The Effects of External Influence on Intra-State Conflicts in Africa: A Case Study of the Democratic Republic of Congo (1996-2005)

[1]Davison Maunganidze., [2]Yeukai Makoni

[1]MSc, MBA (Bus Admin), BSc (Psy), Dip HR, Dip ADR, Dip Eco (Peace & Conflict Resolution)

[2]MSc (Devpt Studies), BSc (M&E), BSc (Socio), Dip (DE) (Peace & Conflict Resolution)

ABSTRACT

This study explored the evolution and trajectory of the effects of external influence on intrastate conflicts in Africa. It sought to reveal the causes of external forces intervention, the social, political and economic effects of external influence in African conflicts and wars. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study. Library and the internet literature were also used to complement the research findings. The study showed that African states have been subject to the West's exploitation to the extent that the West has developed at the expense of Africa who has been the provider of most of their materials to fame. It is because of what Africa possesses, that ranges from natural resources to minerals that has perpetuated colonialism and prolonged monopoly from such countries as America, Britain, France and Belgium, among others. More so, these countries have since deceased from operating as countries per se, but rather fund opposition parties, insurgent groups and even use multinational companies to rub the show, causing stirs within their target countries. The end result however, is to loot the available resources at the expense of the host country. Therefore, the study recommends a great deal of diplomatic effort to be invested in attempts to settle conflicts in Africa. Notable successes have been achieved in ending some wars. Wars of liberation from the control of colonial settlers, who after protracted armed struggles, were forced to concede political power and were seeking favourable transition in economic and political arenas. Such examples include Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. This study also recommends that the governments of Africa and that of DRC in particular should put in place social programs aimed at alleviating poverty so that the citizenry is not enticed by monetary rewards and ending up being recruited to join rebel movements. It is as such because it was noted that recruitment of locals by foreign handlers to take part in overthrowing the governments of Africa is based on their disadvantaged social conditions. The improvement of these social conditions therefore helps in eliminating this vulnerability that is exploited by foreign powers.

Key Words: External, Influence, Intra-State, Conflict

INTRODUCTION

While Africa has had its share of conflicts in the form of interstate wars as well as intrastate wars, the majority of research done has focused on the causes of the conflicts, without much emphasis being put to understand the effects that have emanated from these conflicts. Such conflicts have been between armed groups within states and have caused not only casualties, but contributed vastly to migration of citizens, rape, and starvation as well as social and economic decline among other effects. Greater ignition of these conflicts has come from external influence and it has had a number of effects on the African continent as well as the inhabitants. However, not much seems to have been written on these effects. This study therefore aims at bringing out the tragic effects that external influence has posed on African states, with a particular focus on the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Background to the Study

The history of Africa since colonization includes a series of self-motivated foreign interventions and ruthless exploitation of human labour, minerals and many of her resources. The European countries, amongst them

Germany, France, Belgium and the United States of America (USA) had their respective proxies during the cold war, hence, they set and spread their influence in the African continent. However, today, foreign influence has had profound effects on the targeted countries, with the level of influence prolonging and intensifying the conflicts. This is because foreign colonisers want a greater share of Africa's natural resources at the expense of the indigenes, who are forced into migration and poverty. To Gordon and Gordon (2007), Africa is faced by conflicts because she is a massive continent with better natural resource base as compared to the North.

In Angola, the imperialists used detestable means which further led to conflict in this state. Between 1885 and 1975, Angola was under Portugal's rule. According to the New York Times, the Angola war was ''a three way tribally induced struggle'', in which the contenders became enmeshed in global politics as the rival super powers and their proxies rushed to sponsor their chosen factions. This included the funding of the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), which had solely stood for itself from the period when Angola was colonized up until after independence. There was a switch from funding the well-known Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) to UNITA which prior had little foreign aid. In this regard, this fuelled more fights and civil war within the nation since there was unrest amongst the Angolans. The three parties sought to fight the colonizer hence they refused to work in white owned farms. To Doyle and Sambanis (2006), there was violence that ensued from the indigenes against colonial power. In 1975, the MPLA succeeded in throwing the other parties out of election and awaited the Portuguese to come and formerly hand over power, which they never did. However, with assistance from the Soviet and Cuba, MPLA took over. The other two parties set up a rival to fight the Marxist MPLA. The 1980's then saw the external forces retreating, hence, the fight was now amongst the native parties of Angola, leading to an intensified civil war. An estimated two million people were driven away from their homes and left homeless. This then shows the effects of external influence on intrastate conflicts in Africa. The US administration's aggressive attitude over Angola was consistent with that of successive post war administrators, who were concerned with extending American political influence and control over Africa. Their involvement in Angola followed previous interventions in the D R Congo, where they fuelled the murder of Lumumba and installed Mobutu.

