c.
[201] See *Luanda Agreement 2002*.
[202] Interview (#98) with a former UPC official.

The negotiations between Kahwa and the Congolese government, which took place around December 2002 and January 2003, were preceded by a meeting at President Museveni's Rwakitura farm in late November.[203] This meeting brought together three delegations from Ituri that were opposed to the UPC: one led by Kahwa; another led by Thomas Unencan, representing communities from Aru and Mahagi territories; and a third led by Floribert Ndjabu and Augustin Lobo Nyinga, both Lendu from Walendu Pitsi, where the inter-ethnic conflict had begun in 1999. Museveni asked these groups to reconcile and subtly referred to his own armed struggle, which the Lendu delegation understood as a hint that they should organize themselves in order to defeat the UPC.

The choice of these three delegations was far from accidental: Kahwa represented Hema from Irumu, Unencan and his delegation the main ethnic groups (especially Alur and Lugbara) from Aru and Mahagi, and Ndjabu and Lobo the Lendu from Djugu. In other words, all of Ituri's territories that share a border with Uganda were represented, once again demonstrating the primacy of geopolitics for the selection of rebel agents.

By the time these delegations met again in late December, this time in the Ugandan border town of Arua and in the presence of a pro-Lubanga UPC delegation, they had all formally created their own armed groups: PUSIC (Kahwa), FPDC (Unencan), and FNI (Ndjabu).[204] As a former public relations officer in the cabinet of the RCD-K/ML commissioner for transport and communication, Ndjabu had also played a role in the creation of the Ngiti-dominated *Force de résistance patriotique en Ituri* (FRPI, Ituri Patriotic Resistance Force), which had taken place at Mbusa's headquarters in Beni following the UPC's takeover of Bunia.[205] In Beni, as Ndjabu explained, Mbusa and the Congolese gov-

[203] This paragraph draws on an interview (#123) with Augustin Lobo Nyinga, and on Floribert Ndjabu's testimony in ICC 2011b, 27-50.
[204] Interviews with Joseph Chura (#70) and Lobo (#123).
[205] The complex origins of the FNI and FRPI, only sketched here, are analyzed in greater detail in Tamm 2013b, chap. 2.

ernment began to make plans for regaining control over Ituri "at all costs,"[206] thus creating the EMOI, which soon began to send weapons to Lendu and Ngiti militias in Djugu and Irumu territories. In this new context, the FNI and FRPI represented attempts to co-opt the various decentralized militias and to superimpose political structures onto them, a project that never fully succeeded.[207]

After the UPC delegation refused to sign any agreement in Arua and other members meanwhile went to Kigali to discuss an alliance with the RCD-G (see above), Museveni invited the FNI, FPDC, and PUSIC delegations to Kampala for separate negotiations. There, in early February, these three groups together established the *Front pour l'intégration et la paix en Ituri* (FIPI, Front for Integration and Peace in Ituri).[208]

In the words of Ndjabu's former chief of staff, however, the FIPI was "stillborn."[209] At the meeting in Kampala, Ndjabu and Kahwa disagreed on who would become president of the new alliance, eventually leaving the question open. Two additional events in late February and early March then led to FIPI's rupture. First, Lendu and Ngiti militias attacked the strategically important UPC base in Bogoro, killing at least two hundred civilians. Second, Lendu militias attacked the UPC stronghold at Mandro, in Kahwa's chieftaincy, also killing many civilians. Shocked by these massacres, Kahwa officially withdrew from the alliance. Nonetheless, he then helped the UPDF and Lendu/Ngiti militias chase the UPC out of Bunia by asking UPC troops loyal to him to retreat and instead become PUSIC's armed wing.[210]

This only leaves Uganda's role in the creation of Kakwavu's FAPC on March 4, 2003 (see above), to be explained. Given that the FPDC never managed to develop into a proper

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[206] Ndjabu's testimony in ICC 2011a, 45.
[207] On the evolution of these two groups, see Tamm 2013b, chaps. 3-5.
[208] Interview (#98) with a former UPC official; Ndjabu testimony in ICC 2011c, 23-8.
[209] Interview (#70) with Chura (the same expression was also used by numerous other interviewees).
[210] Interviews #81, #94, #98, and #123. On the Bogoro and Mandro attacks, see UNSC 2004, paras. 64-7, 71-2. For the former, Germain Katanga (FRPI) is currently still on trial at the International Criminal Court, whereas Mathieu Ngudjolo (FNI) has already been acquitted.

military force, it was Kakwavu who continued to control Aru and Mahagi territories on behalf of the UPC throughout early 2003. The fact that the Ugandans then decided to encourage him – a Congolese Tutsi – to defect from the Rwandan-backed UPC, in exchange promising to support his new group,[211] shows once again that geopolitics trumps trust (qua ethnicity) in the selection of rebel clients.

Postscript: Ituri After the Fighting in March 2003

The fighting in Bunia on March 6, 2003, was both preceded and followed by a war of words in the media – first between the UPC and Uganda, then also between Uganda and Rwanda.[212] Increasingly concerned by these events and statements, extra-regional actors slowly but surely became more significantly involved in Ituri.

On March 18, a ceasefire was signed by the DRC, Uganda, and Ituri's armed groups, with the notable exception of the UPC. The UN mission, MONUC, then helped bring together almost two hundred delegates representing all the main ethnic groups to set up the IPC, which in turn established an interim administration. Shortly afterwards, on April 25, the UPDF began to withdraw its troops. Trying to fill the void, MONUC sent in 720 Uruguayan peacekeepers, who were faced with a chaotic situation, as the UPDF's withdrawal, completed by May 6, led to heavy clashes in Bunia among Ituri's armed groups.[213]

In the meantime, the UPC regrouped and – with PUSIC support – retook Bunia on May 12. According to former PUSIC members, this renewed changing of sides came about when they realized that they could not contain the massacres perpetrated by Lendu militias in Bunia. Prior to the attack, Rwanda had resupplied the UPC with weapons. Kigali report-

[211] The Ugandan army delivered on this promise, for instance by briefly crossing the border and crushing an internal mutiny against Kakwavu in May 2003 (see Titeca 2011, 62).
[212] See *The New Vision* 2003a; *The EastAfrican* 2003.
[213] See UNSC 2003, paras. 13-6.

edly told the UPC that, in order to improve their bargaining position, they had to take back Bunia before the arrival of additional peacekeeping contingents.[214]

During the fighting for Bunia, thousands of civilians sought shelter near MONUC's headquarters and thousands more fled the city. These events, coupled with reports about other massacres in Djugu and Irumu territories, finally propelled the international community into more forceful action. On June 6, the UN-authorized and French-led Interim Emergency Multinational Force (IEMF) began to deploy in Bunia. It swiftly took control of the city, on a few occasions clashing with both Hema and Lendu fighters. Given the IEMF mandate, which was limited to Bunia, violence nonetheless continued in Ituri's countryside.[215]

By the time the IEMF left in mid-September, MONUC had deployed 2,400 soldiers to Bunia. This number increased steadily in the following months and MONUC also began to deploy outside the city.[216] It therefore became clear to all of the armed groups that taking Bunia was now impossible. While fighting continued across the district, the groups' leaders began to negotiate with MONUC and the Congolese government. Due to the significant involvement of extra-regional actors from June 2003 onwards, I do not cover subsequent developments in Ituri in this dissertation, although Rwanda and Uganda continued to meddle in the district until at least 2005.[217]

Before providing a summary of the four turning points concerning Uganda's alliances in northeastern Congo analyzed in this chapter so far, I now turn to North Kivu's *Petit Nord*, focusing on Rwanda's changing alliances once the RCD-G began to appear as an unreliable partner towards the end of 2002.

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[214] Interviews; *The New Vision* 2003f.
[215] See *UN Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit* 2004.
[216] See Fahey 2012, 16.
[217] On the dynamics of conflict in Ituri from March 2003 until early 2013, see Tamm 2013a, 35-45; Tamm 2013b, 29-42.

October 2002: Rwanda, Serufuli, and the Indirect Control over North Kivu

> Rwanda still supports the national RCD[-G] leadership but devalued it to a secondary tool of influence in Kinshasa. It has now resolved to create and strengthen autonomous power-bases in the Kivus and to make the most out of its own sphere of influence. It sponsors autonomy movements and offers to share resources and power with certain leaders independently of the political configuration in Kinshasa.
>
> —*International Crisis Group*, January 24, 2003[218]

On October 5, 2002, the last Rwandan army contingent withdrew from the DRC, marching from Goma to the Rwandan border town of Gisenyi.[219] Within less than a month, more than 20,000 Rwandan troops had left the country.[220] Immediately after this withdrawal, according to Aloys Tegera from the Goma-based Pole Institute, North Kivu's Governor Eugène Serufuli "proceeded to organise his men into 17 military battalions under the command of his own appointees. The military and political high command of the RCD[-G] had only the right to be informed."[221]

While the official end date of the Rwandan troop withdrawal lends itself to being characterized as a turning point, the internal power shift within the RCD-G from their top leadership to Governor Serufuli – himself an RCD founding member – was a gradual process that had begun in the wake of his appointment in 2000. Its roots date back even further, to the creation of Serufuli's nongovernmental organization *Tous pour la paix et le développement* (TPD) in October 1998. As a Congolese Hutu, the Rwandans hoped that he could be instrumental in driving a wedge between Congolese and Rwandan Hutu, thus weakening ALIR's local support base in the Kivus.[222] In other words, Serufuli's initial rise was directly linked to the primary reason for Rwanda's second invasion, that is, the transnational threat faced by ALIR, the ex-FAR/Interahamwe's successor organization.

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[218] ICG 2003a, 18.
[219] See AFP 2002b; IRIN 2002e.
[220] According to information verified by MONUC, 20,941 RPA forces had been withdrawn since September 17, 2002. By contrast, the RPA claimed that their number amounted to 23,760. See UNSC 2002b, para. 10.
[221] Tegera 2003, 5.
[222] See Stearns 2013a, 17.

The fact that Kigali then helped Serufuli achieve military predominance over the main RCD-G leadership, however, had to do first and foremost with anticipating that the latter would sooner or later become part of a transitional government in Kinshasa.[223] As Prunier puts it, the rebel leadership was therefore "seen by Rwanda as being in an ambiguous position. Where would its future loyalty lie: with Kinshasa or with Kigali?"[224]

In the last part of the subsection that follows, I will argue that this prospect of agency slack was the main driver in Rwanda's decision to shift its support to North Kivu's governor. After first explaining the creation of the TPD and its subsequent role in Kigali's counterinsurgency strategy, I will also discuss the increasingly important role of resource opportunities as the conflict dragged on. In this regard, Rwanda's backing of Serufuli represented an attempt to guarantee its continued military *and* economic influence in – or, put more drastically, indirect control over – North Kivu following its official withdrawal.

Alliance Dynamics: Rwanda and the RCD-G in North Kivu, October 1998 to October 2002

The Role of Serufuli's TPD in the Context of Rwanda's Counterinsurgency

The creation of the TPD in October 1998 needs to be seen in the context of Rwanda's counterinsurgency campaign in the Second Congo War. One of the reasons for ALIR's continued ability to launch incursions into northwestern Rwanda after the first war was the local support the group received in North Kivu, especially among Congolese Hutu in Masisi and Rutshuru (see Chapter 4).

In their first counterinsurgency campaign, the RPA had – together with AFDL forces – brutally fought both Rwandan and Congolese Hutu, killing not only thousands of farmers and villagers but also many political, business, and community leaders. By September 1997, however, the Rwandan government adjusted its strategy and launched efforts to co-

[223] See Tull 2005, 181.
[224] Prunier 2009, 294.

opt Congolese Hutu elites. Some pragmatists seized that opportunity and in turn convinced many of their militia fighters (*combattants*) to join the Congolese army, which at that time was still led by James Kabarebe.[225] Demonstrating the improved relations between parts of the Congolese Hutu community and Rwanda at the start of the second war, the RCD not only featured Hutu as founding members but also appointed some of them to important positions: Théophile Mpabuka as minister for conflict resolution, François-Xavier Nzabara Masetsa as Mayor of Goma, and Serufuli as paymaster general.[226]

Nonetheless, other Congolese Hutu resisted Rwanda's overtures and in early 1998 formed a new militia, the so-called Mongol, based mainly in southern Masisi. This group remained allied to ALIR. After Laurent Kabila turned against his foreign sponsors in mid-1998, the Mongol and ALIR began to link up with local Mai-Mai groups, together constituting the armed opposition to Rwanda and the RCD in North Kivu. As these links were to some extent fostered and supported by the Congolese government, all these groups came to be seen as Kinshasa's local proxy forces in the second war.[227]

In this context, it is important to highlight that although, at the height of the war, the RCD-G claimed to govern North Kivu's *Petit Nord*, South Kivu, Maniema, the city of Kisangani, and large parts of northern Katanga and Kasaï-Oriental, this vast area was in fact "a mosaic of enclaves under the control of competing armed bands."[228] While the RCD-G and the RPA held all the main towns, groups such as the Mongol and ALIR "controlled pieces of the countryside in an ever-changing pattern."[229]

Especially at the start of the war, the Rwandan army faced the challenge of fighting a counterinsurgency campaign in North Kivu whilst also sending thousands of soldiers to the frontlines deep inside the DRC. Against this military background, the creation of the TPD

[225] See Stearns 2013a, 15.
[226] See Stearns 2012b, 32; Tull 2005, 181.
[227] See Stearns 2013a, 15-6; African Rights 2000, 46-7.
[228] Autesserre 2010, 51. See also Maps 5.1 and 5.2 above.
[229] Ibid., 51.

took place in Goma on October 10, 1998. Officially a non-profit organization focused on social and economic issues, its founders were Congolese Hutu *and* Tutsi, seemingly reuniting North Kivu's Banyarwanda.[230] Several mid-ranking Rwandan intelligence officers were also directly involved in its creation.[231] Alexis Makabuza, an influential Tutsi businessman in Goma, became TPD president, while Eugène Serufuli, a Hutu medical assistant and businessman from Rutshuru, was its vice president prior to being appointed Governor of North Kivu in 2000.[232] Given Serufuli's central role in the organization, however, he is sometimes mistakenly identified as its first president.[233]

One of the TPD's main activities was to support the repatriation of Rwandan Hutu refugees, for which the organization even received financial support from UNHCR via the office of North Kivu's then Governor Léonard Kanyamuhanga (a Congolese Tutsi). These efforts were of course welcomed by Kigali, as they reduced ALIR's recruitment pool in eastern Congo.[234] In an attempt to gain popular support, the TPD also launched several local development projects.[235]

Other activities were seen with more suspicion by both local and international actors. Between 1999 and 2000, according to the International Crisis Group, the TPD was not only involved in resettling around 10,000 Congolese Tutsi returnees from Rwanda in relatively safe areas of Masisi but also clandestinely helped resettle others near the border of the Virunga National Park, which UNHCR considered too dangerous.[236] UN observers suspected that many of the returnees were supposed to join the Local Defense Forces (LDF), paramilitary groups based in rural areas and initially comprising mostly former Hutu *combat-*

[230] See Mararo 2004, 151.
[231] See Stearns 2013a, 18. The TPD's direct links with the Rwandan Directory of Military Intelligence are confirmed in ICG 2003a, 20.
[232] See Tull 2005, 182; Stearns 2013a, 18-9.
[233] See Mararo 2004, 147; ICG 2007a, 25 (note 138); De Villers 2009, 142.
[234] See Tull 2005, 179.
[235] See ICG 2003a, 20; Stearns 2013a, 18.
[236] See ICG 2000b, 17.

tants.[237] The Crisis Group outlined the broader Rwandan counterinsurgency logic that may have been behind the resettlements assisted by the TPD:

> Positioning a population of armed, loyal Tutsis along the Western edge of the Virunga Park may be an effort to block the infiltration of Interahamwe [i.e., ALIR] towards the Rwandan frontier. If this population helps to cement support for the RPA from the other inhabitants of the region, as is outlined in the [*sic*] Kigali's political strategy of fashioning a common Banyarwandan front for peace, then Interahamwe access to the park will be cut off.[238]

The UN's suspicions seemed to be confirmed around two years later, when the largely forced repatriation of several thousand Congolese Tutsi – organized by Rwandan authorities as well as by the RCD-G and/or the TPD – coincided almost exactly with the Rwandan troop withdrawal from September to October 2002.[239] A US Committee for Refugees report suggests that this wave of forced repatriation was meant to "[p]rovide transportation and cover for the reinsertion of [demobilized] Rwandan soldiers and other combatants to eastern DRC," and to "[d]evelop an ethnic Tutsi constituency in eastern DRC from which, in part, to recruit young men into armed militias."[240] These claims were in line with rumors reported elsewhere according to which Rwandans remained covertly involved in the units that then came to be seen as Governor Serufuli's army.[241]

Before turning to the growing importance of resource opportunities, it is worth highlighting that Rwanda's backing of the TPD in general and Serufuli, a Congolese Hutu, in particular once more "underscores the fact that the role of ethnicity is contingent on the political context."[242] Put differently, similar to the case of its alliance with the Hema-dominated UPC in Ituri, geopolitics mattered more to Kigali than the mistrust that the cooperation between Congolese and Rwandan Hutu between 1994 and 1997 had created.

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[237] The LDF system was an idea that the RCD adopted from the RPA's counterinsurgency strategy in northwestern Rwanda (see African Rights 2000, 66).
[238] ICG 2000b, 17.
[239] See Tull 2005, 180-1. While the report cited in the next footnote mentions the RCD-G, another report refers to the TPD (see ICG 2003a, 20-1). Given the close links between these two organizations, it is not unlikely that interviewees essentially considered them one and the same.
[240] *US Committee for Refugees* 2002.
[241] See UNSC 2002b, para. 11; ICG 2003a, 20-1; and, on "the governor's army," Tegera 2003, 6.
[242] Tull 2003, 442 (note 47).

The Growing Importance of Resource Opportunities During Rwanda's Occupation

In an addendum to its first report, published in November 2001, the UN Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the DRC acknowledged that Rwanda's initial objectives for entering the second war in August 1998 "were primarily security-oriented."[243] At the same time, however, the Panel insisted that it had demonstrated "the structured way in which the involvement of [the] RPA developed into the full-scale commercial enterprise that it now represents."[244]

While, as I have already argued above with regard to Uganda's involvement, some of the information in the various panel reports may well be exaggerated or wrong, the larger fact that Rwanda made enormous profits from the extraction of Congolese resources cannot be denied. The key difference between the Ugandan and the Rwandan occupation zones was that in the former it was mostly individual UPDF officers who benefited, whereas in the latter there was a more coordinated system – linking authorities in Kigali, the RPA, the RCD-G, and both Congolese and Rwandan companies – that primarily benefited the Rwandan regime as a whole.[245]

On the basis of the panel reports and several additional interviews with key actors, Stearns suggests that Rwanda controlled every stage of the mineral trade, "from the digging to air transport to the export company in Kigali."[246] He also reports that hundreds of prisoners from western Rwanda were transported to the Kivus in order to work in coltan, gold, and tin mining pits.[247] The world market price of coltan – the short form for columbite-tantalite, a mixture of two mineral ores[248] – spiked in 2000 and remained high in 2001,

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[243] UNSC 2001b, para. 91.
[244] Ibid., para. 91.
[245] See UNSC 2001a, paras. 85-6. On the sharp contrast with regard to individual military officers, see also Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012, 391 (note 45).
[246] Stearns 2011, 298.
[247] See ibid., 298.
[248] See Nest 2011, 3. This 220-page book, titled simply *Coltan*, illustrates the importance that coltan has taken on in media reporting and advocacy campaigns over the last decade.

leading to record profits in the area under Rwandan and RCD-G control.[249] In a remarkable interview with a *Washington Post* reporter in March 2001, then RCD-G president Adolphe Onusumba claimed: "We raise more or less $200,000 per month from diamonds[.] […] Col-tan gives us more: a million dollars a month."[250]

Onusumba justified the RCD-G's decision, taken in November 2000, to impose a monopoly on the export of coltan: "I mean, we are at war[.] […] We need to maintain the soldiers. We need to pay for services."[251] When asked about rumors that the RCD-G covered much of the Rwandan army's operational costs, Onusumba nodded:

> "That is why I can't show you our bill," he said, referring to the bank statement the RCD finance minister had just placed in front of him. "There is cooperation, but Rwanda is not charging us the fees like Zimbabwe charges Kabila," Onusumba said. "It is a brotherhood. … If the Rwandans come and they get col-tan from Punia or Walikale, it's up to them."[252]

Around that period, President Kagame himself referred to the conflict in the DRC as "a self-financing war."[253] Drawing on evidence given by a journalist to a Belgian Senate committee, Prunier claims that Rwanda's Congo Desk – which reportedly dealt with all aspects of the military operation[254] – made $64 million from profits in coltan in 2000 and $44 million in 2001, of which around 60 to 70 percent were reinvested in the war.[255] Neither the RCD-G nor Rwandan officials saw anything 'illegal' in this involvement, as both had formal procedures that Congolese and Rwandan businessmen had to observe.[256]

The growing importance of these resource opportunities of course does not mean that transnational threats became irrelevant. Following the Rwandan withdrawal, all of the ALIR forces – since 2001 operating under the label *Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda* (FDLR, Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) – that were pre-

[249] See Stearns 2011, 299-300; Nest et al. 2006, 37.
[250] Quoted in *Washington Post* 2001.
[251] Quoted in ibid. On the company profiting from this short-lived monopoly, jointly owned by the RCD-G and three companies belonging to Belgian, Rwandan, and South African nationals, see Nest 2011, 86-7.
[252] *Washington Post* 2001.
[253] Quoted in UNSC 2001a, para. 114.
[254] See ibid., para. 198; Stearns 2011, 301.
[255] See Prunier 2006, 109. For lower estimates, see Nest 2011, 93-4.
[256] Interview (#25) with Emmanuel Kamanzi. On Rwanda, see the interview with former intelligence chief Patrick Karegeya in Stearns 2011, 301.

viously stationed in the Kasais and Katanga joined up with their comrades in the Kivus. Albeit officially no longer supported by Kinshasa, the FDLR – estimated at around 15,000 to 20,000 forces – thus remained "a genuine security concern for Rwanda."[257]

However, prior to the withdrawal of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) – the new name of the RPA from May 2002 onwards – several incidents were reported in which Rwandan troops either did not attack ALIR/FDLR fighters despite knowing their locations or even traded minerals with them.[258] The UN Panel of Experts also took note of a letter, dated May 26, 2000, from RCD-G military commander Jean-Pierre Ondekane, in which he urges his units to maintain good relations "with our Interahamwe and Mayi-Mayi brothers" and "if necessary to let them exploit the sub-soil for their survival."[259] Forgery or not, to the Panel, several observers, as well as most Congolese on the ground, such reports only reaffirmed their belief "that it was not Kigali's intention to decisively defeat its foes because their presence in the Congo provides it with a welcome smokescreen to pursue primarily economically motivated agendas."[260]

Given the challenges of counterinsurgency campaigns – which the United States and its allies once again learned the hard way in Afghanistan over the past decade – it is difficult to assess these somewhat conspiratorial claims. What seems clearer with regard to resource opportunities is the fact that some of the companies involved in the Kivus had "close family or financial ties to the Rwandan government, employing army officers as directors or allotting substantial shares to the party."[261] Despite the highly structured Rwandan involvement, there is thus evidence to support the salience of the opportunity mechanism, that is, Kagame's keeping his key domestic allies happy via foreign spoils.