In addition to the above, the African continent remains besieged by many conflicts which have been death related and produced more than 8 million refugees (The Observer, June 15,2003). Amongst the externally induced conflicts is the Rwandan genocide, which had gross violation of human life and rights as well as an infinite racial divide in the nation. This has been so because of the Hutu and Tutsi divide by the Belgian administration, which saw identity cards as well as preferential being accorded to the Tutsi origin because of complexion. As a result, the Tutsi had access to land, property as well as superiority over the Hutu. The Belgians had given power to the Tutsi leaders who had power over the Hutu and this prepared ground for future conflict among the two ethnic groups. However, the 1990s saw the policies' effects when the then president of Kenya, a Hutu was killed in a plane crash. There was a great massacre which killed more than 800 000 people causing hatred amongst the Hutu and Tutsi and displacement of people into the neighbouring D R Congo. The Belgians further exploited the Hutu-Tutsi conflict by lending military and political support to Tutsi leaders who were maintaining their policies. In this regard, external influence has had detrimental effects in African conflicts, ranging from displacement of people to loss of lives as well as wars up to present day.

Conflict in Sierra Leone also is a result of the West influencing the neighbouring countries as well as stirring violence themselves. An estimated 75 000 people have been killed and half of the country's 4, 5 million have been forced out of the country to seek peaceful homes. Conflict in Sierra Leon began soon after independence when the two political parties, the Sierra Leon People's Party (SLPP) and the All People's Congress (APC) started fighting for power. At the same time, Burkina Faso and Liberia formed alliances so as to motivate their political and economic interests. Countries such as the United Kingdom also had economic interests hence were the most relevant participant. International mass media especially BBC was the sole broadcaster who unprofessionally broadcasted the wars and exploited the international television.

The D R Congo is blessed with an abundance of natural resources such as gold, petroleum, diamonds, coal, timber tin, hydro power among others and a population of about 5million people. However, despite this abundance of both natural and human resources, the DRC remains one of the poorest countries in Africa today with at least 50% of its population living below the poverty line. Although the DRC has seen some great improvements over the past years, it continues to live under a strain which emanated from external influence.

Much emphasis has been given to the influence of the imperialist on the Congo conflict, without much being said about the effects that the European countries have caused in Congo.

The war in Congo has been recorded as Africa's world war, with widespread civilian suffering in form of migration to other neighbouring countries and more than six million deaths since its naissance in August 1998. Fighting was fuelled by the county's vast mineral wealth, with all sides taking advantage of anarchy to plunder natural resources. Progress in one part or direction of the country inflames violence in another. As such, this study seeks to explore the effects caused by external influence in African conflicts for there seems to be little done to explore this field. The United Nations, African Union, Southern African Development Community amongst others have stood up to fight the imperialist's unjust plots, though however they have not succeeded and conflict has persisted in Africa.

Statement of the Problem

The conflict in DR Congo has been emotive and so has been the efforts to research it. Previous studies have tended to focus on the influence of external forces on intra-state conflicts, however, with less or no studies being done to show the extent of the effects of external influence in African conflicts. Thus, this study sought to bring out the effects of external forces interference in African societies.