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[257] ICG 2003a, 3.
[258] See Tull 2005, 194-5.
[259] Quoted in UNSC 2002a, para. 66.
[260] Tull 2005, 195. On this issue, see also Vlassenroot and Romkema 2002.
[261] Stearns 2011, 301; for examples of firms and individuals, see ibid.

While Governor Serufuli's exact role in these dealings is not known in detail, he clearly managed to position himself well. Summarizing the impact of resource opportunities in the 1998–2002 period, Stearns concludes: "Political and security imperatives had become enmeshed with the drive for profit, as Serufuli cemented his power at both the grassroots level and in business circles – a feat achieved by few leaders in the Kivus before him."[262] I now turn to the simultaneously occurring peace negotiations and explain why and how Kigali began to favor Serufuli to the detriment of other RCD-G leaders.

The RCD-G in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and Kigali's Shift to Serufuli

When RCD-G representatives signed the Lusaka Agreement on August 31, 1999, which led to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD), Emile Ilunga was still the group's figurehead.[263] At the end of October 2000, Ilunga and his two vice presidents Ondekane and Nyarugabo resigned from their posts, citing – according to a rebel spokesman – leadership failures with regard to mobilization and communication.[264] Adolphe Onusumba, the new president, was a Tetela from Kasaï-Oriental, hailing from the same area as legendary post-independence leader Patrice Lumumba. Observers interpreted this nomination as an attempt to emulate the MLC and garner more popular support for the RCD-G.[265]

The real new leader, however, appeared to be Azarias Ruberwa, a Munyamulenge who had been Bizima Karaha's chief of staff in the foreign ministry prior to the outbreak of the second war. He was named both secretary-general and coordinator of the executive.[266] Together with Onusumba, he was the RCD-G's main negotiator in the ICD, which picked up speed after Joseph Kabila's succession to power in January 2001 (see above). Philip Winter, ICD Facilitator Masire's chief of staff, noted that Ruberwa was "the only Congolese

[262] Stearns 2013a, 20.
[263] See IRIN 1999m. On how Ilunga replaced Wamba, see Chapter 4.
[264] See IRIN 2000a.
[265] See ICG 2000b, 27-8; De Villers et al. 2001, 75.
[266] See De Villers et al. 2001, 75.

leader about whom I never heard rumours of corruption, however much he was criticized for being a Rwandan lackey."[267] Winter's personal take on the relations between the RCD-G and Rwanda in the context of the 2002 negotiations in Sun City (South Africa) is extremely instructive, revealing the difference in perception between Congolese on the ground in North Kivu and international negotiators focused on fostering a power-sharing agreement between Kinshasa and the rebels:

> In my own view, it was a Congolese myth that the Rwandans controlled the RCD. The Government of Rwanda certainly had close relationships with the rebels, but the RCD was a loose coalition of patriots and opportunists, men of principle and men without scruples, Congolese Tutsis and ex-AFDL fighters, ex-Government soldiers and prosperous businessmen. To that extent it reflected the reality of much of the Congolese political class and was probably not under the effective control of its neighbouring government or anyone else, despite the existence of a team of Rwandan 'advisors' nearby in Sun City, and despite its military reliance on Rwanda.[268]

In line with my arguments about rebel leaders' pursuit of their basic goal, that is, taking (a share of) state power, and the role of learning from fighting (see Chapter 3), Gauthier de Villers makes a similar case for not regarding the RCD-G leaders as Kigali's puppets, highlighting that they constantly tried to find ways of benefitting from their "situation of dependency."[269] This brings us back to Rwanda's concerns, noted at the start of this section, that the closer the leadership group around Ruberwa got to a power-sharing deal – which they eventually signed on December 17, 2002 – the more Kigali had to worry.

When asked about Rwanda's incremental shift of support to Serufuli, RPF stalwart Tito Rutaremara acknowledged that once the RCD-G leaders became preoccupied with obtaining positions in Kinshasa, they seemed less concerned with the security situation in North Kivu, whereas the governor, who would remain on the ground, was naturally more focused on this issue.[270] Rutaremara's statement supports my interpretation that it was the prospect of further agency slack in the impending transition period that first and foremost caused Kigali's increasing reliance on Serufuli.

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[267] Winter 2012, 191. See also ICG 2003a, 15.
[268] Winter 2012, 190 (note 2).
[269] De Villers 2009, 134 (my translation).
[270] Interview (#35) with Rutaremara.

Around August 2002, the RCD-G was once again consumed by infighting, this time pitting the military against the political leadership. It reportedly took ten days of negotiations, supervised by James Kabarebe (who had been appointed Rwandan Chief of Defence Staff in July 2002), before an attempted coup by the military against Onusumba and Ruberwa was avoided. One of the main issues appears to have been the finance department's limited allocation of resources to the armed forces.[271] Meanwhile, Serufuli had been able to use a large share of North Kivu's provincial budget for the purpose of recruiting and training thousands of young men, many of them Hutu. Although these recruits – who were trained by the RPA/RDF – later officially joined the RCD-G's army, their loyalty was considered to lie directly with the governor.[272]

By October 2002, Serufuli had, with Rwandan support, effectively built "a rebellion within a rebellion."[273] As the next section shows, however, Kigali would soon diversify its support by encouraging General Laurent Nkunda's defection from the newly integrated national army, whilst Kinshasa slowly began to swing Serufuli to the government's side.

August 2005: Nkunda's Rwandan-Backed Return to Prominence

In late August 2005, after more than a year of keeping a relatively low profile, Laurent Nkunda reemerged as one of the main threats to the DRC's transition. In a statement from August 25, Nkunda accused the "Kabila clan" of organizing a "plan for ethnic cleansing in North Kivu under the cover of military integration."[274] He also went on to list the government's "divisionist" actions in other provinces, concluding that "it is undeniable that the Kabila clan, through its government, remains the sole responsible for the destabilization of the country and, more precisely, its eastern part, notably the Kivu." Nkunda ended the let-

[271] See ICG 2003a, 18.
[272] See Tegera 2003, 5.
[273] Ibid., 5. This view was also shared by a long-serving MONUSCO analyst (interview #17).
[274] This and the following quotations are my translations of the original letter published in *VirungaNews.com* 2005 (see also AI 2005, 11).

ter by saying that the time had come to use "all necessary means to force this government to step down," thus effectively announcing a new rebellion.[275]

Similar to the previous section on Serufuli, identifying Nkunda's statement as a turning point should not obfuscate the fact that his return to prominence was a gradual process, culminating in the formal creation of the *Congrès national pour la défense du peuple* (CNDP, National Congress for the Defense of the People) in July 2006.[276] This particular statement from August 2005 is chosen because it was directly preceded by growing Rwandan concerns that Serufuli was getting ever closer to Kinshasa. In response, Kabarebe had called several high-ranking former RCD officers stationed in North Kivu, asking them to provide protection for Nkunda's return from temporary exile in Rwanda.[277]

In other words, it was Serufuli's agency slack – his getting cozy with Kabila's government – that led Rwanda to focus its support on Nkunda, who had previously been groomed alongside Serufuli but then disappeared from the public stage following his short-lived occupation of Bukavu in June 2004.[278] The first subsection that follows covers the period from November 2002 to August 2005, analyzing Rwanda's support to both Serufuli and Nkunda, as well as the subsequent shift from Serufuli to Nkunda. The second subsection provides a brief summary of events from August 2005 to January 2009; it concludes where the introduction to this dissertation began: with Nkunda's arrest and Bosco Ntaganda's promotion.

[275] See Stearns 2012a, 23 (note that Nkunda's statement is slightly misdated).
[276] However, Nkunda himself claimed that the CNDP was (informally) created on the day of his statement, that is, on August 25, 2005 (see the interview reported in Scott 2008, 170).
[277] See Stearns 2012a, 22-3.
[278] See AI 2005, 9-11.

Alliance Dynamics: Rwanda's Slowly Shifting Support from Serufuli to Nkunda

From Serufuli's Predominance to Nkunda's Defection, November 2002 to September 2003

Despite having helped Serufuli gain military independence from the RCD-G's army (see above), Rwanda continued to work with the RCD-G's leadership following its official withdrawal in October 2002.[279] This continued cooperation was evident, for instance, in the RCD-G's alliance with the Rwandan-backed UPC, formed on January 6, 2003 (see above), and Ruberwa's subsequent attempt to convince ICD Facilitator Masire that the UPC ought to be included in the national transition process.[280] Even after signing on to the Pretoria Agreement in December 2002, the RCD-G thus tried to renegotiate aspects of the power-sharing deal.

Meanwhile, Serufuli's increasingly dominant position on the ground in North Kivu unsurprisingly led to tensions with the RCD-G leadership. On March 23, 2003, a meeting between the governor and RCD-G president Onusumba about the division of revenues reportedly "ended in great tension."[281] The next day, Serufuli "showed his muscle by parading his troops through Goma." Kigali's continued support to Serufuli in that period was no secret, as Serufuli had himself acknowledged one month earlier in a meeting with Amnesty International "that he was still receiving arms and uniforms directly from Rwanda."[282]

Between March and June, the RCD-G launched a military offensive towards the *Grand Nord* controlled by the RCD-K/ML, even taking the strategic towns of Kanyabayonga and Lubero, among others. The fighting only ended when the UN Security Council pressed for a ceasefire.[283] While the UPDF accused Kigali of having deployed two RDF brigades disguised as RCD-G soldiers and of collaborating with Ugandan PRA rebels

[279] See Tull 2005, 181-2.
[280] See Winter 2012, 244.
[281] This and the next quotation are from Tegera 2003, 6.
[282] AI 2003, 18.
[283] See *The New Vision* 2003g.

also based in the area,[284] a Congolese government representative added that "Rwanda was trying to fight a proxy war" using LDF troops under Serufuli's command.[285] These accusations highlight that, independent of whether the advancing Congolese troops formally belonged to the RCD-G's army or the LDF, they were seen as Serufuli's men,[286] who in turn was considered to be working directly with the RDF.

Serufuli's importance to the RCD-G was underlined in June 2003, when he became one of its two new vice presidents. Having already been nominated one month earlier to become one of the four vice presidents of the transitional government in Kinshasa, Ruberwa replaced Onusumba as RCD-G president.[287] Shortly after this reshuffle, on June 30, the transitional government was sworn in, with many leading RCD-G officials taking up positions as ministers, senators, or members of parliament.[288] For the group's army,[289] the beginning of the transition meant that it would progressively become part of the newly created national army, the *Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo* (FARDC, Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo).[290]

The prospect of being merged into the FARDC worried many RCD-G officers, especially those from the Kivus. In September 2003, the RCD-G's North Kivu commander Laurent Nkunda – a Congolese Tutsi from Rutshuru – refused to take up his new position as a general in the FARDC, citing security concerns. He was joined in his defection by two fellow senior Tutsi officers.[291] Nkunda had begun his military career as a transnational recruit of the RPA in 1993 and subsequently joined first the AFDL, then the RCD rebel-

[284] See *The New Vision* 2003d.
[285] *The New Vision* 2003e.
[286] See also ICG 2005, 14.
[287] See IRIN 2003b.
[288] See De Villers 2009, chap. 3.
[289] Note that the RCD-G's army was officially called *Armée nationale congolaise* (ANC, Congolese National Army). Given this misleading name and the large number of other acronyms already introduced, I do not use the abbreviation ANC in the main text.
[290] On the FARDC's troubled trajectory, see Eriksson Baaz and Verweijen 2013.
[291] See Stearns 2008, 246.

lion.[292] His worries were partly rooted in the fear of being prosecuted for his alleged role in war crimes in the context of putting down a mutiny in Kisangani in May 2002.[293]

The Rwandan government played a key role in Nkunda's decision not to take up his new position in the FARDC:

> "Rwanda told Nkunda and others to refuse," according to a senior former CNDP commander. "The order came from Kigali; they needed a plan B in case the transition didn't work out." Another remembered: "The Rwandans told us: 'If you go to Kinshasa, you will come back in coffins.'"[294]

In other words, Rwanda diversified its client portfolio in North Kivu, now being able to draw on both Governor Serufuli and renegade general Nkunda. But how well would these two work together?

Allies Becoming Rivals: Serufuli and Nkunda, October 2003 to August 2005

In December 2003, following several meetings held earlier that year, Nkunda founded an organization called *Synergie nationale pour la paix et la concorde* (SNPC, National Synergy for Peace and Concord) in Bukavu. The group, which subsequently also opened an office in Goma, consisted primarily of civilians from the Banyarwanda, Nande, and Shi communities; its stated goal was to bring together ethnic groups in order to reconcile them and thus foster economic development.[295] Rwanda was reportedly involved in the SNPC's creation, albeit in a more subtle form than in previous cases:

> An Nkunda deserter explained how, dismayed by their past experiences with Congolese management, Rwandan officials gave Nkunda and his fellow leaders handbooks on organizational management and told them not to come calling if they ran into trouble. "They wanted us to figure it out ourselves this time," he said.[296]

While Serufuli supported Nkunda's military efforts in mid-2004, the SNPC's relations with North Kivu's governor appear to have been somewhat ambiguous: one the one hand, Se-

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[292] See ibid., 246; De Villers 2009, 314. Nkunda had already become an RPF member in 1991, two years before joining its armed wing (see Scott 2008, 73-8).
[293] See HRW 2002a, 2.
[294] Stearns 2012a, 19.
[295] See ibid., 19; Scott 2008, 148.
[296] Stearns 2008, 247.

rufuli's former chief of staff (Denis Ntare Semadwinga, a Congolese Tutsi from Rutshuru) was one of the new organization's leaders;[297] on the other, one of Nkunda's close associates claimed that the TPD – which was still considered Serufuli's tool – declined the SNPC's request to form a partnership.[298]

By that time, Serufuli was seen as "the nexus of military and economic power in the region, '*l'homme incontournable*' – the indispensable man – of Goma."[299] His TPD's core idea of reinvigorating a common Banyarwanda identity was furthered on January 19, 2004, when the two main representatives of North Kivu's Hutu and Tutsi communities published a "Memorandum of Congolese Rwandophones," which outlined their history of being persecuted and exhorted the transitional government to resolve their citizenship issues (see Chapter 4).[300]

The notion of a threatened minority was also instrumentalized by Nkunda during the Bukavu crisis in May and June 2004. The background to this crisis were not only disagreements about the transition process between hardliners in President Kabila's camp and in that of the RCD-G, but also tensions in South Kivu, where the RCD-G in 2003 had appointed two men as governor and regional military commander that had both been convicted in absentia of having been involved in the assassination of Joseph Kabila's father.[301]

The transitional agreement then led to the appointment of a Kabila loyalist, General Prosper Nabyolwa, as South Kivu's new military commander, with RCD-G Colonel Jules Mutebutsi, a Munyamulenge, as his deputy. When Nabyolwa arrested an RCD-G officer implicated in Laurent Kabila's death, Mutebutsi responded by attacking his superior's house, forcing him to flee. While Kinshasa replaced Nabyolwa with General Mbuza Mabe,

[297] See Stearns 2012a, 64.
[298] See Scott 2008, 148.
[299] ICG 2005, 10.
[300] See ibid., 11.
[301] See ibid., 4; Stearns 2012a, 21.

another Kabila loyalist, Mutebutsi began to gather (former) RCD-G Banyamulenge commanders around him and to reach out to Nkunda's dissidents in North Kivu.[302]

When fighting restarted in Bukavu in late May, General Mabe's soldiers targeted several Banyamulenge civilians, prompting Nkunda and the Rwandan government to claim that another genocide against Tutsi was in the making.[303] Drawing on many soldiers loyal to Serufuli and some new recruits from Congolese refugee camps in Rwanda, as well as on logistical support provided by both Serufuli's TPD and the RDF, Nkunda marched on Bukavu to support Mutebutsi's group of dissidents.[304] After controlling the town for several days, Mutebutsi and Nkunda withdrew on June 10 due to international pressure. Whereas Serufuli merely stopped short of publicly endorsing the two dissident commanders, RCD-G president Ruberwa eventually denounced both of them as mutineers.[305]

The Bukavu crisis almost led to the collapse of the country's transition process. On July 9, 2004, eight Hutu and Tutsi RCD-G parliamentarians – among them Bizima Karaha, Emmanuel Kamanzi, and TPD co-founders Alexis Makabuza and Théophile Mpabuka – wrote an open letter to Ruberwa, in which they announced the suspension of their participation in the national assembly, accusing the government of destabilizing eastern Congo and of aggression towards "certain ethnic communities or certain neighboring countries."[306] In short, the RCD-G was in a process of fragmentation, and Ruberwa began to lose control over both its non-Rwandophone politicians in Kinshasa and its hardline Rwandophone elements who returned to their Kivu strongholds.[307] Following the military confrontations in late 2004 discussed below, Serufuli went as far as saying that "Ruberwa is our brother, but he doesn't have anything to say here."[308]

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[302] See ICG 2005, 5.
[303] Subsequent investigations found these allegations to have been grossly exaggerated (see HRW 2004).
[304] See ICG 2005, 5-6; Stearns 2012a, 21.
[305] See ICG 2005, 5-6
[306] Quoted in De Villers 2009, 322 (my translation); for the list of signatories, see ICG 2005, 10.
[307] See De Villers 2009, 322-3; ICG 2005, 18.
[308] Quoted in ICG 2005, 11.

While Mutebutsi fled to Rwanda in the wake of the Bukavu crisis, Nkunda retreated to the highlands of Masisi. Feeling betrayed by the RCD-G leadership in Kinshasa, he disappeared from the public scene (until his August 2005 statement) and instead – still under the SNPC label – focused on covert attempts to "rally all those in eastern Congo who felt they had lost out in the transition."[309] Meanwhile, with elections on the horizon (initially scheduled for mid-2005), President Kabila became increasingly concerned by Serufuli's continued control over North Kivu's *Petit Nord* and by the emergence of Nkunda and his fellow dissidents, who appeared at the very least to be tolerated by the governor.[310]

In late November 2004, Kabila saw an opening for military action when, despite ongoing international mediation efforts, President Kagame announced that he would send RDF soldiers into eastern Congo to hunt down the FDLR, which still occasionally launched incursions into Rwanda from North Kivu. Using around 10,000 troops – most of whom had been sent to the Kivus following the Bukavu crisis – Kabila launched Operation Bima ("Get Out"), which was officially aimed at the FDLR but in reality represented an attempt to regain control over the *Petit Nord*.[311] In early December, the advancing FARDC troops were stopped in Kanyabayonga by (former) RCD-G soldiers considered loyal to Nkunda and Serufuli.[312]

According to a well-informed Congolese analyst, it was this military defeat in Kanyabayonga that made Kabila realize that he could not defeat Serufuli militarily and thus needed to find other ways to neutralize him and the broader threat of a united Banyarwanda front that the governor embodied.[313] Not coincidentally, at the height of the fighting in December, several Hutu military officers and local leaders such as Goma's mayor "wrote letters denouncing the manipulation of Banyarwanda identity and expressing

[309] ICG 2007a, 4. For details, see Stearns 2008, 249; Scott 2008, 169-70.
[310] See De Villers 2009, 319.
[311] See ICG 2005, 7.
[312] On this and other battles during the military offensive, see AI 2005, 22-33. It was not always clear who actually controlled these RCD-G troops (see Scott 2008, 160-1, 166).
[313] Interview #19.

allegiance to the central government."[314] Weakening domestic opponents by buying off some of their key partners was a strategy that Kabila and his entourage used throughout the transition, one of the most prominent cases being Olivier Kamitatu, MLC secretary-general and one of Bemba's closest associates since their studies together at a management school in Brussels.[315]

Although details remain unclear, it is undisputed that Serufuli developed closer ties with Kabila throughout 2005. With Nkunda's emergence, the disintegration of the Hutu-Tutsi alliance, and the prospect of elections in which North Kivu's "indigenous" populations were almost certain to punish a governor they saw as "Rwanda's underling,"[316] it made strategic sense for Serufuli to turn away from Kigali and towards Kinshasa:

> "He felt that his authority was being challenged by Nkunda, that he was no longer in control," according to one of the governor's close collaborators. Serufuli himself was more explicit: "I had felt since Sun City […] that the RCD[-G] didn't have a future. That's why I took my decision to get closer to Kinshasa."[317]

The more uncertain his loyalty appeared during 2005, the more Nkunda "began to serve Rwanda as 'checks and balances' on Serufuli."[318] James Kabarebe's personal role in preparing the ground for Nkunda's announcement in August 2005 (see above) can therefore be seen as a sign that the Rwandans had grown so suspicious of Serufuli's links to Kabila that they decided to focus their support on what by then appeared a much more trustworthy ally – one who had himself been involved in the RPF's struggle for power in Rwanda.

As I discuss briefly in the following postscript, events in early 2006 would leave no doubt that Nkunda and Serufuli had turned from allies into rivals.

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[314] Stearns 2012a, 22.
[315] See Carayannis 2008, 5, 11; De Villers 2009, 288; Stearns 2011, 233.
[316] Interview (#21) with a Congolese political science professor.
[317] Stearns 2012a, 22.
[318] Interview (#19) with a Congolese analyst.

Postscript: Nkunda's Rise and Fall, August 2005 to January 2009

The clearest sign of the new rivalry between Nkunda and Serufuli came in early 2006. Following clashes between Nkunda's dissidents and FARDC units in Rutshuru in late 2005, Serufuli publicly condemned Nkunda's actions. The governor then used his personal influence over Hutu commanders of dissident army brigades largely consisting of his former LDF fighters, from whom Nkunda had initially recruited most of his soldiers. In February 2006, brigade commander Major David Rugayi defected from Nkunda's side, taking more than 1,400 soldiers away from Nkunda and into the FARDC. Some months later, another Hutu brigade commander, Colonel Smith Gihanga, followed suit.[319] In short, there could no longer be any doubt that "the Hutu-Tutsi alliance that had underpinned RCD[-G] success in North Kivu was broken."[320]

Only a few days before the national and provincial elections that eventually took place in July 2006, Nkunda announced the creation of the CNDP, emphasizing his role as the protector of minorities.[321] While the CNDP did not disrupt the elections, the murder of a Congolese Tutsi in Sake on November 24, 2006, prompted Nkunda to launch a military offensive, swiftly taking Sake and advancing towards Goma, stopped only by UN armored vehicles and helicopters. Negotiations in Kigali at the end of the year then led to a temporary deal between Kinshasa and Nkunda, which called for the integration of CDNP troops into the army without their having to leave North Kivu (so-called *mixage*).[322]

The fragile deal, however, quickly began to break down. In early 2007, apparently without asking for Kinshasa's permission, Nkunda's troops began to attack FDLR positions, leading to an estimated 180,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) between January and June. In December, Kabila finally launched an offensive against the renegade CNDP,

[319] See ICG 2007a, 5; Stearns 2013a, 25.
[320] Stearns 2012a, 24.
[321] See Reyntjens 2009, 214-5; Stearns 2008, 251.
[322] See Stearns 2012a, 29-30.

which failed miserably. Until then, the CNDP had used the *mixage* deal to amass further resources and recruits, now comprising of around 3,000 to 5,000 troops.[323]

Despite numerous subsequent peace negotiations, Nkunda launched a new offensive in North Kivu in August 2008, resulting in a humanitarian crisis with more than 250,000 IDPs. In October, he even called for an all-out rebellion against Kinshasa. Due to significant international pressure, several high-level diplomatic meetings followed.[324] It was in this context that the Congolese-Rwandan *rapprochement* was announced at Hotel Ihusi on January 16, 2009 (see Chapter 1), leading to Nkunda's demise and Bosco Ntaganda's promotion. While the RDF had initially provided significant support for the CNDP's offensive, it subsequently moved to arrest Nkunda and put him under house arrest in Rwanda.[325]

Analysts agree that Kigali's decision to turn on Nkunda was mainly due to the fact that he "had become too autonomous and thus 'uncontrollable.'"[326] In the words of the International Crisis Group, Nkunda had turned into "an embarrassment and a liability" for the Rwandans.[327] The fact that Nkunda was replaced by Ntaganda and quickly arrested demonstrates that his behavior was a strategic mistake; he had overplayed his hand.[328] Put differently, Nkunda – unlike Laurent Kabila in May/July 1998 – was simply not in a position to get away with agency slack vis-à-vis his Rwandan patrons.

[323] See Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2009, 480; Stearns 2008, 254-8; Stearns 2012a, 30-1.
[324] See ICG 2009, 3-7.
[325] See ibid., 8; Stearns 2012a, 34-5.
[326] Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2009, 482. See also Stearns 2012a, 33-4.
[327] ICG 2009, 9. In December 2008, a UN report providing detailed evidence of Rwandan support to the CNDP between 2007 and 2008 was published (see UNSC 2008, para. 61-8), leading to international condemnation.
[328] Interview (#39) with a former MONUC official.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed six turning points concerning transnational alliances between the Rwandan or the Ugandan government and Congolese rebel groups, altogether covering ten distinct alliances (see Table 5.1). Every single one of these ten cases was largely the result of prior alliance dynamics, once again highlighting the importance of my theory's attention to feedback effects (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, although all six turning points related primarily to local rather than national control over territory, the theory was able to explain both the behavior of Congolese rebel leaders – often uncooperative in nature – and the subsequent responses of their foreign patrons.

The first case study on Uganda and the RCD-K/ML has revealed "a deep-seated indiscipline throughout the UPDF,"[329] which was directly related to the resource opportunity mechanism highlighted in the previous chapter. It was this fragmented and privatized nature of the UPDF's involvement in northeastern DRC that time and again provided Uganda's Congolese rebel clients – especially Mbusa Nyamwisi – with enough leverage to defy the wishes of the government in Kampala. The next three turning points have further illuminated how changing relations between Kinshasa, Kampala, and Kigali enabled rebel leaders to stake out room for maneuver even in the presence of foreign troops. They have also shown the impact of gradual troop withdrawals and analyzed the learning processes that rebel leaders went through, thus demonstrating in action all four theorized mechanisms for agency slack (the third step of my theory) – an increase in agent leverage, a decrease in principal monitoring, as well as learning from both cooperating and fighting.

The last two turning points have provided further examples of these mechanisms, highlighting that even the more tightly controlled Rwandan clients – who worked with an army that was much more cohesive than Uganda's – were able to defy their patron by making deals with the government in Kinshasa. Altogether, the six turning points have shown

[329] *Republic of Uganda* 2002a, section 13.5.

that Congolese rebel groups were by no means helpless puppets whose foreign masters pulled their strings at will. By contrast, the case studies have underlined the strategic role of transnational alliances for rebel leaders and their ability to shape these relations.

With regard to the first step of my theory, the cases in this chapter have shown the continued relevance of transnational threats as well as the growing importance of resource opportunities for both Rwanda and Uganda as the conflict dragged on. In terms of the second step, the examples of Uganda's alliance with Jérôme Kakwavu (FAPC), a Congolese Tutsi supposedly closer to Kigali, and Rwanda's alliance with the Hema of the UPC, historically closer to Kampala's ruling elite, have provided further evidence that geopolitical pragmatism trumps simplistic notions of ethnic solidarism.

In sum, then, my three-step theory of transnational alliances has been able to explain most of the incredibly complex alliance dynamics in northeastern and eastern DRC during and after the Second Congo War. It has also helped tease out the inextricable links between the local, national, and regional dimensions of that conflict, thus bridging the analysis of master and local cleavages.

Table 5.1: Summary of Case Studies in Chapter 5

Alliance	Explanation (including all steps analyzed)
NORTHEASTERN CONGO	
November 2000	
(1) Uganda—RCD-K/ML	Mbusa's and Tibasima's agency slack (in the form of repeated attempts to overthrow RCD-K/ML president Wamba) was possible primarily due to increased agent leverage gained by buying off individual UPDF officers: the fragmentation of the RCD-K/ML and of the UPDF were interdependent.
November 2001	
(2) Uganda—FLC (MLC, RCD-K/ML, RCD-N)	Uganda's creation of the Bemba-led FLC umbrella organization as a response to Mbusa's and Tibasima's agency slack. Mbusa's renewed agency slack (taking control of Beni and Bunia) as a result of (1) learning from the FLC's creation, (2) learning from the military stalemate with Kinshasa, (3) increased leverage due to the possibility of alliances with Kinshasa and/or Kigali, and (4) decreased monitoring due to the partial UPDF withdrawal.
August 2002	
(3) Uganda—UPC	Uganda's support to the UPC in taking over Bunia from the RCD-K/ML as (1) a response to a further loss of trust in Mbusa after he allowed Kinshasa to set up a military command center in Beni, and (2) a signal to Kinshasa that Kampala was not yet willing to give up Ituri District.
March 2003	
(4) Rwanda—UPC	UPC's agency slack (its initially secret alliance with Kigali, already initiated in June 2002) was possible due to increased leverage in the context of escalating Rwandan-Ugandan tensions. Rwanda's decision primarily due to transnational threats (Ugandan support of Rwandan dissidents), but rooted in a deeper conflict about standing; UPC as geopolitically relevant in the sense of opening another front in the Rwandan-Ugandan war of nerves.
(5) Uganda—PUSIC	Retaliatory alliance formation to punish the UPC for its switch to Rwanda; Selection of southern Hema around Chief Kahwa to divide the UPC and secure border region around Irumu territory.
(6) Uganda—FNI	Retaliatory alliance; Selection of northern Lendu due to their status as UPC's main opponent and in order to secure border region around Djugu territory.
(7) Uganda—FPDC	Retaliatory alliance; Selection of Alur and Lugbara to secure border region around Aru and Mahagi territories; FPDC never developed into a real force.
(8) Uganda—FAPC	Retaliatory alliance; Selection of Kakwavu to further divide the UPC and to secure influence over Aru and Mahagi after FPDC failed.
NORTH KIVU	
October 2002	
(9) Rwanda—Serufuli	Rwanda's incremental shift of support from national RCD-G leadership to North Kivu Governor Serufuli as a response to the prospect of further agency slack once the RCD-G would enter the transitional government, to which it was about to agree largely due to learning from the military stalemate.
August 2005	
(10) Rwanda—Nkunda	Rwanda's renewed shift of support from Serufuli to renegade general Nkunda as a response to Serufuli's agency slack (developing close ties to Kinshasa); Nkunda's slack and subsequent arrest as a strategic mistake.

Chapter 6: Transnational Alliance Formation across Africa's Weak States, 1990–2010

Having shown in great depth in the last two chapters that the three-step theory of transnational alliances developed in Chapter 3 explains much of the dynamics of the two Congo Wars, this sixth chapter focuses on demonstrating the wider explanatory reach – that is, the external validity (see Introduction) – of the theory's first step. More specifically, on the basis of data covering forty-two country dyads, I show that the theorized threat and opportunity mechanisms illuminate the formation of transnational alliances across almost all affected weak states in sub-Saharan Africa from 1990 to 2010 (see Table 6.1).

The chapter begins with a methodological discussion of why I chose these forty-two weak state dyads as units of analysis, including a brief critical review of existing datasets on transnational alliances. Second, I analyze the seventeen dyads in which the preemptive and/or retaliatory variants of the threat mechanism applied, demonstrating that the timing of alliances supports these interpretations. Third, I study the seven weak states that suffered from external support to rebels due to resource opportunities, focusing on why some neighbors interfered while others did not. Fourth, I dissect the twelve potentially problematic dyads in which there was either an absence of retaliation, a nonsecurity initiation of an alliance, or a merely indirect retaliation, arguing that none of them poses a serious challenge to my theoretical arguments. In each of these three analytic sections, I provide tables summarizing all pertinent cases and discuss only some of them at greater length in the main body of text in order to highlight specific insights.

Table 6.1: Transnational Alliances in 42 Weak State Dyads in Africa, 1990–2010

Country A	Country B	A vs. B	B vs. A	Preemption	Retaliation	Opportunity	Nonsecurity Initiation
Angola	Congo-B.	yes	yes	no	yes (A)	yes (B)	no
Angola	Congo-K.	yes	yes	no	yes (A)	yes (B)[a]	no[a]
Angola	Togo	no	yes	no	no	yes (B)	no
Angola	Zambia	no	yes	no	no	yes (B)	no
Burundi	Congo-K.	yes	yes	yes (A, B)[b]	yes (A, B)	no	no[b]
Burundi	Rwanda	yes	yes	yes (A, B)	yes (A, B)	no	no
CAR	Chad	yes	yes	yes (A)	yes (B)	no	no
CAR	Congo-B.	no	yes	no	*indirect*	no	no
CAR	Congo-K.	yes	yes	no	yes (B)	yes (A)	no
CAR	Sudan	no	yes	no	*indirect*	no	no
Chad	Niger	no	no	—	—	—	—
Chad	Nigeria	no	no	—	—	—	—
Chad	Sudan	yes	yes	yes (A)	yes (B)	no	no
Congo-B.	Congo-K.	no	no	—	—	—	—
Congo-K.	Rwanda	yes	yes	yes (A)[c]	yes (B)	yes (B)	yes (A)[d]
Congo-K.	Sudan	no	no	—	—	—	—
Congo-K.	Uganda	yes	yes	yes (A)[c]	yes (B)	yes (B)	no
Congo-K.	Zambia	no	yes	no	no	no	yes (B)
Côte d'Ivoire	Guinea	no	no	—	—	—	—
Côte d'Ivoire	Liberia	yes	yes	yes (A, B)	yes (A, B)	yes (A, B)	no
Côte d'Ivoire	Mali	no	no	—	—	—	—
Djibouti	Eritrea	no	yes	no	*indirect*	no	no
Djibouti	Ethiopia	no	no	—	—	—	—
Eritrea	Ethiopia	yes	yes	yes (A, B)	yes (A, B)	no	no
Eritrea	Sudan	yes	yes	no	yes (A)	no	yes (B)
Ethiopia	Sudan	yes	yes	no	yes (A)	no	yes (B)
Gambia	Senegal	yes	no	—	no	yes (A)	—
Guinea	Guinea-B.	no	no	—	—	—	—
Guinea	Liberia	yes	yes	yes (A)	yes (B)	yes (A, B)	no
Guinea	Mali	no	no	—	—	—	—
Guinea	Senegal	no	no	—	—	—	—
Guinea	Sierra Leone	no	no	—	—	—	—
Guinea-B.	Senegal	yes	no	no	no	yes (A)	no
Liberia	Sierra Leone	yes	yes	no	yes (B)	yes (A)	no
Mali	Mauritania	no	no	—	—	—	—
Mali	Niger	no	no	—	—	—	—
Mali	Senegal	no	no	—	—	—	—
Mauritania	Senegal	no	no	—	—	—	—
Mozambique	Zambia	no	no	—	—	—	—
Niger	Nigeria	no	no	—	—	—	—
Rwanda	Uganda	yes	yes	yes (A, B)[e]	yes (A, B)[e]	no	yes (B)[f]
Sudan	Uganda	yes	yes	yes (A, B)	yes (A, B)	no	no
Sum of positive & mixed dyads:		25		11	17	12	5

(a) Refers to the situation in the 1990s; Mobutu's support to rebels right after Angolan independence was primarily due to Cold War politics. (b) Refers to Kabila's support to the FDD in 1998; previous Zairian support between 1994–6 is hard to classify given the Mobutu regime's decrepit nature at that point. (c) Refers to Kabila in 1998. (d) Refers to Mobutu's support to the ex-FAR/Interahamwe in 1994. (e) Refers to the post-August 1999 period. (f) Refers to Uganda's limited support to the RPF between 1990–4. See below for discussions.

The Methodological Rationale for Focusing on Weak State Dyads

Relevant Countries: State Weakness as a Scope Condition

The first step of the theory of transnational alliances developed in Chapter 3 is analytically grounded in the double security dilemma of weak state rulers outlined in Chapter 2. Put differently, state weakness is a critical *scope condition*: in its absence, the causal logic of the theory is not expected to be relevant (see Introduction). In terms of establishing the external validity of my theoretical arguments about transnational alliance formation, the universe of relevant countries is therefore limited to those that experienced either a coup attempt or at least a minor armed conflict between 1990 and 2010. Table 2.3 shows that two thirds of all states in mainland sub-Saharan Africa meet these criteria (see Chapter 2).

Given the extent to which Somalia ceased to have governments with any real authority for most of the time period under study,[1] I exclude this state from the universe of relevant countries. While outside governments did interfere in the fighting in Somalia,[2] its nominal presidents – sometimes merely in control of parts of the capital Mogadishu – cannot be expected to have been capable of providing support to external rebel groups. From this perspective, Somalia should indeed be thought of as a *collapsed* rather than a *weak* state.[3]

Relevant Dyads: Insights from the Possibility Principle

Dropping Somalia leaves 27 out of 42 states in mainland sub-Saharan Africa (64%). Next, it is important to recall that the logic of both the threat and the opportunity mechanisms are based on a dyad of weak states: first, the threat that a specific foreign – typically neighboring – government is likely to, or already does, support domestic rebel groups leads the targeted government to preempt, or retaliate against, this transnational threat by itself supporting rebels in that particular country; second, while the supply side of the opportunity

[1] See Menkhaus 2007, 74.
[2] On the role of outside governments, especially Eritrea and Ethiopia, see ICG 2008b.
[3] To give but three examples, Somalia is labeled a "collapsed state" in Ng'ethe 1995, 257; Rotberg 2003, 9; Menkhaus 2007, 82.

mechanism depends only on the natural resource profile of a targeted country and the costs of supporting rebels there, the demand side depends on the ruler's clients in the potentially interfering country. In short, establishing the external validity of these mechanisms requires taking *weak state dyads* as the units of analysis.

The question that then emerges is whether it actually makes sense to include all possible combinations of the twenty-seven relevant countries. Given that weak states typically have limited power projection capabilities, would it really make sense to include, for instance, Niger and Mozambique as a dyad, the two being more than 3,000 miles apart and separated by six other countries? To answer this question, I draw on insights from the "Possibility Principle,"[4] which James Mahoney and Gary Goertz developed as a set of guidelines for choosing negative cases (such as "nonalliances") in comparative research.

The Possibility Principle posits that "only cases where the outcome of interest is *possible* should be included in the set of negative cases; cases where the outcome is *impossible* should be relegated to a set of uninformative and hence irrelevant observations."[5] Although the authors' specific guidelines are less useful for my theory (as they assume theories in which causal conditions are only jointly sufficient for an outcome), some of their reasoning is nonetheless instructive. In particular, the two authors discuss the literature on militarized inter-state disputes (MIDs), showing how the distinction made by quantitative scholars between including only "politically relevant dyads"[6] or all dyads leads to estimating significantly different probabilities.[7] In the simplest definition, which I adopt, politically relevant dyads consist of *either* at least one major power *or* any contiguous pair of states.[8]

[4] Mahoney and Goertz 2004.
[5] Ibid., 653 (emphasis in the original).
[6] Lemke and Reed 2001.
[7] See Mahoney and Goertz 2004, 656-7.
[8] See ibid., 656. The contiguity criterion is sometimes defined more broadly than just sharing a land border, e.g., including "dyads in which the states are not separated by more than 400 miles of open water, in which one state is within 400 miles of open water of the other state's colony, or in which both states' colonies are within 400 miles of open water of each other" (Lemke and Reed 2001, 127).

In the case of transnational alliance formation across weak states, I argue that the *relevant dyads* are all pairs of geographically contiguous weak states. There is only one unambiguous exception in which an alliance was *possible* despite the noncontiguity of two weak states: the Angola—Togo dyad, due to UNITA's level of logistical sophistication.[9] This exceptional case, also included in my analysis, does not affect the overall results in any significant way. As Lesotho is surrounded by South Africa, which does not qualify as a weak state, the former drops from the universe of relevant countries, leaving 26 out of 42 states (62%) that together cover large parts of the continent (see Map 6.1).

Map 6.1: Countries Covered in the Analysis (in Black)



[9] See UNSC 2000a, paras. 32-5; Peleman 2000. Erring on the side of caution (and in line with the UCDP dataset discussed below), I do not code Rwanda or Uganda as having formed an alliance with UNITA, although there are several indications to that effect in the context of the Second Congo War, from 1998 until at least 2000 (see UNSC 2000a, paras. 25-6, 50, 67; Potgieter 2000, 264-6; ICG 2000b, 56).

Research Strategy: Strengths and Limitations in the Context of Existing Datasets

Covering forty-two weak state dyads, this chapter analyzes the *entire universe* of relevant dyads in mainland sub-Saharan Africa between 1990 and 2010 (see Table 6.1). This research strategy has at least three significant advantages. First, it avoids selecting cases either on the causal conditions (independent variables) or on the outcome (dependent variable); instead, the scope condition of state weakness guides the selection while insights from the Possibility Principle prevent the inclusion of irrelevant negative cases. In short, there is no selection bias.[10]

Second, the resulting list of forty-two dyads covers the full range of outcomes: (a) positive cases, i.e., dyads in which each state supported rebels in the other; (b) mixed cases in which only one state provided support to rebels in the other, potentially raising problems for the external validity of the retaliation mechanism; and (c) negative cases in which neither state formed an alliance with rebels from the other.

Third, this list includes several so-called *pathway cases* in which only one of the two key theorized causal conditions – transnational threats and resource opportunities – were present, thus making it likely that one and not the other caused alliance formation.[11] I will use some of these cases to provide brief analytic narratives that probe whether the theorized causal mechanisms can actually be observed.[12] In this sense, the chapter also further corroborates the internal validity of the first step of my theory.

The data that my research strategy led me to collect improves on existing datasets on external support to rebel groups, but it also has its own limitations. In terms of improvements, I compared my codings of transnational alliances with the UCDP External Support Data (Version 1.0–2011), which covers the entire world from 1975 to 2009, and with those made by Dylan Craig for his dissertation on proxy wars, which covers continental Africa

[10] On the issue of selection bias in comparative research, see Geddes 1990; King et al. 1994, 128-49; Collier et al. 2004; Mahoney and Goertz 2004, 654-7; Goertz and Mahoney 2012, chap. 14.
[11] On the notion of a pathway case, see Gerring and Seawright 2007, 122-31.
[12] See ibid., 125; Goertz and Mahoney 2012, 186-7.

from 1950 to 2010.[13] Given that the UCDP data is much more fine-grained – with annual rather than Craig's decadal observations – and that it forms part of a larger, much-used and well-respected collection of datasets, the remainder of this discussion is limited to the UCDP dataset.[14]

Apart from the fact that my wide-ranging survey of the secondary literature and of the fortnightly newsletter *Africa Confidential* suggests that the UCDP data sometimes appears to misdate the beginning or end of external support and completely fails to include support to certain rebel groups – shortcomings that are perhaps inevitable in such a large data-gathering exercise – I also found some more serious errors of omission: for 10 of the 42 dyads (24%) analyzed in this chapter, the UCDP data erroneously fails to record support from at least one of the weak states to rebels in the other.[15]

While improving on these omissions, my data has at least two limitations of its own. First, it is deliberately much more aggregated than that of the UCDP, as I remain skeptical as to whether some of the information that the UCDP provides (such as types of support) can be reliably collected without in-depth research by country experts. Nonetheless, given the logic of my theory, it would make sense to use specific governments (or "regimes") as units of analysis, for instance, disaggregating the Congo-K.—Rwanda dyad into Mobutu—Habyarimana, Mobutu—Bizimungu/Kagame, and Kabila I/II—Bizimungu/Kagame. In fact, although Table 6.1, largely for presentational purposes, makes these distinctions only in the superscript comments (if at all), the following analytic sections sometimes pick up on them.

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[13] See UCDP 2013 (presented in Pettersson 2011); Craig 2012.

[14] The UCDP data also distinguishes between ten different types of support (ranging from troops as secondary warring party to intelligence material). Given my broader concerns about the quality of data, I ignore these distinctions and treat support as a binary (yes/no) outcome.

[15] The omissions relate to the following dyads: (1) Angola—Zambia (Zambia to UNITA); (2) Burundi—Rwanda (Burundi to RPF); (3) CAR—Chad (CAR to various groups); (4) CAR—Congo-Brazzaville (Congo-B. to Bozizé's rebellion); (5) CAR—Congo-Kinshasa (CAR to MLC and Congo-K. to Bozizé); (6) CAR—Sudan (Sudan to UFDR); (7) Gambia—Senegal (Gambia to MFDC); (8) Guinea—Liberia (Liberia to Zoumanigui et al.); (9) Liberia—Sierra Leone (Sierra Leone to ULIMO); (10) Rwanda—Uganda (Rwanda to PRA). There also appears to be an error of commission: Chad is coded to have provided troops to Sassou Nguesso's Cobras in 1997, which the expert literature fails to confirm.