Research Objectives

1. To establish the motivating factors behind external influence on intrastate conflict in Africa
2. To establish the political, economic and social effects of external influence on intrastate conflict in Africa
3. To establish the extent of interference by external forces in African affairs in general and the DRC, in particular

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a qualitative research design, and a phenomenological methodology, in order to get a clearer understanding of the effects of external forces in intra-state conflicts in Africa, with specific reference to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for the period spanning from 1996 to 2005. The study adopted the use of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as data collection tools. This research was based on the interpretive research philosophy. Interpretivism stresses that reality consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world and as such, they may adopt an inter-subjective epistemology and the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. The population for this research were individuals and groups affected by the DRC conflict. As such, this population was a stratified one, comprising individuals from three different African countries, as well as Zimbabwe officials. Purposive sampling encompasses a number of designs, which include, but not limited to extreme or deviant case, typical case, snowballing and criterion sampling (Green and Aarons 2011). This study used criterion sampling, which involves searching for individuals, groups or cases that met a certain criterion. For purposes of this study, the researchers identified and selected individuals and groups of individuals that were knowledgeable about or experienced the effects of external forces in DRC intra-state conflict. However, additional to knowledge and experience, respondents were also chosen on the basis of availability and willingness to participate in the study. The study sample therefore comprised of five (5) foreign officials resident in Harare, thirty (30) foreign nationals residing in Zimbabwe, evenly drawn from three (3) different African countries, as well as six (6) officials in the academia who were targeted for interviews and focus group discussions. Data was presented in a narrative form, which is befitting for data obtained qualitatively (Dierckx de Casterle, Gastmans, Bryon and Denier, 2011). As such, a qualitative narrative best presents the findings in a clear and transparent way which explains the effects of external forces in intra-state conflict in Africa, with particular focus on the DRC. The narrative is enriched with tables and graphs. Data analysis was done through thematic content analysis, where the researchers identified themes from the texts of the interviews and focus group discussions conducted, in order to give expression to the commonality of voices across participants. This also helped the researchers to come up with generalisations that answer the research questions. The research also made use of interpretational analysis, where the researchers looked for patterns, threads, constructs or commonalities within the data.

Theoretical Framework

This study suggests and brings into discussion the Realism and the Power theories as frameworks for analysis. To realists, states or nations are always engaged in a struggle for power. Thus, to Morgenthau, the use of power fulfills the interests of a nation. National power to Morgenthau is composed of geographical capacity, economy and natural resources, population, military strength of a government. These are the particularities that intruders search when they what to exploit a nation. To survive, thus nations should have power, where anarchic power dominates the weaker states. Thus international politics seems to have taken over domestic politics hence the sponsoring and funding of rebel and insurgent groups by super powers to fulfil their interests. It is important therefore to note that colonialism like Marxism is destructive. It has been evident in Africa, where many states have fallen victim to the prowess of the dominant elite (Fanon, 1961). Former ways of colonialism have not yet been abolished, hence, it is still an African problem for Africa is the sole target of colonialism. This is because, where a country was colonized 30 years ago, the effects are still felt today. For example, the effects of the 1884 Berlin Conference where the European countries planned how to colonize Africa are still felt today in the DRC, Zimbabwe, Libya to name a few. They allocated each other countries and territories to exploit as well as strategies to manipulate which are still evident today in Africa. For example, perpetuation of regime change agenda in Zimbabwe through funding of opposition parties like the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) by America and the Danish. Thus, to Harbeson and Rothchild (2009), a few African states, if any have post-colonial identity, since much seems to be still in the hands of the colonisers.

The essence of Realism is that, the state which is subject to manipulation seems independent (Nkrumah 1966). However, in reality its political, economic and social systems are directed from the outside. More so, the methods used to control a state vary. In extreme cases, troops from the imperial power enter the territory and dictate to the government how to run the affairs of the country. This is best explained by the Realism theory in International Relations as Morgenthau notes that relative gains characterize the relationships that exist in Africa's exploitation. Hence, both nations might gain something but the other gains more. For example, in Libya, America decided for Libya that the oil reserves needed control and protection. This did not end there, later France came in and it further led to the killing of the then president, Muamar Gadhafi. Thus, as Robert Gates, America's Secretary for Defence once said that there is a lot of bombing in Libya because the region has a ''vital interest'' of the United States. In this case therefore, Africa bears the brunt of the European machinations. More so, imperialism is exercised through economic and monetary means. This is where the manipulating takes either or processed products for sale and benefits at the advantage of the producing country. Worst case scenarios have seen looting in countries especially during civil wars. For instance the looting of minerals in the DRC by Rwandan and Ugandan as well as Belgian militias. According to Institute of Environmental Security (2000), between September 1998 and August 1999 stockpiles of minerals, livestock and agricultural products were looted from the DRC. Furthermore, little of the profits come in form of assistance but as credits which have further plunged the economies of many states as they fail to pay back debts. Then one can therefore question why the European countries would want to keep on manipulating Africa after all that they have caused. To Ntalanja (1990), imperialism thus is a use of power without responsibility and an exploitation without redress.