Second, and more importantly, most of the interpretations that are summarized in one word in the columns on preemption, retaliation, opportunity, and nonsecurity initiation in Table 6.1 and in some more detail in subsequent sections and tables are based only on secondary accounts. While I have endeavored to consult the work of leading country experts and well-respected think-tanks or human rights organizations for all positive and mixed cases (referenced throughout the remainder of the chapter), these interpretations should not be considered definitive. However, I am confident that they resonate with most of the principal accounts in the literature, thus at the very least making plausible that the threat and opportunity mechanisms were indeed relevant in the respective cases.

Transnational Threats: Preemptive and Retaliatory Alliances

Overview

The summary in Table 6.1 shows that in 25 of the 42 relevant weak state dyads (60%) there was support to rebel groups from at least one side to the other; 17 of these 25 dyads (68%) featured reciprocal support, leaving 8 mixed dyads (32%) in which there appears to have been no retaliation.

While the eight potentially problematic cases are dealt with in the penultimate section of this chapter, the present section focuses on the seventeen that support my theory. It also further distinguishes these dyads into those 11 (65%) in which the preemptive and retaliatory threat mechanisms explain alliance formation for both sides and those 6 (35%) in which the preceding alliance was due to a factor other than transnational threats. With regard to those six dyads, the aim here is merely to demonstrate that the subsequent alliance was clearly in retaliation for the other side's initial move; the causes of these initial decisions will be addressed in the next two sections. Tables 6.2 and 6.3 summarize all seventeen positive dyads, suggesting that the timing of alliances supports my interpretations.

Table 6.2: Cases of Preemption with Retaliation

Country A	Country B	Summary
Burundi	Congo-K.	*Preemption/Retaliation*: Kabila allegedly began to support the CNDD-FDD already prior to August 1998, leading Burundi to support the RCD; it is not fully clear whether Congo-K. or Burundi made the first move. In 1996, Burundi had supported Kabila's AFDL rebels in retaliation for deals between Mobutu's army and the CNDD-FDD.[16]
Burundi	Rwanda	*Preemption/Retaliation*: Rwanda's Hutu government apparently began to support the Palipehutu-FNL in 1991 in retaliation for the Burundian Tutsi-led government's active (or at least passive) backing of the RPF.[17]
CAR	Chad	*Preemption*: Disagreements led CAR to support Miskine's rebels and reportedly also the CSNPD and FARF. *Retaliation*: Chad intervened on behalf of Bozizé in 2003, leading to the overthrow of President Patassé; the latter had earlier already accused Chad of interference.[18]
Chad	Sudan	*Preemption*: Army officers supporting the JEM and SLA in Darfur forced President Déby's hand; he acquiesced around 2004 to avoid a coup. *Retaliation*: Sudan then began to support various Chadian rebels.[19]
Congo-K.	Rwanda	*Preemption*: Afraid that Rwanda would turn against him, Kabila began to support the ALIR in 1998. *Retaliation*: Rwanda then helped create the RCD and invaded; in 1996, Rwanda had done the same with the AFDL in retaliation for Mobutu's support to the ex-FAR/Interahamwe.[20]
Congo-K.	Uganda	*Preemption*: Afraid that Uganda would side with Rwanda, Kabila joined Sudan in supporting the ADF in 1998. *Retaliation*: Uganda then began to support the RCD and invaded; in 1996, Uganda had done the same with the AFDL in retaliation for Mobutu's support to the ADF and WNBF.[21]
Côte d'Ivoire	Liberia	*Preemption/Retaliation*: Taylor was close to junta leader Guéï, who in 2000 lost elections to Gbagbo; around 2002, afraid that Taylor would interfere, Gbagbo began to support LURD/MODEL; Taylor then responded by supporting MPIGO and MJP.[22]
Eritrea	Ethiopia	*Preemption/Retaliation*: In the context of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War from 1998 to 2000, each side began to support rebel groups opposed to the other side.[23]
Guinea	Liberia	*Preemption*: Guinea opposed Taylor's NPFL in the First Liberian Civil War (1989–96), Taylor in turn gave sanctuary to the Guinean putschist Zoumanigui; in 1999, two years after Taylor was elected president, Guinea supported the JCL/LURD rebels. *Retaliation*: Taylor helped Zoumanigui and other Guinean dissidents invade Guinea in 2000.[24]
Rwanda	Uganda	*Preemption/Retaliation*: After the Rwandan-Ugandan fighting in Kisangani (Congo-K.) in August 1999, each side began to support dissidents opposed to the other side.[25]
Sudan	Uganda	*Preemption/Retaliation*: Rumors of reciprocal interference (Sudanese support to, e.g., the UPDA; Ugandan support to the SPLM/A) existed since the late 1980s; more significant tit-for-tat support began around 1993/94. It is unclear who made the first move.[26]

[16] See ICG 2000b, 20; HRW 1997, 82-93; Prunier 2009, 383 (note 95); Reyntjens 2009, 61.
[17] See Lemarchand 1996, 153-4; *Africa Confidential* 1991.
[18] See *Africa Confidential* 1998c; *Africa Confidential* 2003a; *Africa Confidential* 2003b; ICG 2006, 18-9; ICG 2007b, 15-6; Marchal 2007, 183-4; ICG 2008a, 30; email discussion with Louisa Lombard, Nov. 2013.
[19] See Tubiana 2008, 26-8; Prunier 2008a, 115; Seymour 2010, 58-9.
[20] See Chapter 4.
[21] See ibid.
[22] See ICG 2003b, 15-9; Banégas and Marshall-Fratani 2007, 96-7.
[23] See Abbink 2003, 413-6; Reid 2009, 19-21; Negash and Tronvoll 2000, 51-2.
[24] See *Africa Confidential* 2002a; ICG 2002a, 3-6; Reno 2007, 74-6.
[25] See Chapters 4-5.
[26] See *Africa Confidential* 1990; Prunier 2009, 80; Atkinson 2010, 205-6. (See also Chapter 4.)

Table 6.3: Cases of Retaliation without Preemption

Country A	Country B	Summary
Angola	Congo-B.	Congo-B. supported UNITA and FLEC-FAC from 1992 or 1993 onwards, becoming more important to UNITA after Mobutu's fall in 1997. *Retaliation*: Angola intervened on behalf of Sassou Nguesso in 1997.[27]
Angola	Congo-K.	Despite an Angolan-Zairian agreement, Mobutu's close associates kept collaborating with UNITA in late 1996 / early 1997. *Retaliation*: Angola intervened on behalf of the AFDL by sending Katangan Tigers in 1997.[28]
CAR	Congo-K.	CAR collaborated with the MLC between 1999 and 2003. *Retaliation*: Congo-K. provided arms to the Bozizé rebellion in 2003.[29]
Eritrea	Sudan	Sudan began to support the EIJ in late 1993. *Retaliation*: Eritrea began to support various Sudanese rebel groups in 1994.[30]
Ethiopia	Sudan	Sudan began to support various Ethiopian rebel groups around 1993. *Retaliation*: Ethiopia established contacts with the SPLM/A that same year, increased its support and widened it to other rebel groups in 1995.[31]
Liberia	Sierra Leone	Taylor's NPFL helped the RUF invade Sierra Leone in 1991. *Retaliation*: Sierra Leone then supported ULIMO against quasi-president Taylor.[32]

Preemption with Retaliation: A Closer Look at the Double Security Dilemma

Out of the eleven dyads that featured preemptive *and* retaliatory alliance formation, I had to code six – more than half of them – as unclear with regard to the question of which government initiated the tit-for-tat interference (see Table 6.2). Even in some of the five other cases, some analysts may contest the chronology I put forward. Despite investigations by several scholars, as discussed in some detail in Chapter 4, it has been difficult to pin down when exactly Laurent Kabila began to collaborate with the ALIR; similarly, I have shown that rumors about Rwandan-backed plans for a coup already circulated in early 1998, yet it was only in July 1998 that Kabila became sufficiently concerned about the imminence of a coup, leading him to order the Rwandans out of the country.

The point is that *uncertainty and fear* are defining features of a security dilemma. In a context of uncertainty, rumors or other forms of ambiguous intelligence lead to suspicion, that is, the updating of prior beliefs to the effect that noncooperation by the other side is

[27] See *Africa Confidential* 1997f; Clark 1998; Mabeko Tali 2000.
[28] See Chapter 4.
[29] See *Africa Confidential* 2001; ICG 2007b, 15-6; Belaid 2008, 81.
[30] See Kibreab 2009, 84-9; Clapham 1999, 94-5; Cliffe 1999, 96-7; de Waal 2004, 201.
[31] See *Africa Confidential* 1994; de Waal 2004, 203-7; Clapham 1999, 96; Cliffe 1999, 98-100.
[32] See Ellis 1998, 155-6; Abdullah and Muana 1998, 177-81; ICG 2002a, 2.

deemed more likely, which may eventually result in sufficient fear to decide that striking first is the best available option (see Chapter 2). It is therefore not unreasonable to argue that the expert literature being inconclusive as to which side struck first – despite having been written after the fact – actually supports my interpretation that these tit-for-tat alliances were caused by what I call the interference dilemma.

Moreover, as in the case of Kabila's decision in the summer of 1998, transnational alliance formation is sometimes *directly* linked not only to the interference dilemma between weak state rulers but also to the other half of the double security dilemma, namely, the coup dilemma between the ruler and his ruling coalition. In this subsection, I provide a brief discussion of Chadian President Idriss Déby's decision to support Sudanese rebels in Darfur around 2004, thus avoiding a military coup, as another illustration of the difficult trade-offs that weak state rulers sometimes face.

Then, I discuss the tit-for-tat support to rebels in the context of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War (1998–2000). The analytic goal is to show that the *indirect* link between the coup dilemma and transnational alliance formation is sometimes more nuanced than the simple coup-proofing argument, outlined in Chapter 2, that weak state rulers substitute building military capabilities by supporting foreign rebel groups in order to address external threats. Similar to the Rwandan and Ugandan interventions in Congo-Kinshasa, the case of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War suggests that some weak state rulers use transnational alliances as merely one strategy *alongside* (rather than in place of) relying on the strength of the military. These four governments of course have one thing in common: they all started as rebel groups that managed to build up enough military capacity to take over their states.[33]

[33] See Pool 1998 (on the EPLF in Eritrea/Ethiopia); Young 1998 (on the TPLF in Ethiopia); Prunier 1998 (on the RPF in Rwanda); Ngoga 1998 (on the NRA in Uganda). These four groups are collectively categorized as "reform rebels" in Reno 2011, chap. 4.

The Coup–Interference Trade-Off: The Origins of Chad's Proxy War with Sudan

> The rebels [in Sudan's western Darfur region] were strengthened by their membership of cross-border ethnic groups, including the Beri (Zaghawa and Bideyat), to which the Chadian president Idriss Déby belongs. Déby's inability to control his Beri kinsmen, including those closest to him, brought an end to more than ten years of good relations with the Sudanese regime of Omar al-Bashir.
>
> —Jérôme Tubiana[34]

After being accused of a coup attempt against President Hissène Habré in April 1989, Chad's former army commander Idriss Déby fled to Darfur. With Libyan and Sudanese support, Déby then organized a rebellion under the name *Mouvement patriotique du salut* (MPS, Patriotic Salvation Movement), eventually ousting Habré in December 1990.[35]

As the epigraph above suggests, relations between Déby and the Sudanese regime in Khartoum remained friendly throughout the 1990s.[36] On several occasions, rebel groups from western and southern Sudan, as well as their Eritrean backers, asked Déby for support, but the Chadian ruler remained loyal to his erstwhile sponsors.[37] By one account, Déby and al-Bashir had – back in 1990 – made a pact not to host each other's armed opposition in the future.[38]

In the early 2000s, however, Zaghawa elements within the Chadian army and presidential guard began to provide arms to their Sudanese ethnic kin in Darfur, who were in the process of mobilizing against Khartoum.[39] As early as 2001, even the MPS representative in Khartoum, a Zaghawa activist, gave the Darfur-based Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) the impression that Chad's ruling party would support their struggle.[40] Clearly, Déby faced a problem of agency slack from within his own regime.

Déby's lack of control became even more obvious in 2003, as the fighting in Darfur intensified. He was unable to prevent the SLA and the Justice and Equality Movement

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[34] Tubiana 2008, 10.
[35] See Marchal 2007, 178; Tubiana 2008, 25-6; Huliaras 2001, 10. On the long-lasting territorial dispute between Chad and Libya, which played a role in Tripoli's support to Déby, see Burr and Collins 1999.
[36] See Marchal 2007, 188-90; Seymour 2010, 57.
[37] See Tanner and Tubiana 2007, 20; Flint and de Waal 2008, 73-6.
[38] See Flint 2007, 149.
[39] See Seymour 2010, 58-9; Tanner and Tubiana 2007, 20.
[40] On the meeting between the MPS representative (Daud Taher Hariga) and the SLA chairman (Abdel Wahid Mohamed al Nur), see Flint and de Waal 2008, 81.

(JEM) "from using Chad as a rear base, from recruiting combatants among the regime's own Republican Guard, and from seeking support among the Chadian Beri, including those very close to the government."[41] When, in an attempt to reassure Khartoum of his goodwill, Déby ordered Chadian troops to help fight the Darfurian rebels, many of the soldiers essentially refused, warning their kin across the border.[42]

The Sudanese government viewed these developments with suspicion. As Roland Marchal notes, "the longer the conflict and the survival of the Darfur insurgency, the less trust Khartoum had in Déby and the more bitter discussions with him became."[43] Already by early 2003, key elements within the regime had become "convinced that the Chadian president was playing a double game."[44]

Ironically, however, it appears that a coup attempt against Déby in May 2004 was largely due to the mutineers' frustrations about his continued unwillingness to back the Darfurian rebels. According to Prunier, Déby "capitulated"[45] to almost all of their demands in order to retain his presidency; he replaced his chief of staff with a general who was close to the rebels in Darfur and also named a first cousin of Khalil Ibrahim's, the JEM leader, as new director of security.[46] Those government and army factions opposed to Déby's turnaround – as well as other domestic foes – subsequently left Chad, finding refuge in Sudan and military support from its government.[47]

As Acheikh Ibn Oumar Saïd, one of the Chadian dissidents, put it in August 2004: "Regardless of whether you are Arab, Sara [the main ethnic group in the south of Chad], or Zaghawa, nowadays every opponent of the Chadian regime is trying to contact the Sudanese."[48] From 2005 onwards, Déby and Bashir were engaged in a full-scale proxy war.[49] In

[41] Tubiana 2008, 26.
[42] See ibid., 26.
[43] Marchal 2007, 191.
[44] Ibid., 193-4.
[45] Prunier 2008a, 115.
[46] See ibid., 220 (note 102).
[47] See Marchal 2007, 193; Flint and de Waal 2008, 114-5, 207; Tubiana 2008, 27-8.
[48] Quoted in Tubiana 2008, 28 (explanatory brackets in the original).

April 2006, Chadian rebels even reached the capital N'Djamena, but Déby loyalists – supported by French soldiers – eventually managed to defeat the rebel offensive.[50]

Déby's turnaround following the coup attempt in May 2004 was remarkable in that members of his ruling coalition basically forced his hand. This episode therefore provides an interesting illustration of the potential trade-off that weak state rulers face between the threat of a coup and that of foreign interference: in order to avoid an imminent coup, Déby had to accept the risk of antagonizing Khartoum.[51] In contrast to the double security dilemma that Laurent Kabila faced in July 1998, however, the coup plotters were adamantly opposed to, rather than collaborating with, the neighboring government in question (see Chapter 4). Nonetheless, the outcome was the same – a tectonic shift in regional alliances.

Interference as a Complementary Strategy: The Eritrean-Ethiopian War

> The proxy war strategy was pursued by both players in the devastating war of 1998–2000 between Ethiopia and Eritrea, not only in the enemy country but also in neighbouring states such as Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti and Sudan.
>
> —Jon Abbink[52]

On May 24, 1991, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) took Asmara, ushering in the *de facto* independence of Eritrea from Ethiopia, which became official in 1993. Four days after the capture of Asmara, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) – as part of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and with EPLF support – entered Addis Ababa, ending more than sixteen years of civil war in Ethiopia.[53]

With limited external backing, the EPLF and TPLF defeated Africa's largest army, which was supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba during the Cold War, whilst at various

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[49] On the development of this proxy war from 2005 up to 2008, see ibid., 28-52.
[50] See *Africa Confidential* 2006a.
[51] Although oil played an at least indirect role in the domestic conflicts in both countries (see Behrends 2011), there were no significant lootable natural resources in either eastern Chad or western Sudan; in other words, this proxy war represents a pathway case in which the absence of resource opportunities makes it easier to tease out the role of transnational threats.
[52] Abbink 2003, 413.
[53] See Young 1998, 49.

points in time also battling rival groups.[54] In other words, they "were clearly the largest and most successful"[55] rebel movements that Africa had seen.[56] Unsurprisingly, once in power, this historical legacy continued to influence the course of the new regimes. By the time Eritrea became independent, for example, 78,000 people out of an estimated population of 2.5 million had been mobilized into the country's army.[57]

In May 1998, seven years after winning the Ethiopian civil war together, the two rebellions-turned-governments then shocked the world by engaging in one of the rare instances of classic inter-state warfare in Africa. Misinterpreted as either a territorial dispute or simply a 'senseless' conflict,[58] the Eritrean-Ethiopian war was in fact rooted in a complex history of EPLF–TPLF tensions that predated their military victories in 1991.[59]

Not completely dissimilar to the reasons for the falling out between Rwanda and Uganda (see Chapters 4 and 5), the causes of the war therefore cannot be easily reduced to the rational survival-seeking calculus outlined in Chapter 2. The point of this mini case study, however, is that once the Eritrean and Ethiopian governments were at war, support for rebel groups in each other's country became a useful complementary strategy.

Jon Abbink provides a list of the transnational alliances in the context and aftermath of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War, distinguishing between direct creations and occasional allies: Ethiopia created two Eritrean rebel groups and occasionally worked with eight other movements or factions, whereas Eritrea collaborated with two Ethiopian groups.[60] Abbink also discusses how this proxy war affected neighbors in the region, especially Somalia and

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[54] See Pool 1998, 19.
[55] Woodward 1996, 99.
[56] For a comparative overview of how the two groups successfully managed their domestic and international environments, see Reno 2011, chap. 4; for detailed historical accounts, see Young 1997; Pool 2001.
[57] See Pool 1998, 19.
[58] For a critique, see Tronvoll 2009, 6-7.
[59] See Young 1996; Abbink 1998, 555-62; Negash and Tronvoll 2000, chaps. 3-5.
[60] These are, on the anti-Asmara side, the Afar Red Sea Democratic Front, Eritrean Revolutionary Democratic Front (both direct creations), Eritrean Popular Democratic Liberation Front, Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front, Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Kunama, Eritrean Democratic Resistance Movement, Eritrean Liberation Front or Jebha, ELF-Revolutionary Command or Sagem, ELF-National Command, ELF-General Command; and, on the anti-Addis side, the Oromo Liberation Front and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (see Abbink 2003, 423-4).

Kenya, but also Djibouti and Sudan. During the war, for instance, Eritrea supported the *Front pour la restauration de l'unité et de la démocratie* (FRUD, Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy) in Djibouti, aiming to cut off Ethiopia's supply line through Djibouti City's port.[61]

At the same time, both countries' main military efforts lay in mobilizing their populations: Ethiopia may have had around 400,000 persons under arms, Eritrea almost 350,000; overall, an estimated 200,000 were killed in combat.[62] The example of these two highly militarized states therefore adds nuance to the general argument about coup-proofing made in Chapter 2. In short, not all African countries that I characterize as "weak states" have rulers bent on deliberately weakening their armies in order to decrease the risk of a military coup.[63] Nonetheless, both the case of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War and that of Rwanda's military interventions in Congo-Kinshasa demonstrate that even for these states the formation of transnational alliances remains an important foreign policy option.

Retaliation without Preemption

The main observable implication of the threat mechanism's retaliatory variant is that, independent of the reasons for which the government of one weak state begins to support rebel groups in another, the target government is *generally* expected to retaliate. However, there may of course be *specific* circumstances in which retaliation would be more costly than to focus on fighting foreign-backed rebels directly at home, or in which weak state rulers simply lack the resources to retaliate (see Chapter 3). Out of the six positive dyads in which there was retaliation for external support that in turn was not driven by concerns to preempt a transnational threat but rather by resource opportunities or nonsecurity motives,

[61] See ibid., 415; Bollee 2003, 482.
[62] See Tronvoll 2009, 4-5.
[63] For an interesting attempt to characterize cases such as Ethiopia – but also Angola, Rwanda, and even Sudan – as being representative of an "illiberal state-building" trajectory that is at least partly at odds with the general arguments about clientelist rule in Africa, see Jones et al. 2013.

a lag of a few years between the initial and the retaliatory alliance can be observed in three cases: Angola—Congo-Brazzaville, Angola—Congo-Kinshasa, and CAR—Congo-Kinshasa. In this subsection, I show that these three delayed responses do not contradict the causal logic of my theory.

The Issue of Timing: Three Examples from Central Africa

The case of Angola's support to the AFDL in retaliation for the Mobutu regime's continued collaboration with UNITA has already been discussed at length in Chapter 4. Given these long-lasting links, however, one may ask why the MPLA government was not more active in trying to foster rebellions in Zaire between the support of the failed Shaba I and II invasions in 1977/78 and the sending of the Katangan Tigers to help the AFDL in 1997.

In the context of the Cold War, attempting to help overthrow Mobutu – who presented himself as Africa's anti-Communist bulwark – would have likely only increased Western support to UNITA (see also Introduction). This still leaves the period from about 1990 to 1997. Here, one needs to bear in mind that the Mobutu regime and the Zairean army had largely become empty shells (see Chapter 4) and that the international community was busy trying to broker peace in Angola. Although UNITA was able to use links with Zairian officials to facilitate diamond sales and weapons transfers, Zaire itself did not present a significant military threat. Without an opportunity in the form of an existing anti-Mobutu rebellion presenting itself – as it eventually did with the AFDL in 1996/97 – diverting attention away from the immediate large-scale fighting at home and towards UNITA's rear bases would not have necessarily made much military sense, and it would have led to problems on the international diplomatic scene, where the arms embargo imposed against UNITA in 1993 was generally working in the government's favor.[64]

[64] On the political background to these sanctions and on their limited impact, see HRW 1994; de Beer and Gamba 2000; Peleman 2000.

These considerations are also relevant to the Angolan government's relations with President Pascal Lissouba's regime in Brazzaville. As early as 1992, the Angolan press accused Lissouba, who had just defeated Denis Sassou Nguesso in a disputed presidential election, of supporting the secessionist Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC).[65] Subsequently, Lissouba's entourage – and, by some accounts, he himself – were involved in arms and diamond trafficking with UNITA. At the ceremony celebrating thirty years of independence in August 1995, Lissouba even hosted UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi alongside the official Angolan ambassador – a remarkable diplomatic blunder.[66]

Although the MPLA government took its distance from Lissouba's regime and began to show its political support for former president Sassou, it only retaliated militarily in 1997, when a full-scale civil war erupted between Lissouba's and Sassou's militias. So why did Angola not react earlier? Once again, it is worth bearing in mind that the Angolan civil war involved heavy weaponry on both sides and that UNITA had a sophisticated support network in which taking out one node would not necessarily have changed much. The critical difference between 1993–6 and 1997, however, was "Savimbi's decision to move UNITA's main African office from Kinshasa to Brazzaville"[67] after Mobutu's fall. Brazzaville, in other words, was no longer just any node but now arguably the most important one for UNITA. When the fighting in Congo-Brazzaville started, the Angolan government thus saw an opportunity to deal another significant regional blow to their adversary. After initially only channeling arms to Sassou's militias (the Cobras), Luanda subsequently used the pretext of pursuing UNITA and FLEC forces to send at least 1,000 soldiers, who swiftly helped Sassou capture Brazzaville in October 1997.[68]

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[65] See Mabeko Tali 2000, 160; Clark 1998, 35.
[66] See Mabeko Tali 2000, 160-1; UNSC 2000a, paras. 23-4.
[67] *Africa Confidential* 1997d.
[68] See ibid; *Africa Confidential* 1997f; *New York Times* 1997b. On the background and aftermath of this round of fighting, see Yengo 2006; Englebert and Ron 2004; on the quixotic role of Rwanda and the DRC, see Prunier 2009, 167-71.

The third example is Kinshasa's delayed response to the alliance between President Ange-Félix Patassé of the Central African Republic (CAR) and Jean-Pierre Bemba's MLC, which began after the MLC in mid-1999 seized control of those parts of Equateur Province – around Gbadolite – that border the CAR's capital Bangui.[69] Some of Bemba's troops subsequently helped Patassé survive coup attempts in May 2001, October 2002, and February 2003.[70] In March 2003, however, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, and Congo-Kinshasa joined forces, assisting former army chief of staff François Bozizé in taking control in Bangui. While Chad provided the bulk of fighters, Brazzaville helped fund the operation and Kinshasa supplied weapons.[71]

Given the developments analyzed in Chapter 5, the fact that Kinshasa did not retaliate earlier – or at least it is not known to have done so – should not be surprising. The Congolese army's two major offensives along the Ubangi River in late 1999 and mid-2000 both failed; the Libenge–Gemena–Gbadolite triangle, crucial for the supply line between Bangui and Equateur Province, therefore remained in Bemba's hands. At that time, moreover, the MLC was still actively collaborating with the Ugandan army, thus also receiving supplies through Entebbe. Put simply, the resources it would have taken for Kinshasa alone to help depose Patassé would not have been worth it. This changed in 2003, when Chad was willing to take on most of the costs.

In sum, none of the three delays in retaliation directly challenge the causal logic of my theory, but they highlight the difficulty of making theoretical claims about the exact timing of retaliatory transnational alliance formation. For each case, there is a degree of contextual contingency that is hard to pin down in the abstract – that is, for instance, in the form of specific "control variables." This is one of the reasons why a conventional statistical (lagged) dyad-year approach would not necessarily represent an adequate test of the retal-

[69] See *Africa Confidential* 2001; Dietrich 2003, 4-7; Belaid 2008, 81.
[70] See Marchal 2009, 14.
[71] See ICG 2007b, 15-6.

iatory threat mechanism's observable implications: the theory simply makes no determinate claim as to how swiftly or slowly retaliation should be expected. I will return to the issue of statistical testing in the overall conclusion.

Resource Opportunities: Investigating Supply and Demand

Overview

Resource opportunities are the second key factor that my theory suggests can lead rational, survival-seeking rulers from weak states to form transnational alliances, assuming there is not only a *supply of* but also a *demand for* such opportunities (see Chapter 3). The summary in Table 6.1 shows that opportunities played a role in 12 of the 25 positive and mixed weak state dyads (48%). In two of these dyads, they even appear to have motivated both sides. Moreover, if one looks more closely at the 12 dyads (see also Table 6.4), it seems that in 8 of them (67%) at least one instance of alliance formation was motivated by resource opportunities in the absence of preemptive or retaliatory concerns by the initiator.[72]

In sum, while it is difficult to establish definitively that the theorized opportunity mechanism was operative, there is a plausible case to be made that the supply of and demand for resource opportunities was by itself critical to the formation of transnational alliances in almost one third of the positive and mixed dyads. Crucially, the opportunity-supplying countries in the eight pathway cases comprise Angola (four), Congo-Kinshasa (one), Liberia (one), and Senegal (two); the opportunity-demanding countries include the Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Togo, and Zambia (one case each). Put differently, the mechanism appears to be relevant well beyond the transnational alliances covered in Chapters 4 and 5; it is by no means an artifact of my focus on the Congo Wars.

[72] The four dyads in which resource opportunities went hand in hand with transnational threats are Congo-K.—Rwanda (Rwanda to RCD), Congo-K.—Uganda (Uganda to AFDL, then RCD), Guinea—Liberia (both Guinea to ULIMO and later Liberia to Zoumanigui et al.), and Liberia—Sierra Leone (Liberia to RUF).

Table 6.4: Positive and Negative Cases in the Context of Resource Opportunities

Country	Lootable Resources	Neighbor	Evidence for Opportunity Mechanism
Angola	Diamonds	Congo-B.	President Lissouba's entourage was involved in diamond trafficking with UNITA (1992/3–7).[73]
		Congo-K.	Mobutu and close associates sold weapons to UNITA in exchange for diamonds (1994–7).[74]
		Togo [a]	President Eyadéma was directly involved in arms smuggling, being paid in cash or in kind (1993–5, 1997–?); role of clients unclear.[75]
		Zambia	Senior government officials were involved in arms and diamond deals with UNITA (1990s).[76]
Congo-K.	Coffee, coltan, diamonds, gold, timber, tin, tungsten	Angola	*None*: The support to the AFDL in 1997 was due to transnational threats.[77]
		Burundi	*None known*: Burundi's limited support to the AFDL and RCD was primarily due to threats.[78]
		CAR	Patassé's regime helped supply the MLC and appears to have been involved in diamond laundering and other business deals (1999–2003).[79]
		Congo-B.	*(Nonalliance)*
		Rwanda	Resource opportunities were only a secondary factor in 1998 but grew more important during the war; army officers were involved in companies operating in RCD-controlled territories.[80]
		Sudan	*(Nonalliance)*
		Uganda	Resource opportunities were only a secondary factor in 1996 (AFDL) but one of the main ones in 1998 (RCD); army officers played key roles in deals concerning resource exploitation.[81]
		Zambia	*None*: Zambia's limited support to the AFDL was primarily a gesture of regional solidarity.[82]
Côte d'Ivoire	Cocoa, diamonds, timber	*Guinea*	*(Nonalliance)*
		Liberia	Liberia's support to MPIGO and MJP (2002–3) was partly motivated by Taylor's and several key associates' desire to protect their logging interests in the Ivorian-Liberian borderlands.[83]
		Mali	*(Nonalliance)*

(continued)

[73] See Mabeko Tali 2000, 160-1.
[74] See HRW 1994, 53-5; *Washington Post* 1997a; UNSC 2000a, paras. 18-20; Reyntjens 2009, 62.
[75] See UNSC 2000a, paras. 32-5, 101-2.
[76] See *Africa Confidential* 1998a; UNSC 2000a, paras. 86, 154; Prunier 2009, 100, 198-199.
[77] See Chapter 4.
[78] See Reyntjens 2009, 61; ICG 2000b, 19-21; ICG 2003a, 10.
[79] See *Africa Confidential* 2001; Dietrich 2003, 4-7.
[80] See Chapters 4-5.
[81] See ibid.
[82] See Reyntjens 2009, 65-6; Stearns 2011, 55-6.
[83] See ICG 2003b, 20; Le Billon 2012, 146-8.

Table 6.4 *(continued)*

Country	Lootable Resources	Neighbor	Evidence for Opportunity Mechanism
Guinea	Diamonds	*Côte d'Ivoire*	*(Nonalliance)*
		Guinea-B.	*(Nonalliance)*
		Liberia	Taylor's backing of incursions by RUF, Liberian, and Guinean dissident forces in 2000–1 was partly motivated by a quest for diamonds.[84]
		Mali	*(Nonalliance)*
		Senegal	*(Nonalliance)*
		Sierra Leone	*(Nonalliance)*
Liberia	Diamonds, iron, rubber, timber	Côte d'Ivoire	President Houphouët-Boigny's family and senior officials profited from business links with Taylor's NPFL (1990–3). Such links appear to have continued under President Bédié.[85]
		Guinea	As part of the ECOMOG intervention, Guinean officers supported ULIMO(-K), in return receiving a share of resource profits (c. 1991–6). Such exchanges later also took place between Guinean officials and LURD (c. 2001–3).[86]
		Sierra Leone	Also as part of ECOMOG, Sierra Leonean officers supported ULIMO, in return profiting from its trade in resources (c. 1991–6).[87]
Senegal	Cannabis, cashews, timber	Gambia	President Jammeh and some associates were said to support the MFDC (from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s), in return allegedly profiting from its resource trade.[88]
		Guinea	*(Nonalliance)*
		Guinea-B.	President Vieira's entourage and army officers had business connections with the MFDC until at least 1998.[89]
		Mali	*(Nonalliance)*
		Mauritania	*(Nonalliance)*
Sierra Leone	Diamonds	*Guinea*	*(Nonalliance)*
		Liberia	President Taylor and key government officials were heavily involved in smuggling diamonds exploited by the RUF (1997–2001).[90]

(a) Not a neighboring country.

[84] See Gberie 2001, 3-4; Keen 2005, 268-9.
[85] See Richards 1995, 143; Reno 1997b, 500; Prkic 2005, 124; Ellis 2007, 165. On Bédié, see Ellis 1998, 164.
[86] See Ellis 1998, 156; ICG 2002a, 2; Ellis 2007, 96-8; Lidow 2011, 188. On the financial rationale for joining ECOMOG, see Arieff 2009, 340-1; and, on the broader security rationale, see Adebajo 2002, 62.
[87] See ICG 2002a, 2; Ellis 2007, 96-8; Lidow 2011, 184-9.
[88] See Evans 2003, 5, 9-10, 13; Evans 2004, 8-11; Foucher 2007, 178-9.
[89] See Evans 2003, 13; Evans 2004, 5, 8-9; Foucher 2007, 178-9; Vigh 2012, 141-2.
[90] See UNSC 2000b, paras. 85-9; Keen 2005, 249-54.

In order to get a better sense of the interplay between the supply and demand sides of the opportunity mechanism, it is useful to contrast positive with negatives cases, that is, alliances with nonalliances. Table 6.4 therefore presents the seven countries in which rebel groups received support at least partly due to resource opportunities, each time listing the relevant lootable resources and all neighbors (or, in the case of Togo, known noncontiguous interferers) that qualify as weak states in the time period under study. For each of these neighbors, the table documents whether there was an alliance and, if so, to what extent existing research provides evidence for the opportunity mechanism.

There is notable variation with regard to how pervasive neighbors' interference was: In the cases of Angola and Liberia, every weak state neighbor supported rebels in these countries; by contrast, in Côte d'Ivoire (one of three neighbors), Guinea (one of six), and Sierra Leone (one of two), it was only Charles Taylor's Liberia that interfered. The in-between cases are Congo-Kinshasa (six of eight formed alliances, but resource opportunities seem to have been important only in three of them) and Senegal (two of five).

In terms of resources, diamonds and timber stand out: diamonds mattered in all opportunity-supplying countries except Senegal; timber played an additional role in three of these six and a key one in Senegal.[91] However, in four countries, a variety of other resources also provided opportunities, the most surprising being the "conflict cashews"[92] that the *Front Sud* faction of the separatist *Mouvement des forces démocratiques de la Casamance* (MFDC, Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance) from Senegal either sold via intermediaries or traded in exchange for arms from Guinea-Bissau.[93]

The purpose of this section is twofold. First, using examples from Liberia's first civil war, I discuss analytic issues concerning the demand side of the opportunity mechanism. I

[91] In his book on armed conflicts and resources, Philippe Le Billon devotes full chapters on diamonds and timber (see Le Billon 2012, chaps. 4-5), the third key resource being oil, which is "nonlootable" and thus, as argued in Chapter 3 above, of little relevance for external support from weak states.
[92] Evans 2003, 10.
[93] See also Evans 2004, 8.

also use this discussion to illustrate some of the empirical complexities of the regionalized conflicts in West Africa's Mano River basin area. Second, I focus on the variation in neighbors' interference, asking whether the supply or the demand side was more important in determining why some neighbors interfered in a given country while others did not.

The Complexities of Demand: The First Liberian Civil War, 1989–1997

When it comes to resource-linked armed conflicts in the post-Cold War period, few rebel leaders are as infamous as Liberia's Charles Taylor, who is often portrayed as the exemplary warlord of a new era.[94] After launching a rebellion on Christmas Eve 1989, he was stopped short of taking state power in 1990 by the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), a multilateral intervention force. Nonetheless, from then until being elected president in 1997, Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) established "de facto sovereignty"[95] over an area he dubbed "Greater Liberia."[96]

During that period, he also helped Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) invade Sierra Leone, subsequently benefiting from the alluvial diamonds that the RUF exploited.[97] Once in power in Monrovia, Taylor's links to the RUF continued, and he soon began to provide support to rebels from neighboring Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. Under pressure at home from a rebellion that was backed by these two neighbors, he finally resigned and fled the capital in August 2003, taking exile in Nigeria.[98]

This subsection, however, does not provide a detailed narrative of the interlinked conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire, which have been jointly labeled "Taylor's Mano River War."[99] Instead, I focus on two particular aspects of Liberia's first

[94] See Clapham 1998a, 7; Reno 1998, chap. 3. For a detailed (nonacademic) biography, see Waugh 2011.
[95] Le Billon 2012, 32.
[96] Abdullah and Rashid 2004, 184.
[97] See Keen 2005, 37-8, 48-9; Gberie 2005, 13-4.
[98] On the period from 1997 to 2003, Taylor's subsequent arrest in 2006, and his drawn-out trial in the Special Court for Sierra Leone (which finally ended in conviction in April 2012), see Waugh 2011, chaps. 10-4.
[99] ICG 2002a, 1. For analyses of this regional "conflict system," see Marchal 2002; Sawyer 2004.

civil war that illuminate temporal issues concerning the opportunity mechanism's demand side: first, the debate about Côte d'Ivoire's reasons for supporting the NPFL; second, the relevance of resource opportunities for and during ECOMOG's intervention.

Revenge or Resources? The Timing of Côte d'Ivoire's Support to the NPFL

On April 12, 1980, 28-year-old Liberian Master Sergeant Samuel Doe led a successful military coup during which President William Tolbert was murdered.[100] Two months later, Doe's soldiers dragged Adolphus Tolbert – the late president's son, married to Désirée "Daisy" Delafosse, Ivorian President Félix Houphouët-Boigny's adopted daughter – out of the French embassy in Monrovia and put him in prison. Houphouët-Boigny subsequently sent a delegation that pleaded with Doe to spare his son-in-law. Despite Doe's assurances, however, Adolphus was soon killed.[101]

Some analysts argue that the Ivorian president's backing of Taylor's NPFL in 1989–90 was simply a means of avenging the assassination of his son-in-law.[102] By contrast, Paul Richards argues that "it is unlikely that personal factors alone are sufficient" to explain Houphouët-Boigny's support; "economic interests," resulting from "the impact of the collapse of commodity prices on the Ivoirian economy" were also important.[103] Concurring with this analysis, Stephen Ellis considers access to the extremely valuable iron ore deposits in Nimba County, which borders Côte d'Ivoire, as a motivating factor alongside revenge.[104] In my terminology, there was thus both a demand for and a potential supply of resource opportunities in neighboring Liberia.

Looking more closely at the early interactions between the NPFL and Ivorian officials lends further credence to the argument that the opportunity mechanism was at least as im-

[100] See Clapham 1989, 102.
[101] See Adebajo 2002, 31-2. A chronologically somewhat different account is presented in Waugh 2011, 89.
[102] See ICG 2003b, 15 .
[103] Richards 1995, 143.
[104] See Ellis 1998, 166.

portant as the issue of revenge. While Houphouët-Boigny generally welcomed Liberian political dissidents in his country following Doe's coup,[105] "[i]ntense pressure from the Ivorians" – who in turn had been diplomatically strong-armed by Liberia – forced Taylor and other dissidents to flee the country in 1987.[106] It was not Côte d'Ivoire's president but Burkina Faso's Blaise Compaoré and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi who provided unequivocal support for Taylor's efforts to build up a rebellion between 1987 and 1989.[107] In late December 1989, when the NPFL began to infiltrate Liberia from neighboring countries, some of their commanders were even arrested by Ivorian authorities.[108]

These events suggest that "Houphouët-Boigny was not committed to hosting a dissident Liberian armed movement,"[109] putting into question the idea that he was strongly driven by revenge. Once Taylor's NPFL had proven itself on the battlefield in 1990, however, it became clear that he could provide the potential benefits from Liberian iron ore and timber. Moreover, the business network that Taylor had forged in Côte d'Ivoire in the previous years was now activated,[110] likely creating further demand to which Houphouët-Boigny needed to respond. Subsequently, Taylor was able to import arms through the country, and his business managers were free to live in and operate from Abidjan.[111] Ivorians who in turn profited from commercial links with Taylor's Greater Liberia included Houphouët-Boigny's chief of staff (and future president) Robert Guéï as well as members of Guéï's family, one of Houphouët-Boigny's sons-in-law, the mayor of Yamoussoukro, and various other senior officials.[112]

[105] See Adebajo 2002, 32.
[106] Huband 1998, 51.
[107] For fascinating details, see ibid., 52-9; Ellis 2007, 68-72.
[108] See Huband 1998, 60-1.
[109] Waugh 2011, 121.
[110] See ibid., 121; Ellis 2007, 72.
[111] See Ellis 2007, 90.
[112] See Reno 1997b, 500; Prkic 2005, 124; Ellis 2007, 165.

"Peacekeeping" and Plunder: ECOMOG in Liberia, 1990–7

The regional intervention force ECOMOG provides an intriguing case with regard to resource opportunities: launched as a peacekeeping mission primarily due to regional security concerns, its officers soon became embroiled in Liberia's war economy, using anti-Taylor warlords as surrogates whilst benefiting from their trade in resources.[113] ECOMOG troops at times also appear to have been involved in straight-out plunder, leading Monrovians to dub the operation "Every Car Or Moving Object Gone."[114]

Given the multilateral character of this intervention and the fact that Liberia did not have a proper government between 1990 and 1997, the case sits uneasily with my conceptual framework. At the same time, however, it provides another illustration for how military commanders can become interested in resource opportunities *following* their initial deployment to a foreign country. Put more abstractly, I argue that the officers' demand for opportunities was endogenous to their presence on the ground.

Why was ECOMOG launched in the first place? Concerning Nigeria, which spearheaded the mission, analysts point to the business relations between Presidents Ibrahim Babangida (1985–93) and Samuel Doe (1980–90), to Babangida's personal ambitions, and to Nigeria's broader regional ambitions and historical rivalry with Côte d'Ivoire.[115] By contrast, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, and Sierra Leone, which were also instrumental in setting up the mission, all had more direct security concerns: Taylor had recruited several Libyan-trained dissidents from these four states into his NPFL, causing fears that he would soon help these foreign nationals destabilize their home countries.[116]

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[113] See Adebajo 2002, 4, 62; Reno 1998, 104; Bøås 2001, 711.
[114] Ellis 2007, 173. For an explicitly more balanced assessment of ECOMOG, see Adebajo 2002.
[115] See Ellis 1998, 164-6; Adebajo 2002, 43-54. In fact, ECOMOG troops arrived in August 1990, one month prior to Doe's being trapped and murdered by the warlord Prince Johnson (see ibid., 75-9). I do not code subsequent temporary alliances between Nigerian ECOMOG *officers* and anti-Taylor warlords as transnational alliances, as I consider the Nigerian *government*'s initial decision to create ECOMOG as an attempt to support Liberia's government against the NPFL.
[116] See Ellis 1998, 160; Adebajo 2002, 62; Sawyer 2004, 445; Ellis 2007, 161.

In the case of Guinea, Alexis Arieff highlights that its "participation in the peacekeeping force meant training and extra funds for salaries for Guinean soldiers, a significant base of support for [President Lansana] Conté's rule."[117] Such funds represent a type of resource opportunity that is not captured by my focus on relations with foreign rebels. With regard to these relations, the fact that ECOMOG officers from at least Guinea, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone subsequently profited from business deals with Liberian armed groups such as the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO) should not be surprising: although not necessarily always sanctioned by their home governments, permitting such arrangements helped the rulers keep their military clients happy.[118]

Some Tentative Explanations of the Variation in Neighbors' (Non)interference

Having shown that the opportunity mechanism is relevant to transnational alliance formation across Central and West Africa, one key question remains to be answered: which factors determine why this mechanism is "triggered" in some weak states with a resource-abundant neighbor but not in others? Put differently, is it the supply or the demand side of resource opportunities that explains the variation in neighbors' (non)interference?

The present section provides some answers to these questions. It must begin, however, with two caveats. First, since most of the data presented in Table 6.4 relies on existing rather than primary research, it may be incomplete; in particular, I cannot exclude that there were covert alliances in some of the cases coded as noninterference. Second, while it is relatively easy to assess the supply side (that is, the availability of lootable natural resources and the military capabilities of the target government), a proper understanding of the demand side (that is, whether the potentially interfering ruler faces pressure for resource opportunities from key domestic clients) is more difficult to achieve without in-

[117] Arieff 2009, 340.
[118] See Ellis 1998, 156; ICG 2002a, 2; Alao 2007, 136; Ellis 2007, 96-8; Lidow 2011, 184-9.

depth knowledge of each regime. Therefore, the explanations offered here should be considered tentative ones.

Since both Angola and Liberia faced interference from *all* their neighboring countries and have already been discussed at some length, I exclude them from the following analysis. This leaves five resource-supplying weak states. In the first part of this subsection, I discuss Guinea and Senegal, arguing that the supply side is most important in understanding variation in their neighbors' interference. In the second part, I address Congo-Kinshasa, Côte d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone, suggesting that in these cases the demand side was of greater relevance. In sum, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the relative importance of the supply and demand sides depends on the particularities of each case.

Limited Supply: (Non)interference in Guinea and Senegal

Guinea is remarkable in that out of six neighbors only one provided support to Guinean rebels, and even in this case – Liberian President Taylor's backing of armed dissidents – actual rebel activity on Guinean soil was relatively short-lived, lasting only from September 2000 until around April 2001. Taylor's decision also backfired, as Guinea subsequently increased its support to LURD.[119] In other words, it was arguably suboptimal from a strategic perspective.