The Power theory however was propounded by Karl Marx and claims that society is in a state of perpetual conflict due to competition for resources. Conflict theory holds that social order is maintained by domination and power, rather than consensus and conformity. Those who hold power are superior and chiefly suppress the weak. In the event of societies not withstanding these pressures, they end up in conflicts and wars and the masses might end up fleeing their countries in search of countries with peace. For example, the DRC war has over the years caused loss of lives with multitudes fleeing into neighbouring countries. It is at the background of these theories that the effects of intrastate conflicts in Africa will be discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Relevant to the African situation, Gleditsch (2003) noted the role of trans-boundary ethnic populations and constituencies to external intervention in intra-state conflicts. To Gleditsch, external intervention in conflicts are often motivated by states seeking to support members of similar ethnic groups in adjacent states. Furthermore, she says that, ethnic kin and Diasporas in other states have often played an important role in financing insurgencies. Thus, concluding that all else equal, we would expect that the risk of civil wars would be higher

in a situation where more of the same ethnic groups are found on both sides of international borders. The systematic literature searching led to an interest in understanding the effects of external influence on the intra-state conflicts pertaining to motivation for intervention, operations in the theatre of war and even cease-fire prospects, let alone the social, political and economic effects.

The issues of external forces on intrastate conflicts in Africa date back to the colonialism era (Umozurike 2000). This was a time when the West realised how rich Africa was and sought to exploit her. Africa is endowed with riches that range from minerals, natural resources, and geographical location as well as manpower. Thus the use of racial lines and discrimination was one of the administrative ways used by the colonisers to divide people in Africa. These however have been adopted to modern conflicts that afflict countries like Rwanda today, with an example being the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Furthermore, the crisis in the horn of Africa today, particularly in Somalia has resulted in conflicts which have weakened the government. The kidnappings, killings, terrorist attacks have become the order of the day (Meredith 2006).

A synthesis of the earlier work provides an overview of the research topic (Hall 2004). Material drawn from the literature review led to the development of a theoretical framework on effects of external influence on the intra-state conflicts and provided the context for identifying data collection requirements, and also enabled the creation of the primary research data collection tools. Thus the inadequacies of the current published material on the effects of external influence on the intra-state conflicts made it imperative to adopt a broad-based approach in the conduct of this study.

An Overview of Intra-state Conflicts

Interestingly, the literature on conflict and specifically, intra-state conflicts, is heavily inspired by the international relations, peace and governance as well as political science fields. Various scholars defined what a conflict is in general, with Mccandless and Karbo (2011) cited in (Koka and Gumbi, 2001) defining conflict as meaning a struggle (physical or verbal, or emotional), a clash between diametrically opposing forces, also a state of non-agreement between persons that could end up in violence. In general, conflict is a negation to harmonious co-existence of a people. The other authoritative literature from the same text quoted Toure (1999:23) highlighting that conflicts arise from human relations in two principle ways: first, individuals or groups of individuals have different values, needs and interests; and, second, most resources are not available in unlimited quantities and so access to them must be controlled and fought for'.

Particular attention to intrastate conflicts noted literature focusing on separating inter-state conflicts and intrastate conflicts, mostly refereed in some literature as civil war. Intrastate conflict is highlighted as the most common form of conflict today. It is described as sustained political violence that takes place between armed groups representing the state, and one or more non-state groups. Violence of this sort usually is confined within the borders of a single state, but usually has significant international dimensions and holds the risk of spilling over into bordering states. Whereas, interstate violence or conflict was defined as a conflict between two or more states (both members of the international system), who use their respective national forces in the conflict (missworldsecurity.com, 2012). Further review of external intervention in an intrastate armed conflict revealed that it could be called an internationalized intrastate armed conflict when the government, or an armed group opposing it, receives support, in the form of troops, from one or more foreign states (H.S.R.G, 2010).

One of the outcomes of the review in as far as intrastate conflict was concerned, was noted by Francis (2006), who posited that there was diverse theoretical interpretations and labelling that have been used to explain and describe wars and armed conflicts in Africa, in particular the post-Cold War conflicts. To highlight clearly this, Francis noted that;

They have been variously described as 'asymmetrical warfare' (Paul Rogers, 2000), 'civilian-based civil wars' (Mary Anderson, 1999); 'international social conflict' (Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham & Tom Woodhouse, 2000), 'ethno-religious wars' (Oliver Furley, 1995), 'guerrilla/insurgence warfare' (Christopher Clapham, 1996, Steven Metz, 1994), 'low intensity conflict' (Mike Smith, 2003), and 'unconventional warfare' (Andrew Janos, 1963).

To this fact, the review noted what was also pin-pointed by Francis that it was important to note that these terms

are used to identify different aspects of the same conflict and sometimes used interchangeably by different political analysts and media commentators depending on the context. There is also growing academic and international policy focus on the interpretations of these conflicts.

Causes and Characteristics of Conflicts in Africa

Most of the literature attempted to look at the distinction between inter-state and intrastate conflicts before looking at the causes and characteristics of the conflicts as alluded above. Most scholars as highlighted by Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan (2014), noted that inter-state conflicts were largely witnessed in the immediate post-independence era, indicating issues to do with colonially drawn border disputes and the Cold War politics. In the more recent years, however, Africa has witnessed a number of violent intra-state conflicts which have resulted in the diversion of a significant portion of resources, including official development assistance, away from development to emergency, and has been a major impediment to development. While ongoing conflicts must be addressed, resources should also be devoted at the same time towards tackling the root causes of conflicts and taking preventive actions. Such a course of action will free resources in the long run for development which will prevent further conflicts, thus leading Africa into a virtuous circle of peace and development.

Today, much has been talked about concerning conflict in Africa, with much writings and researches focusing on the extent of harm caused to nations, governments and the people. Proxies have been used in the DRC conflict, with external states funding rebel groups to help fight in Congo. The DRC today has experienced civil wars, militant insurrections and inter-tribal wars. More so, in Africa, the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), Liberian crisis (1989-2003), DRC (1996-2003), Angolan Civil War (1975-2002) and the Sierra Leone war (1992-2002) (Galadima 2004). To Musau (2009), the African continent remains besieged by many conflicts, which have resulted in more than half of all war- related deaths worldwide producing millions of refugees. These conflicts have led to the Rwanda genocide, gross violations of human rights in countries like the DRC, Burundi, Angola and Sierra Leonne (The Observer, June 15, 2003). In addition to the above mentioned, governments and states have collapsed with social welfare and public service provision to citizens becoming a history of the past.

Africa is a vastly varied continent, as alluded by Gordon and Gordon (2008), that the massiveness of Africa attracted the West. Hence the political agendas of the West henceforth were based on Africa. One can note from the naming of the DRC then by the Belgians as the 'Congo Free State'. How was it free when the Belgians were causing sufferings to the indigenes? Up until now, any looter can come and freely loot in the DRC because they have already name it 'free'. As such, Mbembe (1992) in 'On the Postcolony' asserts that the ruthless killing spirit cascaded down to the later rulers in Congo. For example, after the appointment of Lumumba who was the first Prime Minister, the United States did not stop looking for ways to remove him so as to bring their own puppet whom they had trained Mobutu Sese Seko. Thus the geographical location of Zaire poised a better, advantageous way for the US to transport minerals from Africa to Europe. African countries have different histories and geographical settings, different stages of economic development, different sets of public policies and different patterns of internal and international interactions which have to be understood in their pretext. Thus, while the discussions refer to conflicts and their causes and possible solutions in the broader African context, in practice attention to conflicts will have to be paid at the individual country level and in the context of specific country circumstances.