The fact that three other neighbors (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone) did interfere in other weak states but not in Guinea suggests that it is not the demand but the supply side that is more important for explaining noninterference. Three relevant issues have been highlighted in the literature, relating both to the limited availability of lootable resources and to Guinea's enhanced military capabilities. First, "Guinea's main source of tax revenue and foreign exchange was a nonlootable mineral: bauxite."[120] Second, many of its alluvial diamonds were extracted industrially, providing the government with additional

[119] See Gberie 2001, 11; ICG 2002a, 5; Arieff 2009, 340-1.
[120] Snyder and Bhavnani 2005, 584.

income, which in turn was used partly to equip the army.[121] Third, Presidents Ahmed Sékou Touré (1958–84) and Conté (1984–2008) both "leveraged neighbourhood wars to increase external financial and military aid" whilst also using them "as a smokescreen for cracking down on internal rivals."[122] Taken together, these factors meant that there was actually a rather limited supply of resource opportunities.

In the case of Senegal, two of its neighbors interfered (the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau) while three did not (Guinea, Mali, Mauritania). Although the demand side may have also played an important role at least in the cases of Mali and Mauritania, which both never interfered anywhere in the period under study, I would argue that, overall, the supply side provides a better explanation for the observed variation. Specifically, it is the geography of rebellion and resources that led to a limited supply of opportunities to the three noninterferers: the resource-rich Casamance region, in which the separatist MFDC was active, shares long borders with the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau but only a tiny stretch with Guinea and none at all with Mali and Mauritania.[123] Getting involved in trading cannabis, cashews, or timber was therefore much more feasible and attractive for Gambian and Bissauan officials than for those from the other three countries.

Limited Demand: (Non)interference in Congo-K., Côte d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone

In the cases of (non)interference in the remaining three resource-supplying weak states (Congo-Kinshasa, Côte d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone), there are three cross-cutting factors that led to a limited demand for resource opportunities: first, opportunities need to be considered in the context of the transnational threats that potential interferers face; second, the demand for opportunities with regard to one neighbor may be limited by those regarding

[121] See ibid., 584-5.
[122] Arieff 2009, 344-5.
[123] See Evans 2003; Evans 2004. For a broader discussion of the role of geography and resources in the MFDC rebellion, see Humphreys and Mohamed 2005.

another; and third, some weak state rulers are less dependent on providing opportunities to clients than others.

In the case of Congo-Kinshasa, six out of eight weak state neighbors interfered at one point in time, but only for three of them there is evidence for the opportunity mechanism. Even in the cases of Rwanda and Uganda, where there is evidence, it was transnational threats that provided the primary initial impetus for interference (see Chapter 4). As already discussed above, the reasons for Angola's and Burundi's support to Congolese rebels was also primarily determined by the transnational threats they faced. Furthermore, whereas Angola had more than enough resource wealth at home (especially in the form of oil revenues), Burundi was preoccupied with its civil war at home and was interfering in an area in eastern Congo that was largely controlled by its stronger Rwandan ally.[124]

With regard to Congo-Brazzaville's noninterference in Congo-Kinshasa and Zambia's interference being limited to providing a small degree of support to the AFDL, it is notable that both countries in the 1990s did get involved in diamond deals with the Angolan-based UNITA.[125] Given these existing deals with a rebel group from another neighbor, there was arguably less demand concerning rebels from Congo-Kinshasa.

Finally, Sudan's noninterference can best be explained by the fact that the government in Khartoum was preoccupied with fighting both the SPLM/A and, indirectly, its sponsor Uganda. For Khartoum, the primary concern was therefore to be able to get access to northeastern Congo for military purposes, which it achieved through agreements first with Mobutu and then, from around May 1998 onwards, with Laurent Kabila (see Chapter 4).

Turning to Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia's interference and Guinea's noninterference need to be understood primarily in the context of the transnational threats that Presidents Taylor and Conté faced in the early 2000s: while the new Ivorian President Gbagbo (2000–10) was an enemy of Taylor's due to the latter's support to Gbagbo's rival and predecessor

[124] Rwandan control can also be interpreted as limiting Burundi's supply rather than its demand.
[125] See the references in Table 6.4.

Guéï, Gbagbo in turn became an ally of Conté's, who had previously opposed Taylor's NPFL.[126] For Guinea, in other words, transnational threats emanating from Liberia trumped any potential demands for resource opportunities concerning Ivorian rebels.

In the case of Mali's noninterference in Côte d'Ivoire, it is notable that, at least until the 2012 military coup, Mali has been considered a democratic success story following the popular overthrow of President Moussa Traoré (1968–91).[127] Given that Mali also appears to not have provided direct support to any rebel groups in the period from 1990 to 2010,[128] one may suggest that the Malian government did not need to rely on providing resource opportunities to its key domestic clients to the extent that many autocratic African regimes did. In other words, Mali's more democratic character may have led to limited demand.

The final instance of variation to be explained concerns Guinea's noninterference and Liberia's interference in Sierra Leone. Given the weakness of Sierra Leone's military and the abundance of alluvial diamonds in areas close to both the Guinean and the Liberian border,[129] there was a supply of resource opportunities with regard to both neighbors, suggesting that the demand side is key to explaining variation. Once again, it is the context of transnational threats that led to a limited demand in the case of Guinea: due to Taylor's collaboration with the RUF since the early days of his NPFL rebellion and Guinea's opposition to Taylor throughout the 1989–2003 period, Conakry actively supported the Sierra Leonean government from the early 1990s onwards.[130]

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[126] See the references in Table 6.2 and the earlier discussions in this chapter.
[127] See Young 2012, 224.
[128] The *Mouvement Patriotique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (MPCI, Patriotic Movement of Côte d'Ivoire) reportedly recruited several hundred Malians, and the Ivorian government at one point accused Mali of backing the MPCI, but there is no evidence for direct support (see ICG 2003d, 12, 33). On historical and ethnic cross-border links, see McGovern 2011, 7-14.
[129] On the military, see Reno 1998, chap. 4; on the location of diamond deposits, see Le Billon 2008, 360.
[130] The two countries had a defense pact (see Abdullah and Muana 1998, 181; Keen 2005, 36). Nonetheless, individual Guinean officers stationed at the border sometimes colluded with the RUF (see Richards 1996, 50; Keen 2005, 268).

Challenging Cases? Indirect Retaliation, Nonsecurity Initiation, and Nonretaliation

There are twelve dyads in which at least one instance of transnational alliance formation poses a potential challenge either to the explanatory power of my theory (cases of indirect retaliation or nonsecurity initiation) or, more seriously, to the empirical validity of its retaliatory threat mechanism. In other words, while instances of indirect retaliation or nonsecurity initiation merely represent causes of alliances that the theory does not *cover* directly, instances of nonretaliation at first sight appear to be *inconsistent* with the theory.[131] Table 6.5 provides an overview of the twelve relevant dyads, showing that there were three instances of indirect retaliation, five of nonsecurity initiation, and nine of nonretaliation.

This section shows, first, that the cases of indirect retaliation, albeit not covered by the mechanisms theorized in Chapter 3, are nonetheless in line with the broader assumption of rational, survival-seeking rulers outlined in Chapter 2; second, that the cases of nonsecurity initiation were either well-measured and in support of a winning side or backfired disastrously, thus highlighting that my theory can identify suboptimal decisions and illuminate their consequences;[132] and third, that virtually all cases of nonretaliation featured particular circumstances under which retaliation was either simply impossible or arguably not really required for survival. In sum, while conceding that my rational theory fails to capture both certain causes of alliance formation and certain diplomatic responses that fall short of retaliation in the form of counter-alliances, I find that none of the cases seriously invalidates the logic of the theory.

[131] The italicized terms allude to the set-theoretic notions of consistency and coverage (Ragin 2008, 45): "Consistency, like significance [in correlational analyses], signals whether an empirical connection merits the close attention of the investigator. If a hypothesized subset relation is not consistent, then the researcher's theory or conjecture is not supported. Coverage, like strength, indicates the empirical relevance or importance of a set-theoretic connection." See also Goertz and Mahoney 2012, 32-6.

[132] On the notion of suboptimality in the context of rational theories, see Introduction.

Table 6.5: Cases of Indirect Retaliation (IR), Nonsecurity Initiation (NI), or Nonretaliation (NR)

Country A	Country B	Issue(s)	Explanation
Angola	Togo	NR (A)	Angola did not retaliate against Togo for its support to UNITA (since 1993). Far-flung Togo was arguably of less strategic importance to the Angolan regime than Congo-Brazzaville and Congo-Kinshasa, where it did support the enemies of UNITA's backers. Interfering in Togo would have also been harder to justify to extra-regional actors involved in the Angolan peace negotiations.[133]
Angola	Zambia	NR (A)	Angola did not retaliate against Zambian support to UNITA in the 1990s. However, Angolan accusations led President Chiluba to replace his Minister of Defense and others in October 1997 as a sign of goodwill; furthermore, in April 1999, France and the United States reportedly had to use their influence on Angola to stop it from attacking a Zambian airport.[134]
CAR	Congo-B.	IR (B), NR (A)	Due to President Sassou's alliance with Congo-Kinshasa via Angola, Congo-Brazzaville's financial support to Bozizé's rebellion in 2003 can be seen as indirect retaliation for President Patassé's alliance with the MLC. Patassé was simply overthrown before being able to respond.[135]
CAR	Sudan	IR (B), NR (A)	Sudan's support to anti-Bozizé rebels in CAR around 2006 was indirect retaliation against Khartoum's enemy Chad, which had helped install Bozizé in 2003 and been able to use CAR's territory afterwards. It seems that the embattled Bozizé did not retaliate against Sudan, leaving this task to Chad.[136]
Congo-K.	Rwanda	NI (A)	Mobutu's support to the ex-FAR/Interahamwe was largely a function of his previous friendship with former Rwandan president Habyarimana. Mobutu's strategic mistake massively backfired, leading to his Rwandan-led overthrow.[137]
Congo-K.	Zambia	NI (B), NR (A)	Zambia's limited support to the AFDL was primarily a gesture of regional solidarity. At that time, the Mobutu regime was already too weak to be able to retaliate.[138]
Djibouti	Eritrea	IR (B), NR (A)	Eritrea's support to FRUD during the Eritrean-Ethiopian War (1998–2000) was indirect retaliation against Ethiopia, which received weapons and ammunition through Djibouti's port. It seems that Djibouti did not retaliate itself, likely relying on Ethiopian protection.[139]
Eritrea	Sudan	NI (B)	Sudan's support to the EIJ in Eritrea and to various groups in Ethiopia, which began around 1993, was part of a broader regional project driven by Islamic fundamentalism. This strategically suboptimal policy backfired, however, almost leading to the fall of the regime in Khartoum.[140]
Ethiopia	Sudan	NI (B)	(See immediately above.)

(continued)

[133] On Togo's support, see UNSC 2000a, paras. 32-5; on the diplomatic context, see the discussions above.
[134] See *Africa Confidential* 1998a; *Africa Confidential* 1998d; Prunier 2009, 198-9.
[135] See ICG 2007b, 15-6.
[136] See *Africa Confidential* 2006b; Giroux et al. 2009, 8; email discussion with Louisa Lombard, Nov. 2013.
[137] See Chapter 4.
[138] See Reyntjens 2009, 65-6; Stearns 2011, 55-6.
[139] See Abbink 2003, 415; Bollee 2003, 482.
[140] See de Waal 2004, 197.

Table 6.5 *(continued)*

Country A	Country B	Issue(s)	Explanation
Gambia	Senegal	NR (B)	Senegal did not retaliate against Gambia for its support to the MFDC. Gambia's policy towards the conflict in Casamance has been ambiguous, however, and the level of direct governmental support an issue of debate. In the early 2000s, President Jammeh apparently by and large cut any illicit links with the MFDC, suggesting that Senegal's diplomatic pressure, stopping short of retaliation, was effective.[141]
Guinea-B.	Senegal	NR (B)	Senegal did not directly retaliate against Guinea-Bissau for its support to the MFDC. Following pressure from France and Senegal, however, Bissauan President Vieira dismissed his chief of staff, Mané, accusing him of backing the MFDC. In the armed conflict that resulted from this dismissal, Senegal sent troops to support Vieira's side.[142]
Rwanda	Uganda	NI (B), NR (A)	Uganda's support to the RPF between 1990–94 was primarily due to President Museveni's historical debt to the Rwandan refugees who were involved in his armed struggle. Rwandan President Habyarimana did not retaliate, however, partly because he had French military support, partly because Museveni's backing of the RPF was well-measured.[143]

The Strategic Utility of Indirect Retaliation

In all three cases of indirect retaliation, the decision makes strategic sense (see Table 6.5). First, President Sassou's financial support for Bozizé's operation to overthrow President Patassé in the CAR in 2003 helped his ally across the Congo River, whose continued hold on power depended on Angola almost as much as Sassou's coming to power had (see above). Given Chad's lead role, providing a financial boost was a relatively safe and easy way for Sassou to consolidate his relations with key neighboring governments.

Second, Khartoum's support to anti-Bozizé rebels such as Michel Djotodia's *Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement* (UFDR, Union of Democratic Forces for Unity) around 2006 indirectly undermined Chadian President Déby at a time when relations between Khartoum and N'Djamena were extremely bad (see above). In fact, the UFDR cooperated with the Chadian rebel group *Mouvement pour la paix, la reconstruc-*

[141] See Evans 2004, 8; Foucher 2007, 178-80.
[142] See Foucher 2007, 178-9; Vigh 2012, 141-2.
[143] On the nature of this limited support, see Prunier 1992, 48-9; on the historical background, see Chapter 4.

tion et le développement (MPRD, Movement for Peace, Reconstruction and Development), which had rear bases in northern CAR and also received support from Khartoum.[144]

Third, in the context of the war with Ethiopia, Eritrea's support to FRUD in Djibouti was a sensible strategic move, as Djibouti City had become a crucial *entrepôt* for Ethiopia after Eritrea had cut off Ethiopia's access to the port of Assab.[145] The transnational alliance with FRUD therefore held the promise of gaining the upper hand in the Eritrean-Ethiopian War, a life-and-death issue for the regime in Asmara.

In sum, Sudan's and Eritrea's indirect retaliations took place in a context of serious transnational threats, whereas that of Congo-Brazzaville helped keep its external kingmaker happy. All three decisions make strategic sense if one assumes rational rulers trying to ensure their survival. Whilst highlighting empirical particularities that my theory of transnational alliances does not specifically address, they conform to the broader strategic logic on which the theory is based.

The Strategic Risk of Nonsecurity Initiation

In three of the five cases of nonsecurity initiation, the interfering government faced serious consequences for its strategically questionable decision (see Table 6.5). In the other two, however, there were no such repercussions. In the case of Zambia, this was simply due to the fact that, by the time Zambia provided some limited support to the AFDL, Mobutu's government was already militarily overwhelmed and in no position to retaliate, especially not against a country in which there was no ongoing rebellion at the time. The case of Uganda is more interesting in this context: as Gérard Prunier argued in 1992, it was neither politically nor militarily possible for President Museveni to break completely with the RPF due to the Rwandan refugees' historical links with his army. Nonetheless, Museveni was careful not to antagonize the Rwandan government and its French backers too much. As

[144] See *Africa Confidential* 2006b; Tubiana 2008, 69.
[145] See Bollee 2003, 482.

Prunier tentatively summarized: "Contacts, discrete support, infiltrations – without doubt. Large rear bases, organized camps, and direct support from the NRA – no."[146]

This leaves the three cases in which there was serious blowback. As the consequences of Mobutu's decision to support the ex-FAR/Interahamwe have been discussed at length in Chapter 4, I focus on Sudan's ideologically motivated support to Eritrean and Ethiopian rebel groups starting around 1993. In order to fully understand Khartoum's foreign policy after the military coup in June 1989, one needs to disaggregate the government rather than regard it as a unitary actor, since it was divided between President Omar al-Bashir's pragmatism and Hassan al-Turabi's militant Islamism. As Alex de Waal explains:

> [There was] a consistent tension throughout the 1990s between "realist" and the "Islamist" doctrines of foreign affairs in Khartoum. On the whole, the military officers who held formal executive offices of state were pragmatists who did not want to expose Sudan to the dangers of an adventurist foreign policy, while the leadership of the NIF [National Islamic Front] under Hassan al Turabi was in favour of an ideologically driven, regionally aggressive policy.[147]

When the ideologically driven, strategically suboptimal approach prevailed with regard to Eritrea and Ethiopia, it almost led to the regime's demise, thus confirming the logic of my theory. In de Waal's words, Sudan's policy of regional aggression "ended up antagonising all its major neighbours by 1995, and thereby induced a concerted response that would have brought the regime down in 1998 or 1999, had it not been for the decision of the Eritrean and Ethiopian leaders to engage in a war between themselves."[148] Put differently, the Sudanese government survived this crisis largely because its neighbors themselves got sidetracked by strategically suboptimal decisions.

Furthermore, this example also illustrates the interrelated issues of the coup dilemma and of potential intra-regime agency slack, both of which are covered by my theory: de Waal suggests that al-Bashir's faction at times may have simply lacked the "requisite con-

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[146] Prunier 1992, 49 (my translation). On the domestic politics in Uganda at the time, see also Otunnu 1999.
[147] de Waal 2004, 182.
[148] Ibid., 197. In 1991, al-Turabi founded the Popular Arab and Islamic Congress (PAIC), by one account bringing together extremist groups from as many as seventy-one countries (see Kibreab 2009, 86). It is hard not to consider this a lesson in the art of making enemies.

trol" to implement a strategically wiser foreign policy, as "senior Islamist officers were operating autonomously, or running specialised intelligence agencies that kept an eye on the army itself."[149] In other words, the pragmatists may have grudgingly accepted suboptimal transnational alliances because they were afraid that opposing these alliances would have led to a coup by the Islamists.

Reasons for Nonretaliation

Given that Table 6.5 already provides explanations for the nine cases of nonretaliation, this subsection merely highlights some common themes, thereby distinguishing which cases appear more problematic with regard to the validity of my theory than others. While none of them poses a critical challenge to the theory's logic, they do highlight particular circumstances under which one should not necessarily expect tit-for-tat retaliation.

In two of the instances (the CAR's nonretaliation against Congo-Brazzaville and Congo-Kinshasa's against Zambia), the targeted governments were simply overwhelmed before they could react, and the interferers in question only played minor roles. These two cases therefore present no challenge at all to the theory.

In two other cases (the CAR's against Sudan and Djibouti's against Eritrea), nonretaliation can be explained by the fact that the initial alliances against the two governments represented cases of indirect retaliation. The CAR and Djibouti relied on their stronger allies Chad and Ethiopia, respectively, against which these initial alliances were primarily directed. The two cases therefore suggest that the decision whether or not to retaliate can sometimes depend on a ruler's inter-state alliances, which my theory does not systematically incorporate.

[149] de Waal 2004, 197. After al-Bashir managed to outmaneuver and arrest al-Turabi in December 1999 (see Prunier and Gisselquist 2003, 107), he publicly blamed the earlier breakdown of relations with Eritrea on al-Turabi (see Kibreab 2009, 92).

A third category, comprising three cases of nonretaliation (Angola's against Zambia, Senegal's against Gambia, and Senegal's against Guinea-Bissau), shows that weak state rulers may employ various forms of "coercive diplomacy"[150] that fall short of retaliation via transnational counter-alliance. In other words, by theorizing only the binary choice between retaliation and nonretaliation, my theory fails to capture the broader range of foreign policy instruments that weak state rulers potentially have at their disposal. Nonetheless, the diplomatic pressure exercised in these three cases supports the general logic of the theory – namely, that the affected governments considered foreign interference a threat and thus reacted to it. Moreover, it is notable that in all three cases officials from the interfering government seemed more interested in resource opportunities than in weakening the governments that their transnational allies fought (see Table 6.4).

Lastly, there are two cases of nonretaliation (Angola's against Togo and Rwanda's against Uganda) for which the reasons I provide are perhaps less convincing than those for the other cases. In addition to what is stated in Table 6.5, it is worth pointing out that Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaoré was accused of making deals with UNITA that were similar to those between Togo and UNITA.[151] Arguably, Angola decided to focus its retaliatory energy on the strategically more vital neighboring governments that were supporting UNITA (Mobutu's Zaire and Lissouba's Congo-Brazzaville) and opted against overreaching in the form of retaliating against its farther-flung backers.

In the case of Rwanda, Uganda's well-measured support to the RPF has already been noted. Even taking into consideration that President Habyarimana also received French military support, however, Rwanda's nonretaliation seems somewhat puzzling. On the other hand, the government's genocidal response to the assassination of Habyarimana undermined the army's focus on combatting the RPF and swiftly led to the RPF's victory. These observations together suggest that – to use language that may sound inappropriate in the

[150] George 1991.
[151] See UNSC 2000a, paras. 21-2, 103.

context of genocide – the Hutu extremists in the Rwandan government simply made several strategically suboptimal choices from 1990 onwards, leading to their overthrow.[152] From this perspective, Rwanda's nonretaliation does not undermine my theory's logic.

In sum, the reasons offered in this subsection should not be misconstrued as stubborn attempts to "explain away" anomalous evidence. Seven of the nine instances of nonretaliation certainly suggest that it would be worthwhile to theorize in greater detail the conditions under which the retaliatory threat mechanism should be expected to operate. At the same time, however, none of these cases – whether identified as optimal or suboptimal behavior – appears to pose a fundamental challenge to the rational logic of the theory.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed 42 weak state dyads in mainland sub-Saharan Africa. It has shown that in 25 (60%) of them there was support to rebel groups from at least one side to the other. In terms of the empirical relevance of the mechanisms theorized in Chapter 3, the preemptive variant of the threat mechanism appears to have occurred in 11 of these 25 dyads (44%), the retaliatory variant of that mechanism in 17 (68%), and the opportunity mechanism in 12 (48%). Only in 4 (16%) did neither of these three mechanisms occur. However, three of these four at least featured indirect retaliation, leaving only 1 (4%) in which none of the mechanisms played any role whatsoever. From a dyadic perspective, the theory thus covers almost all of the mixed and positive cases.

While a closer look at the data has suggested that the causal mechanisms were actually at play in the relevant cases, several short analytic narratives have shown how they operated exactly, also highlighting some interesting nuances. Furthermore, the chapter has addressed negative cases – nonalliances – in two different ways, looking at why some gov-

[152] For an analysis that touches on the issue of whether the Rwandan genocide was in some sense "rational," see Straus 2006.

ernments did not interfere in resource-rich neighbors whilst others did, and at why some governments failed to retaliate against a transnational alliance. From this perspective, which focuses on each regime's decision whether or not to form an alliance, it has been shown that there were three instances of indirect retaliation, five of nonsecurity initiation, and nine of nonretaliation. However, neither of these potentially problematic instances seriously challenges the rational logic of my theory of transnational alliances. In fact, I have shown that many of them actually lend it additional credibility.