Origins of conflicts are manifold and complex, rooted in international and national arenas, and encompassing economic, political, cultural and social parameters. Among the international factors, particularly noteworthy are the consequences derived from the end of the Cold War and its aftermath, as well as the globalization and liberalization of the world economy - which have generated a sense of political and economic insecurity in Africa. In the DRC for example, one John Kakande writes that the US army operated secretly in Congo, covertly funding for the wars. The US has also set Multinational companies which still operate on their behalf redirecting minerals back to their host countries. Walsh (2003) notes that many organizations benefited from the un-peaceful environment during the wars in the DRC

Furthermore, the same is happening in Nigeria, where a series of corrupt governments have taken to exploit the oil and fossils available. Corruption has cemented the deals between the West and the Nigerian government. Nigerian nationals from the Ogoni and Ijaw districts in the Niger Delta, have been reported to be incited towards

receiving bribes from multinationals and other various companies who will be operating in their neighbourhoods. The same case has happened in Rwanda, as noted by Allyn and Bacon (2000), that the colonisers because they have power, they take advantage of situations, deliberately diving Rwandans according to racial lines. This caused a stir, with others being superior to the others. As such, one can note that the Rwandan political and economic position in the capitalist world system led to the genocide.

Europe's colonial influence in Africa created a strong ground for civil wars .For Rwanda, Kinzer (2008) notes that highly patriarchal ruling regimes exposed colonies to divisions, economically and socially undermining them. In the Congo, black citizens were treated as second class citizens, with human deprivation. More so, military training cemented the domination with such breed of African leaders being created, Mobutu Sese Seko of the then Zaire, Bozize of the Central Africa and the former Togolese President, Gnassingbe.

On the socio-political and cultural side, at the most basic level, conflicts in Africa are directly related to the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of independence by African countries, and to the (multi-ethnic) composition of the independent states. Partially arising from these factors, emerge the more often cited causes generally subsumed under the generic label "governance". Exclusion or perceived exclusion from the political process for reasons of personal, ethnic or value differences, lack of socio-political unity, lack of genuine access to national institutions of governance, reliance on centralized and highly personalized form of governance, perception of inequality and discrimination, constitute major socio-political causes of conflicts in Africa. While many of the causes may be historical in nature, the problems are compounded by the quality of leadership and lack of political alternatives.

The role of ethnic multiplicity in intra-state conflicts is widely debated in most literature that was reviewed. One influential argument in the literature is that the duration of civil wars is positively, though non-monotonically related to the level of ethnic fractionalization of the warring society (Sambanis and Elbadawi 2000). In that regard the question was raised whether ethnic conflict was often a cover for a "conflict among the elites" for power, though it eventually acquires a life of its own. In fact ethnic identity can be a source of support for national identity, provided two conditions are met: firstly, the existence of effective democratic institutions that provide equal opportunities for all diverse parties, including ethnic groups and women; and secondly, the enforcement of accountability of those who govern and manage the nations. When these two conditions are satisfied, ethnic loyalty will expand and embrace state loyalty or patriotism, and the state and the nation will become co-terminus leading to the development of unity amidst diversity.

Another finding on the causes of intra-state conflicts pointed to geopolitical factors in the emergence and intensity of conflicts in the DRC's past and present conflicts. After the so called First Congo War, intervention by Angola, Uganda, and Zimbabwe led to a DRC led coalition of the regional countries with the key motive for these countries' involvement in the war was the protection of their national security (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, UNECA 2011). The second DRC war or "the anti-Kabila war", which broke out in 1998, was driven by two key factors with a clear regional character. Two types of motivations were behind the intervention by foreign countries in the anti-Kabila war. The first was the security concerns of Angola, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. For example, Angola's motivation was to protect its oil and diamond fields, especially the Kabinda oil fields, which are split by Congolese territory. The analysis covers the regional as well as global dimensions of the conflicts.

According to UNECA (2011), the roots of the wars in the DRC have regional dimensions and the impact of the wars have spilled beyond the country's borders and affected the entire region. The Great Lakes region as a whole has suffered greatly in terms of the human death toll, political instability and the negative effects on the economy. It is therefore pertinent to note that many scholars are of the view that external influence gave both a regional and global dimension of the triggers of the wars as well as the mechanisms that transformed the seemingly internal conflicts into regional and even continental wars.