Overall, this chapter has thus further corroborated both the internal and the external validity of the theoretical arguments about transnational alliance formation developed in Chapters 2 and 3. It has also provided several insights into how these arguments could be further refined so as to better capture the specific conditions under which each of the theorized mechanisms is or is not expected to occur. It is to such considerations – as well as some much broader ones – that I now turn in the overall conclusion to this dissertation.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The Rise and Fall of the M23: Rwanda's Last Hurrah in Eastern Congo?

The hope expressed by MONUC official Matthew Brubacher and others after the press conference at Hotel Ihusi in Goma on January 16, 2009, with which this dissertation began, proved premature.[1] While the joint Rwandan-Congolese military operations successfully decimated the FDLR (the Rwandan Hutu rebels based in eastern DRC), they also took an enormous toll on civilians, displacing close to a million people in 2009 alone.[2] The population continued to be plagued by a diverse array of armed actors including foreign rebel groups, local militias, and a largely undisciplined national army.[3]

Even worse, in April 2012, the Rwandan-Congolese *rapprochement* fell apart as a group of former CNDP officers defected from the Congolese army (FARDC) and launched a new rebellion, the *Mouvement du 23 mars* (M23, March 23 Movement), referring to an agreement between the Congolese government and the CNDP from March 23, 2009. The M23 received crucial support from Kigali, which had reportedly been involved in planning the mutiny from at least late 2011 onwards.[4] On November 20, 2012, the M23 seized control of Goma, humiliating not only the FARDC but also the UN peacekeeping mission, now called MONUSCO, which stood idly by as the rebels entered the town.[5]

The regional and international backlash that had already begun in mid-2012 and only grew more intense in the months following the fall of Goma, however, showed that Rwanda's meddling in eastern Congo was no longer sustainable. Throughout the second half of

[1] An ICG report from November 2010 is aptly titled "Congo: No Stability in Kivu Despite a Rapprochement with Rwanda" (ICG 2010).
[2] From 2009 to 2012, more than 4,500 FDLR combatants were repatriated, possibly up to seventy percent of their remaining fighters (see Stearns 2012b, 41).
[3] See Tamm and Lauterbach 2011, 1-2.
[4] See Stearns 2012a, 44; UNSC 2012, para. 3.
[5] See *New York Times* 2012. In July 2010, MONUC turned into MONUSCO, which stands for *Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo* (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC).

2012, international donors – including key allies such as the United Kingdom and the United States – cut or suspended aid to Rwanda due to its role in the M23 rebellion.[6] Following diplomatic pressure, the M23 withdrew from Goma eleven days after their takeover, agreeing to negotiations with the Congolese government.[7]

While these peace talks made little progress, the UN initiated a political process that culminated in the formation of an Intervention Brigade within MONUSCO, formally authorized by the UN Security Council in March 2013 to "carry out targeted offensive operations" against Congolese armed groups in order to "neutralize" them.[8] South Africa, Tanzania, and Malawi contributed troops to this intervention force, reflecting important regional developments – especially South Africa's growing role in the DRC.[9]

Following a severe leadership struggle within the M23 and intermittent fighting with government troops, the Congolese army and the Intervention Brigade launched a major military operation in late October 2013 that swiftly led to the M23's demise. Crucial to this outcome, it appears, was that Rwanda eventually decided to abandon the M23.[10] The *New York Times* concluded a report on the operation's success with a sentence invoking the same sense of optimism that had existed in January 2009: "Back in Goma, it was clear that after years of war, residents finally have reason to hope."[11]

While it is too early to say whether this time such hope is more warranted, the rise and fall of the M23 can be used to reflect on important policy considerations: how can third-party actors help end or even prevent transnational alliances? In the particular case at hand, why did Rwanda eventually cease its support to the M23, and could the breakdown of the Rwandan-Congolese *rapprochement* have been avoided?

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[6] See *Reuters* 2012; *The Guardian* 2012.
[7] See BBC 2012.
[8] UNSC 2013, para. 12(b) (both quotes).
[9] See *Congo Siasa* 2013a.
[10] See Olivier 2013; *Congo Siasa* 2013b.
[11] *New York Times* 2013.

The theory presented in this dissertation does not explicitly address how cycles of transnational alliances come to an end, but there are clear policy implications to be drawn from the theory's first step. Using examples from the history of the Congo Wars and their aftermath up to the M23's demise, the next section discusses these implications. It is followed by a concluding section that looks back at the dissertation's theoretical arguments and empirical findings in order to move forward, systematically outlining avenues for further advancing the research agenda on transnational dimensions of armed conflict.

Policy Implications: Ending and Preventing Transnational Alliances

Having explained the formation and dynamics of transnational alliances across weak states, explaining when, why, and how they end would be a logical next step. Doing so would first and foremost require collecting better data on both their duration and their termination.[12] This constitutes a real empirical challenge: establishing when exactly an alliance ended is often even more difficult than documenting when it began.[13]

The purpose of this section on policy implications is of course much more limited. It focuses on the role that third-party actors – both intra- and extra-regional – can play in ending and preventing transnational alliances. As these two issues are closely related, I discuss them jointly with regard first to transnational threats, then to resource opportunities – the two causes of alliance formation highlighted by my theory (see Chapter 3). The focus here is on short- to medium-term solutions; therefore, I do not discuss the more fundamental issue of addressing the underlying threats of rebellions and of coups, which would eventually lead one to consider the long-term promises of democracy promotion.

[12] An analogy can be made here with the literature on civil war, where scholars began with the question of onset (e.g., Fearon and Laitin 2003) but then also turned to the issues of duration (e.g., Collier et al. 2004) and termination (e.g., Toft 2010).
[13] On concerns with regard to existing datasets on external support for rebel groups, see Chapter 6.

Alleviating Transnational Threats

Before discussing the Rwandan-Congolese *rapprochement* in 2009 and its failure three years later, a deeper historical question should be addressed. Could the Congo Wars have been avoided in the first place? After all, there were more than two years between the influx of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe into eastern Zaire in July 1994 and the launch of the AFDL-*cum*-RPA invasion in October 1996. During that period, the new government in Kigali repeatedly pleaded with the international community to have the ex-FAR/Interahamwe disarmed and separated from the much larger number of genuine refugees (see Chapter 4). The fact that Mobutu's government was providing the Hutu extremists with weapons was also already known at the time.[14]

"Securing the camps was just too difficult; there was no stomach here for that kind of operation," a US State Department official remembered.[15] While UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali began to look into possible military solutions to the crisis as early as August 1994, the UN Security Council was divided – especially pitting pro-Mobutu France against the pro-RPF United States – and generally unwilling to commit significant resources to the problem.[16] As the head of UNHCR's office in Goma at the time later wrote in a critical reflection on the international community's missed opportunities:

> Initiatives within a multilateral framework were neutralized by an international environment characterized by rivalries and a relative indifference to events in the Great Lakes region of Africa. […] It follows that, had the international community played a more constructive role in the return of the refugees than was the case, the situation in the whole of the central Africa region and beyond might have been dramatically different.[17]

In short, if third-party actors had sufficiently alleviated the transnational threats that the new government in Kigali faced, it would likely not have instigated the creation of the AFDL or at least not launched a full-blown invasion. More generally, to make a fairly obvious point, *cycles* of transnational alliances can be prevented by third-party actors if they

[14] See, for instance, HRW 1995.
[15] Quoted in Stearns 2011, 42.
[16] See ibid., 39-42.
[17] Boutroue 1998, 2-3.

are willing to take the necessary means to dissolve an initial alliance, or if they are at least able to make a credible promise to the threatened party that they will do so soon. The starting point of my theory, of course, was that this has seldom been in the case in post-Cold War Africa, meaning that *intra-regional* – especially, inter-neighbor – relations drive security dynamics.

In this regard, whether or not Rwanda's support to the M23 will indeed have been its last alliance with rebel groups in eastern Congo partly depends on whether the Intervention Brigade can live up to its promise of neutralizing the FDLR. Highlighting the long-standing links between the Congolese army and the Rwandan Hutu rebels, which were allegedly rekindled in response to the M23 rebellion, Rwandan officials expressed doubt as to whether the FARDC and the Intervention Brigade would actually target the FDLR.[18] As this dissertation went to press, however, such military operations had just begun, providing hope that Rwandan-Congolese relations may once again improve.[19]

The primary goal for third-party actors should of course be to help *prevent* the formation of transnational alliances altogether. With regard to transnational threats, my theory provides clear guidance on this issue. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, the interference dilemma that drives preemptive alliance formation crucially depends on the beliefs of weak state rulers. Assuming it is true that both sides are defensively oriented, the dilemma can be avoided if the two sides manage to convince each other of their benign motives – and if they have reason to believe that these motives will not change in the near future.[20]

In this context, the rational choice literature highlights the importance of "costly signals," that is, actions that aggressive actors would find too costly to take.[21] To give examples relating to transnational alliances, the Ethiopian-Somalian *rapprochement* in 1988 and

[18] See *Reuters* 2013a
[19] See *Reuters* 2013b.
[20] See Glaser 2010, 46-50. For a theory of (major) war that is built on the notion of actors' uncertainty about *future* intentions, see Copeland 2000, chap. 1.
[21] See Kydd 1997, esp. 139-47; Morrow 1999, 86-91; Glaser 2010, 64-5. For a formal costly-signaling theory of reassurance, see Kydd 2000.

the period of *détente* between Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Sudan from 1991 to 1993 not only featured assertions of mutual noninterference but also mutual steps to police and neutralize each other's exiled oppositions.[22]

One of the reasons that the Rwandan-Congolese *rapprochement* fell apart in 2012 was Kigali's "personal distrust for the Kinshasa government, which is despised as corrupt and unstable."[23] Following the defection of Rwanda's former army chief of staff Kayumba Nyamwasa, who fled to South Africa in February 2010, Kigali was worried that Nyamwasa and his fellow Rwanda National Congress (RNC) dissidents might use eastern DRC as a staging ground.[24] In short, the Rwandan government believed that its Congolese counterpart would be either unwilling or unable to stop Nyamwasa from doing so.

So how may third-party actors affect the beliefs of weak state rulers in order to prevent such interference dilemmas? First, they can offer incentives for bilateral trust-building initiatives and coordination mechanisms between neighboring governments.[25] Second, they can provide monitoring mechanisms and threaten crippling sanctions for cases of external support for rebel groups. With regard to this second point, recent events relating to eastern DRC may in fact serve as a promising example. First, the suspension of aid to Rwanda in the context of international condemnation of its support to the M23 likely contributed to the end of the alliance. Second, MONUSCO has recently begun operating unmanned aerial vehicles in the Congolese-Rwandan-Ugandan border area.[26] Such "drones" could be used not only to monitor rebel group movements inside the DRC but also to observe cross-border activities. Analyzing such activities via drone video footage is far from easy and does not exhaust all possible ways in which rebels may receive external support, but it at least provides one innovative way of monitoring.

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[22] See Cliffe 1999, 106-7.
[23] Stearns 2012a, 57.
[24] Interview (#11) with an experienced international journalist. See also Stearns 2012a, 56-7.
[25] Drawing on institutionalist theory, such fora should mitigate the problem of asymmetric information, thus reducing the uncertainty both sides face in assessing each other's beliefs (see Keohane 1984, chap. 6).
[26] See BBC 2013.

Reducing Resource Opportunities

The policy implications with regard to ending or preventing transnational alliances formed due to resource opportunities are straightforward. Assuming governments indeed make rational calculations based on the potential benefits to be derived from lootable natural resources in the foreign territory controlled by a potential rebel ally (subtracted by the potential costs of supporting that ally), the goal for third-party actors should be to reduce these expected benefits. The issue of "conflict resources" has of course received much attention since the mid-1990s, so there is no need for an extensive discussion of possible policy instruments here.[27]

The UN Security Council has already taken several measures with regard to conflict resources, chief among them "so-called commodity sanctions, and the mandating of expert groups charged with investigating, and publicly reporting on, commodity-related sanctions-busting and illegal activity."[28] In fact, some of the evidence on Rwandan and Ugandan involvement in the DRC, Togo's links with UNITA, and Charles Taylor's role in Sierra Leone that I presented in Chapters 4-6 was based on such UN reports. It is reasonable to assume that the pressure created by the UN Panel of Experts reports on the DRC in the early 2000s helped accelerate the Rwandan and Ugandan troop withdrawals.

Global civil society actors have also played key roles in the context of tackling conflict resources. In the case of "blood diamonds," their campaigns led to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, a joint initiative by governments, the diamond industry, and civil society actors that entered into force in 2003.[29] With regard to "conflict minerals" in eastern DRC, lobbying efforts by US-based groups such as the Enough Project resulted in Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act from July 2010, which "requires

[27] For a comprehensive overview that covers conflict termination, prevention, and peace-building, see Le Billon 2012, chaps. 6-7. For further details, see the edited volume by Ballentine and Nitzschke 2005.
[28] Le Billon 2012, 151.
[29] See Smillie 2005.

American companies to ensure that the raw materials they use to make their products are not tied to the conflict in Congo, by tracing and auditing their mineral supply chains."[30]

After the M23's demise, Enough founder John Prendergast claimed that the reforms catalyzed by the Dodd-Frank bill were one of three main factors that led to the end of the rebellion.[31] Prendergast's questionable argument focuses primarily on rebel financing *per se*, however, not on Rwandan involvement. With regard to the latter, Jason Stearns highlights that Rwanda's economic interests in eastern Congo go beyond minerals:

> Rwandan army officers keep cattle in Masisi and prominent Rwandan businesses – some owned by the ruling party – trade in everything from fuel to drinking water. The potential consumer base is immense: the population of North and South Kivu is around 11 million people, roughly the same as that of Rwanda. There is nothing illegal about much of this trade, however, and it is unclear how much of this trade benefits the RPF or individuals within the army – or whether Rwanda needs to maintain an armed group in the Kivus to sustain it. Set against Rwanda's GDP – USD 6.4 billion in 2011 – and given the substantial reputational risks involved in war, it is unlikely that business interests alone would sway Kigali.[32]

In sum, while third-party efforts to reduce resource opportunities can be an important instrument for ending and preventing transnational alliances in general, their importance should not be overstated in the specific case of Rwanda and the M23.

Looking Back to Move Forward: Avenues for Future Research

This concluding section systematically reviews the foundations of my dynamic theory of transnational alliances as well as its three steps. In each subsection, I briefly summarize both the main theoretical arguments and the relevant empirical evidence presented throughout this dissertation, using them as a springboard to discuss avenues for future research. In short, this section looks back in order to move forward.

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[30] *Enough Project* 2013.
[31] See Prendergast 2013.
[32] Stearns 2012a, 57-8.

Theoretical Foundations

In Chapter 2, I have argued that a useful starting point for analyzing armed conflict in and across weak states is to assume that the leaders of both governments and rebel groups rationally pursue political power in the form of trying either to retain or to gain control over a sovereign state. On the basis of this power politics approach, I have further argued that the strategic environment of weak state rulers can be characterized as a double security dilemma, which consists of an internal coup dilemma between the ruler and members of his ruling coalition, and an external interference dilemma between the ruler and neighboring weak state rulers. In that chapter, I have also shown with aggregated cross-national data that tit-for-tat interference – i.e., the reciprocal formation of transnational alliances – appears to be significantly more frequent in Africa than in other world regions.

This last insight requires further research. First, as shown in Chapter 6, the UCDP External Support Data, on which I have based the cross-regional analysis in Chapter 2, fails to record the existence of a significant amount of transnational alliances. Improving the data on regions other than sub-Saharan Africa may therefore reveal more cases of reciprocal support for rebel groups in the rest of the world than the UCDP dataset suggests.

Second, it is nonetheless unlikely that the inter-regional differences in the frequency of both interference *per se* and tit-for-tat interference would completely disappear. These differences require a more systematic explanation than the ideas outlined in Chapter 2. Drawing on Phil Roessler's research,[33] my main argument has been that the coup dilemma is more salient in Africa than elsewhere and that therefore African rulers in particular avoid building up their armed forces' military capabilities, leaving them only with the option of interference if they are threatened by a neighboring weak state ruler. By contrast, rulers that do not face a coup dilemma have a broader range of strategies at their disposal. Further research should thus consider transnational alliance formation as only one among a menu

[33] See Roessler 2011; Roessler 2013.

of different policy tools. In this regard, Idean Salehyan's related discussion of the literature on the substitutability of foreign policy strategies provides a good starting point,[34] although I have shown in Chapter 6 that interference can also serve as a complementary tool.

In Chapter 2, I have criticized recent scholarship which conceives of governments and rebel groups as "like units" and therefore claims that one can simply apply structural realist IR theory to explain the alliance behavior not only of governments but also of rebel groups.[35] My argument has been that such a conception ignores the qualitative difference that juridical statehood makes – an attribute that only governments possess and that rebel groups try to obtain by deposing the government of the sovereign state in which they fight.

However, in Chapter 3, I have then focused on explaining the initial alliance choices of weak state governments and have addressed the alliance behavior of rebel groups only after they enter a transnational alliance. Future research should study the overall alliance behavior of rebel groups, looking at their interactions with (1) other domestic rebel groups, (2) foreign rebel groups, *and* (3) foreign governments. Useful starting points are the discussion of the "resources-versus-autonomy dilemma" by Salehyan and colleagues, as well as Fotini Christia's theory of warring group alliances in multiparty civil wars.[36]

Step 1: Alliance Formation

The two factors that my theory highlights to explain why weak state governments support foreign rebel groups – transnational threats and resource opportunities – have already been reintroduced in the previous section on policy implications. In Chapter 4, I have assessed in great detail how the causal mechanisms related to these two factors operated in the cases of the First and Second Congo War. In Chapter 6, I have further shown that at least one of the mechanisms occurred in 21 (84%) out of the 25 mainland sub-Saharan African weak

[34] See Salehyan 2010.
[35] See Lemke 2008a, 187; Lemke 2008b, 774-5; Lemke 2011, 52-3; Vinci 2008, 308; Vinci 2009, 39-40.
[36] Salehyan et al. 2011, 717; Christia 2012, chap. 2.

state dyads in which there was support for rebel groups from at least one side to the other in the period from 1990 to 2010. In other words, my theory captures the vast majority of these alliances.

In Chapter 6, I have also investigated so-called negative cases (or nonalliances). This research strategy has helped clarify certain contextual conditions under which either the retaliatory threat or the opportunity mechanism should not be expected to operate. One avenue for future research should be to collect better time-series data on transnational alliances (see also above) in order to test my theoretical arguments using statistical methods. In this regard, the contextual factors highlighted in Chapter 6 could serve as candidates for control variables. At the same time, the discussion has shown that some of them will be hard to capture systematically, especially in a large-*N* context. In general, I should emphasize my concern about existing datasets on external support; the ostensible rigor of sophisticated statistical methods is of little value if they use global data of questionable quality. In an ideal world, one would bring together country and regional experts in order to ensure that the data adequately reflects the expert literature. The data presented in Chapter 6 is a first step in this direction.

In a footnote in Chapter 4, I have suggested that Angola's decision to support the Kabila government at the start of the Second Congo War was based on considerations relating to transnational threats, whereas Zimbabwe's backing of Kabila was driven by a resource opportunity calculus. Put differently, the causal mechanisms of the first step of my theory may apply not only to transnational but also to inter-state alliances. Future research should examine to what extent the causes for which weak state governments form transnational and inter-state alliances are identical or at least similar.

While this latter suggestion aims at potentially expanding the scope of the theory, my final suggestion with regard to alliance formation would help delimit its historical scope with regard to Africa. Throughout the dissertation, I have conceded that threats and oppor-

tunities – factors linked to a weak state ruler's logic of political survival – do not represent the only causes of alliance formation. If one looks back further than 1990, it is indeed possible that "nonsecurity motives" may play a much more important role than they have in the post-Cold War period. Specifically, I am referring to the decolonization period and the struggle against white minority rule, during which many African governments provided support to liberation movements even if it endangered them, often seemingly due to strong ideological convictions.[37] A systematic historical analysis of transnational alliances in Africa from decolonization until 1990 would be useful in understanding whether the importance of power politics has changed over time.

Step 2: Agent Selection

The first step of my theory explains against which particular foreign government a weak state ruler is expected form transnational alliances, but it is indeterminate as to why he chooses some rebel groups but not others from that particular country. The second step addresses this question. As I have argued in Chapter 3, transnational alliances should be conceived of as patron-client (or, interchangeably, principal-agent) relations. Although principal-agent theory provides a useful framework to analyze the issue of choosing clients, I have argued that the geopolitical relevance of rebel groups with regard to threats and opportunities is more decisive for the choice of clients than considerations relating to information asymmetries, which are emphasized in conventional principal-agent models. The level of trust that a patron has in its client nonetheless plays an important role in selecting agents, and especially in subsequent interactions.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I have evaluated these arguments in the context of the Congo Wars and their aftermath. Specifically, I have shown that geopolitical concerns were of primary importance in all seventeen transnational alliances covered in these chapters (see

[37] For instance, see Young 2012, 107-11.

Table 1.3 for an overview). Furthermore, I have highlighted how such concerns led both Rwanda and Uganda to form alliances with groups from Ituri District that had previously been on the opposing side, demonstrating that geopolitics trumps trust.

While the analysis of these seventeen alliances provides confidence in the second step of my theory, further tests are warranted in order to confirm its external validity. On the basis of collecting the kind of time-series data to which I have referred above, one could investigate each alliance formation by one government directed against another, identify the pool of potential rebel clients that existed at that particular moment, and then assess whether the choice and "nonchoice" of groups varies in line with my arguments. The UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset records most active rebel groups and could thus be used as a starting point. However, as suggested in the Introduction, some potential clients that were not chosen may never appear in these datasets. Once again, expert knowledge would be needed to ensure that pools are accurately identified, especially if that data were also used to assess arguments from step 3 that depend on the concept of agent leverage as a function of the ratio of available principals vis-à-vis available agents.

Alternatively, one could also test specific observable implications of my arguments with more readily available data. For instance, controlling for the number of countries in which a target government interferes (i.e., for the amount of likely retaliatory alliances), rebel groups that operate in areas with significant amounts of lootable natural resources should be more likely to have foreign sponsors than those groups active in resource-poor areas. Given the availability of geocoded data on the location of diamond and gemstone deposits,[38] among others, one could relatively easily extend Salehyan and his colleagues' data, which is already structured to examine "the factors that influence why certain rebel groups receive external support while others do not."[39]

[38] See Gilmore et al. 2005; Lujala 2009.
[39] Salehyan et al. 2011, 710

Step 3: Agent Behavior and Its Consequences

Focusing on the behavior of rebel agents over time, the third step of my theory explains why they sometimes behave uncooperatively towards their foreign principals. It contends that such agency slack can occur either if an agent gains sufficient autonomy and has negative learning experiences when cooperating with its principal, or if an agent learns that it is unlikely to overcome its target government militarily and is then able to enter a power-sharing agreement.

In Chapter 3, I have argued that agent behavior should be integrated into a theory of transnational alliances because it can have direct consequences for subsequent alliance formation and agent selection. These feedback mechanisms from the third to the first two steps are what makes the theory dynamic. More specifically, I have argued that there are two different feedback mechanisms. First, agency slack generally diminishes the principal's trust in its agent, which may lead the principal to choose a different agent; if the rebel agent itself switches to a rival principal (an extreme form of slack), the original principal has little choice but to find a new agent. Second, in the case of a rebel client that manages to seize power and thus turns into a potential principal itself, agency switch can create new transnational threats for the original principal if the new government chooses to support foreign rebel groups that fight its former sponsor.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I have shown that these mechanisms explain much of the transnational dynamics of the Congo Wars. Out of the seventeen transnational alliances analyzed in these two chapters, thirteen were the direct result of agency slack and/or switch (see the overview in Table 1.3). In other words, these alliance shifts can only be understood if one focuses on processes of strategic interaction between the Rwandan and Ugandan governments and their Congolese rebel allies.

One of the main implications of this finding is that one would miss the reasons for most of these transnational alliances if they were studied as isolated events. In order to

explore the external validity of my theory's third step, future research should investigate alliance dynamics in other transnationalized conflicts, such as the "proxy war" between Chad and Sudan or the interconnected Liberian, Sierra Leonean, and Ivorian civil wars (see Chapter 6). Such work will necessarily involve a detailed reconstruction of conflict processes and of interactions between rebel clients and their foreign patrons. The mechanisms highlighted by the theory – increases in agent leverage, decreases in principal monitoring, learning from cooperating, and learning from fighting – can all be firmly established only in the context of analyzing the evolving strategic environments of both governments and rebel groups. In this regard, Chapters 4 and 5 have shown that qualitative process tracing offers distinct methodological advantages.

Overall, then, the dynamic three-step theory presented in this dissertation not only explains the transnational dynamics of the deadliest conflict since World War II and the formation of transnational alliances across Africa's weak states from 1990 to 2010, but it also opens promising avenues for further advancing the research agenda on external dimensions of internal armed conflict.

Appendix: Note on Fieldwork

The fieldwork on the Congo Wars for this dissertation can be distinguished into two parts; each consisted of a longer and a shorter trip. The first part, conducted solely for the dissertation, comprised a two-month trip from the end of June to late August 2011 to Kinshasa (16 days), Goma (11 days), and Bukavu (5 days) in the DRC, Kigali (13 days) in Rwanda, and Kampala (12 days) in Uganda, as well as a four-week trip in March 2012 to Kampala (28 days).

The second part, made possible through a consultancy with the Rift Valley Institute's *Usalama Project: Understanding Congolese Armed Groups*, involved a four-week trip in August 2012 to Kinshasa (7 days) and Bunia (21 days) in the DRC, as well as a shorter trip in December 2012 to Bunia (7 days), Kpandroma and Rethy (2 days), and Mongbwalu and Kobu (2 days), all in the DRC's Ituri District, via Entebbe and Kampala (4 days).

During those four trips, I personally conducted 103 interviews, while my Usalama Project research assistants conducted 28 interviews in my absence both during and after the third trip; finally, I also conducted 3 interviews in the UK. Table A.1 below categorizes these 134 interviews according to the interviewees' identities (for the complete list of interviews, see References).

The main objective of the first part of my fieldwork was to gather factual information on – and, even more importantly, individual interpretations of – the transnational alliances studied in Chapters 4 and 5. Based on the existing literature at the time, I had already identified most of the key turning points around which the two chapters are structured. In addition, I had also firmly established my three research questions – related to alliance formation, agent selection, as well as agent behavior and its consequences. Although I thus had an initial guideline of questions, I would often also ask spontaneous ones in response to what interviewees said, generally resulting in a semi-structured interview format.

Table A.1: Interviews on the Congo Wars

Category	No.
Congolese rebel group members	76
Senior officials and commanders	*62*
Rank and file	*14*
Government officials and military officers	9
Congolese	*2*
Rwandan	*4*
Ugandan	*3*
Journalists, analysts, and scholars	19
Congolese	*5*
Rwandan	*2*
Ugandan	*6*
Other	*6*
Congolese civil society activists	13
UN officials	11
Other	6
Total	134

Regarding potential interviewees, I had prepared lists of important (former) Congolese rebel group officials and commanders, as well as (former) government officials and military officers from Rwanda and Uganda.[1] As Table A.1 shows, I was far more successful in obtaining interviews with the Congolese rebel side than with the Rwandan or Ugandan government side of the transnational alliances under study. For instance, I managed to speak to four of the five presidents that the RCD(-G) and the RCD-K/ML had between 1998 and 2003.[2] Discussions with journalists, analysts, scholars, civil society activists, and UN officials complemented these interviews, often adding more neutral perspectives and helping me navigate the local terrain, both literally and metaphorically.

The relative difficulties in getting access to the government side were partly a function of the actors' different trajectories: while most of the former rebel officials held less important positions by the time of the interviews, the key Rwandan and Ugandan players

[1] Especially useful for this purpose were the lists of officials in De Villers et al. 1999; De Villers et al. 2001.
[2] Note that Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi (interview #15), RCD-K/ML president since November 2000, was the DRC's Minister of Decentralization at the time of the interview; however, he is counted in Table A.1 as senior rebel group official. In other words, an interviewee's category is determined by the position they held at the time of the alliance under study.

either had risen to (or remained in) some of the highest offices in their countries, had fallen out with the regime and were in exile, or had died. Moreover, given the reputational costs the Congo Wars had brought to both countries (e.g., through the UN Panel of Experts reports), several officials were reluctant to talk about their government's involvement in these conflicts. In the case of the Rwandan and Ugandan militaries, neither spokesperson was able to facilitate interviews with officers who were still in active service. Finally, practical constraints prevented me from spending as much time in Uganda and especially in Rwanda as in the DRC.

However, media reporting from the time of the wars and other sources – in the Ugandan case, especially the transcripts of the so-called Porter Commission[3] – provided me with numerous statements by key Rwandan and Ugandan government actors. Since the Ugandan newspapers *The New Vision* and *The Monitor* were not fully available in digital format for the period from 1996 to 2003, I spent most of my time in Kampala in their archives, systematically collecting reports on the Congo Wars. These and other media reports – notably, those by the UN-affiliated IRIN service – also helped me cross-check much of the information provided by interviewees.

The primary purpose of the second part of my fieldwork was to collect information on the origins and trajectories of three Ituri-based armed groups (the FNI, FRPI, and UPC) in order to write two reports for the Usalama Project. Given the significant overlap between the data needed for these reports and the data needed for my dissertation, this consultancy offered a unique opportunity, as it enabled me to spend six more weeks in the DRC – almost all of them in Ituri District – and hire five local research assistants.[4] Project director Jason Stearns provided me with a set of research questions, which included (but also went well beyond) the questions I needed to ask on relations between the armed groups and their

[3] See *Republic of Uganda* 2002b.
[4] These research assistants were Jean Paul Basila, Daniel Litsha, and a third who wishes to remain anonymous for the report on the UPC, and Didi Angaika and Claude Lonzama for the report on the FNI/FRPI.

foreign sponsors. In sum, this second part was instrumental in collecting data on eight of the ten local-cleavage transnational alliances studied in Chapter 5 (see Table 1.2).

With regard to my five Usalama Project research assistants, I should note that four of them had been involved in one way or another with the armed groups that I studied. Hiring "insiders" was in fact a deliberate aim of the Usalama Project in order to get the kind of access and information needed for the project reports. This access of course came at the expense of worrying about the objectivity of insider assistants. However, three important factors alleviated this concern. First, all five assistants were recommended to me for their largely nonpartisan attitude by third parties (UN officials and civil society activists). Second, I conducted almost all of the key interviews myself. Third, the fact that I was conducting research on both the Hema- and the Lendu-dominated armed groups meant that I automatically gained insights into the different perspectives of the two main local sides of the conflict, enabling me to detect biases in each side's accounts.

References

Interviews

(An asterisk indicates that the interview was conducted by an Usalama Project research assistant.)

#1 Brigadier General Frank Rusagara (London, June 20, 2011)
Director of Finance, 1994–97, then Permanent Secretary, 1997–2000, both at the Rwandan Ministry of Defence.

#2 Congolese government official (Kinshasa, July 1, 2011)

#3 MONUSCO analyst 1 (Kinshasa, July 1, 2011)

#4 MONUSCO official 1 (Kinshasa, July 2, 2011)

#5 Ernest Wamba dia Wamba (Kinshasa, July 4, 2011)
RCD president, August 1998 – May 1999; RCD-K/ML president, May 1999 – November 2000.

#6 International journalist 1 (Kinshasa, July 5, 2011)

#7 Emile Ilunga (Kinshasa, July 5, 2011)
Self-proclaimed political leader of the Katangan Tigers, 1996–97; RCD president, May 1999 – October 2000.

#8 Former MLC national secretary (Kinshasa, July 6, 2011)

#9 UN official 1 (Kinshasa, July 7, 2011)

#10 Jean-Baptiste Sondji (Kinshasa, July 9, 2011)
Congolese opposition politician, early 1990s; Minister of Health and Social Affairs under Laurent Kabila, May 1997 – March 1999.

#11 International journalist 2 (Kinshasa, July 9, 2011)

#12 Delly Sesanga (Kinshasa, July 12, 2011)
Former secretary-general of Arthur Zahidi Ngoma's political party *Forces du futur*; RCD founding member, August 1998.

#13 International analyst (Kinshasa, July 12, 2011)

#14 Azarias Ruberwa (Kinshasa, July 12, 2011)
Chief of staff of Foreign Minister Bizima Karaha, May 1997 – July 1998; RCD founding member, August 1998; RCD-G secretary-general and coordinator of the executive, October 2002 – June 2003; RCD-G president, June 2003.

#15 Mbusa Nyamwisi (Kinshasa, July 14, 2011)
RCD co-founder and executive council member, August 1998; president of the RCD assembly, January–May 1999; RCD-K/ML commissioner-general, October 1999 – October 2000; RCD-K/ML vice president, October–November 2000; *de facto* RCD-K/ML president since November 2000.

#16 UN official 2 (Kinshasa, July 14, 2011)

#17 MONUSCO analyst 2 (Kinshasa, July 14, 2011)

#18 UN official 3 (Goma, July 19, 2011)

#19 Congolese analyst (Goma, July 20, 2011)

#20 Séverine Autesserre (Goma, July 20, 2011)
Congo expert; author of *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*.

#21 Congolese political science professor (Goma, July 21, 2011)

#22 Former AFDL official (Goma, July 22, 2011)

#23 Jason Stearns (Goma, July 22, 2011)
Congo expert; author of *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa*.

#24 Local NGO leader (Goma, July 22, 2011)

#25 Emmanuel Kamanzi (Goma, July 25, 2011)
AFDL founding member, October 1996; RCD finance minister, August 1998 – May 1999; then, among other responsibilities, in charge of mining until November 2000.

#26 Willy Mishiki (Goma, July 25, 2011)
Joined the RCD in late 1998; briefly with the RCD-K, May – August 1999.

#27 Bishop Jean-Luc Kuye Ndondo (Bukavu, July 27, 2011)
President of the Congolese Truth and Reconciliation Commission, July 2003 – February 2007.

#28 Early AFDL recruit (Bukavu, July 28, 2011)

#29 Séverin Mugangu (Bukavu, July 29, 2011)
Professor of Law, Catholic University of Bukavu; conducted research on conflict in the DRC.

#30 Rwandan journalist 1 (Kigali, August 4, 2011)

#31 Western embassy official (Kigali, August 4, 2011)

#32 Rwandan journalist 2 (Kigali, August 5, 2011)

#33 Long-term international aid worker (Kigali, August 9, 2011)

#34 Ambassador Zeno Mutimura (Kigali, August 11, 2011)
Rwandan Alliance for National Unity (RANU) chairman, 1979–87; various RPF positions, 1987–94; First Counsellor at the embassies in Addis Ababa (1994–96) and Beijing (1999–2005); Ambassador in Dar-es-Salaam (2005–9); diplomatic advisor to the RPF secretary-general, 2009–11.

#35 Tito Rutaremara (Kigali, August 12, 2011)
First RPF secretary-general, 1987–93; RPF parliamentary leader, 1994–2000; Rwanda's Chief Ombudsman, 2003–11.

#36 Frederick Golooba-Mutebi (Kampala, August 15, 2011)
Ugandan researcher; expert on Rwanda, Uganda, and their bilateral relations.

#37 Senior UPDF officer (Kampala, August 25, 2011)

#38 Senior international analyst (January 2012)

#39 Former MONUC official (London, February 14, 2012)

#40 Senior Rwandan official (March 2012)

#41 Ugandan journalist 1 (Kampala, March 6, 2012)

#42 General Jeje Odongo (Kampala, March 7, 2012)
Minister of State for Defence, 1996–1998; Commander of the Army, 1998–2001; various political positions, 2001–9; Minister of State for Defence since February 2009.

#43 Emmy Allio (Kampala, March 10, 2012)
Ugandan journalist; covered the Congo Wars for the *New Vision*; later ESO deputy chief.

#44 Grace Matsiko (Kampala, March 13, 2012)
Ugandan journalist; covered the Congo Wars for the *New Vision*.

#45 Andrew Mwenda (Kampala, March 15, 2012)
Ugandan journalist and entrepreneur; chief investigative reporter for the *Monitor* at the time of the Second Congo War.

#46 Ugandan political analyst (Kampala, March 15, 2012)

#47 Major General Benon Biraaro (Kampala, March 26, 2012)
Briefly led a Ugandan contingent in the Second Congo War; member of the Rwandan-Ugandan probe committee on the August 1999 clashes in Kisangani; deputy army chief of staff and head of the Senior Command and Staff College between 2003 and 2007.

#48 MONUSCO analyst 3 (Kinshasa, August 6, 2012) [Usalama Project (UP): #1]

#49 Daniel Litsha (Bunia, August 8, 2012) [UP: #2]
UPC secretary-general in 2002–3; hired as one of my Usalama Project research assistants.

#50 Former UPC official 1 (Bunia, August 8, 2012) [UP: #3]

#51 Former UPC official 2 (Bunia, August 9, 2012) [UP: #4]

#52 Eric Mongo (Bunia, August 9, 2012) [UP: #5]
President of the Ituri-based peace and reconciliation NGO network Haki Na Amani.

#53 Didi Angaika (Bunia, August 9, 2012) [UP: #6]
Program leader, Haki Na Amani; Notable, Walendu Bindi; former FNI official; hired as one of my Usalama Project research assistants.

#54 Former UPC official 3 (Bunia, August 10, 2012) [UP: #7]

#55 Former FRPI official 1 (Bunia, August 10, 2012) [UP: #8]

#56 Richard Lonema (Bunia, August 11, 2012) [UP: #9]
UPC co-founder and interim leader; appointed UPC national secretary for economy, commerce, and industry in September 2002.

#57 Former FRPI official 2 (Bunia, August 11, 2012) [UP: #10]

#58 Former UPC official 4 (Bunia, August 13, 2012) [UP: #11]

#59 Former FRPI official 3 (Bunia, August 14, 2012) [UP: #12]

#60 Walendu Bindi notable 1 (Bunia, August 14, 2012) [UP: #13]

#61 Walendu Bindi notable 2 (Bunia, August 15, 2012) [UP: #14]

#62 Former UPC official 5 (Bunia, August 15, 2012) [UP: #15]

#63 Former UPC official 6 (Bunia, August 15, 2012) [UP: #16]
Floribert Kisembo's former *aide-de-camp*.

#64 Local informant 1 (Bunia, August 15, 2012) [UP: #17]

#65 MONUSCO official 2 (Bunia, August 16, 2012) [UP: #18]

#66 Former UPC official 7 (Bunia, August 16, 2012) [UP: #19]

#67 Former UPC official 8 (Bunia, August 16, 2012) [UP: #20]

#68 Former FRPI official 3 (Bunia, August 17, 2012) [UP: #21]

#69 MONUSCO official 3 (Bunia, August 17, 2012) [UP: #22]

#70 Joseph Chura (Bunia, August 20, 2012) [UP: #23]
Former FNI president Floribert Ndjabu's chief of staff, 2002–5; FNI secretary-general and interim president from 2005 to the time of the interview.

#71 "Colonel Bruce Bebi" (Bunia, August 20, 2012) [UP: #24]
Former FPRI commander.

#72* Former UPC combatant 1 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #25]

#73* Former UPC combatant 2 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #26]

#74* Former UPC combatant 3 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #27]

#75* Former UPC combatant 4 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #28]

#76 Local NGO leader (Bunia, August 21, 2012) [UP: #29]

#77 Michel Kalimi (Bunia, August 21, 2012) [UP: #30]
Lendu/Ngiti community elder and representative; vice president of the Ituri Pacification Commission (IPC), 2003.

#78 UN official 4 (Bunia, August 22, 2012) [UP: #31]

#79 Daniel Litsha (Bunia, August 22, 2012) [UP: #32]
See above (#49).

#80 Dieudonné Mbuna (Bunia, August 22, 2012) [UP: #33]
UPC founding member; UPC president Thomas Lubanga's chief of staff, 2002–3.

#81 Former PUSIC official (Bunia, August 23, 2012) [UP: #34]

#82 Former UPC official 9 (Bunia, August 23, 2012) [UP: #35]

#83* Ngabu Wele (Bunia, August 23, 2012) [UP: #36]
Held several FNI positions in 2002–3, among them representative at the IPC special assembly.

#84* Oudu Kungu Jackson (Bunia, August 23, 2012) [UP: #37]
In charge of FRPI's communications, 2002–4; FRPI liaison to humanitarian agencies, 2004–5.

#85* Former FRPI combatant 1 (Bunia, August 23, 2012) [UP: #38]

#86 Former UPC official 10 (Bunia, August 24, 2012) [UP: #39]

#87* Former FRPI combatant 2 (Bunia, August 24, 2012) [UP: #41]

#88 Former UPC combatant 5 (Bunia, August 25, 2012) [UP: #43]
#89 Local human rights activist (Bunia, August 25, 2012) [UP: #44]
#90* Former UPC combatant 6 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #45]
#91* Former UPC combatant 7 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #46]
#92* Former UPC combatant 8 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #47]
#93* Former FRPI combatant 3 (Bunia, August 25, 2012) [UP: #48]
#94 Former UPC official 11 (Bunia, August 27, 2012) [UP: #50]
#95 Former UPC intelligence officer (Kinshasa, August 29, 2012) [UP: #51]
#96 Former UPC intelligence officer (Kinshasa, August 30, 2012) [UP: #52]
#97 Former UPC official 12 (Kinshasa, August 30, 2012) [UP: #53]
#98 Former UPC official 13 (Kinshasa, August 31, 2012) [UP: #54]
#99 José Endundo (Kinshasa, August 31, 2012)
RCD founding member; suspended from the RCD in April 2000; subsequently joined the MLC, becoming national secretary for the economy.
#100* Former FRPI combatant 4 (Bunia, August 2012) [UP: #55]
#101* Eric Bahati Ngabu (Bunia, August 31, 2012) [UP: #56]
Former FNI combatant with the rank of Major.
#102* FRPI commander (Gety, September 1, 2012) [UP: #57]
#103* Local informant 2 (Bunia, September 2012) [UP: #58]
#104* Local informant 3 (Bunia, September 2012) [UP: #59]
#105* Former UPC official 14 (Bunia, September 2012) [UP: #60]
#106* Local informant 4 (Bunia, September 2012) [UP: #61]
#107* Former UPC commander (Bunia, September 2012) [UP: #62]
#108* Local informant 5 (Bunia, September 2012) [UP: #63]
#109* John Tinanzabo (Bunia, October 7, 2012) [UP: #64]
UPC founding member; appointed UPC national secretary for pacification and reconciliation in September 2002; UPC interim president at the time of the interview.
#110* Former Hema self-defense committee member (October 2012) [UP: #65]
#111* Former APC commander (October 2012) [UP: #66]
#112* Local researcher (October 2012) [UP: #67]
#113* Former UPC official 15 (Bunia, October 28, 2012) [UP: #68]
#114* Former UPC official 16 (Bunia, October 2012) [UP: #69]
#115* Former UPC combatant 9 (Bunia, October 2012) [UP: #70]
#116 Former UPC official 17 (Bunia, December 11, 2012) [UP: #71]
#117 Former UPC official 18 (Bunia, December 12, 2012) [UP: #72]
#118 Former FNI official 1 (Bunia, December 14, 2012) [UP: #73]
#119 Lendu community leader (Bunia, December 14, 2012) [UP: #74]
#120 Didi Angaika (Bunia, December 14, 2012) [UP: #75]
See above (#53).
#121 Former FNI official 2 (Bunia, December 15, 2012) [UP: #76]
#122 Célestin Tawara (Bunia, December 15, 2012) [UP: #77]
Unsuccessful FNI candidate for the national parliament in 2011.
#123 Augustin Lobo Nyinga (Bunia, December 16, 2012) [UP: #78]
Lendu delegation's spokesman at the Rwakitura farm meeting with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in late November 2002; FNI co-founder; appointed FNI commissioner for the exterior in December 2002.
#124 Herman Ndrugboma Kranjedu (Kpandroma, December 17, 2012) [UP: #79]
FNI coordinator in Kpandroma.

#125 Walendu Pitsi notable 1 (Rethy, December 18, 2012) [UP: #80]
#126 Walendu Pitsi notable 2 (Rethy, December 18, 2012) [UP: #81]
#127 Walendu Pitsi notable 3 (Rethy, December 18, 2012) [UP: #82]
#128 Former FNI official 3 (Kpandroma, December 18, 2012) [UP: #83]
#129 Lendu community leader (Kpandroma, December 18, 2012) [UP: #84]
#130 Elisabeth Sakina Buve (Mongbwalu, December 19, 2012) [UP: #85]
FNI commissioner for social affairs in 2003–4, based in Mongbwalu.
#131 Marcélin Ndovya Kambale (Mongbwalu, December 19, 2012) [UP: #86]
FNI commissioner for agriculture, farming, and fishing in 2003–4, based in Mongbwalu.
#132 FNI official (Kobu, December 19, 2012) [UP: #87]
#133 Former FNI official 4 (Bunia, December 2012) [UP: #88]
#134 Former FNI official 5 (Bunia, December 2012) [UP: #89]

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