An Overview of the Effects of Imperialism in African Intra-state Conflicts

One major finding of the literature review in relation to the background of conflicts in Africa, imperialism and colonialism appeared to be part of the systemic roots, colonial exploration and exploitation since colonisation of

Africa that started in the 19th century. From the time King Leopold of Belgium founded the International African Association in 1876 and declared the establishment of the Congo Free State as a personal property of King Leopold, the subsequent Belgian rule and the unplanned independence handover to the Lumumba government followed. Fellow (2001) notes that external interference began just after five days of declaring "Independence" on June 30 1960, with the country's police forces "Force Publique" launching series of protests and the Belgian officers took command of the Congolese national army under the pretext of putting down the rebellion staged by Force Publique. The Belgians, the US dominated UN, imperialist corporations and local reactionaries all got united to get rid of Lumumba. The quick succession of events in Congo was enough to prove the conspiracies of the imperialists, the UN and local reactionaries and a grim testimony to the fact that how transformation to neo-colonialism was ensured in many of the so-called independent countries where there was a presence of radical nationalist forces threatening imperialist interests (Fellow, 2001).

In his book 'The Wretched of the Earth', Fanon (1969) notes that colonialism forces the colonised to constantly ask 'who am I in reality? Because they would have lost an appreciation of their identity. Allyn and Bacon (2002) note that Angola because of the oil and the diamonds in her country was under great siege from Portugal. This was a moment when the Portuguese where fighting against three native political groups mostly dispersed across Angola's vast countryside. However, Portugal succeeded in looting and Today, Angola is way far poorer as compared to Portugal, this is where Portugal still has expensive shops operating in Angola and owning much of the successful business.

External exploitation led to destruction and annihilation of existing political structures when Belgium colonised DR Congo (Nzongola-Ntalanja 2002). Instead, the Belgians occupied higher military positions and made almost all the essential decisions, which favoured the colonisers. It has also been revealed that the produce from farmers in the Congo was exported to Europe and the farmers did not receive any financial acknowledgement to their work. This also led to an estimated 70% of the farm labourers losing what they had worked for. As such, there was no political organisation nor importance of the citizens after independence. Little lessons could be drawn by Congo from partnering with other states since they never had the chance. Thus, one can note that unifying institutions is a necessity so as to keep relations across boarders unstrained. As is historically known interstate and intra-state conflicts were heightened during the Cold War as Africa and many other African countries became proxy war zones. The recent wars in the DRC differ from the wars of the 1960s and 1970s in important ways. The recent wars occurred in a very different geopolitical context marked by the end of the Cold War on the one hand, and the onset of the war on terrorism on the other. In the 1970s, the Mobutu regime was able to count on its Western allies who valued his strategic importance in the region. Global capital has both benefited from a weak regulatory system to exploit natural resources and to weakening institutions by undermining governance reforms. These, in turn, contributed to raising the risk of conflicts and to prolonging instability.

External Influence in Intra-state Conflicts

In the review process, it was noted that literature mostly covered aspects of economic motives as causes to intervene in internal affairs. Albornoz and Hauk (2011) noted that notwithstanding the economics focus on almost exclusively domestic determinants, the political science literature on foreign interventions and transnational aspects of civil wars has been growing considerably in recent years. Furthermore, they postulate that external influence in intra-state conflicts were characterized by the involvement of foreign governments supporting one of the sides in conflict and the number of examples is large, even before and after the end of the Cold War. During the 1970s and 1980s for example, conflicts arose in Africa after great lengths of exploitation by the super powers. The Americans, Russians, British and the French sought for political and diplomatic allies whom they could monopolise in resource exploitation. Most scholars nonetheless noted that it is difficult to find empirical data on external intervention as some of the intervention is largely covert.

Reports by the UNDP (2012), on African development have revealed that there were at least 37 French military interventions n Africa during the period 1963 to 2007. This was the time when much conflict was arising in Africa. The western and central Africa are good examples. Researches have revealed that, despite claims by President Sarkozy to disengage in meddling with African affairs, it appears there has been a continuation of intrusion by France in Africa. For example, the permanent bases in Djibouti, Senegal and Gabon (Hyden 2006). France however is not the only country interested in African affairs. Today, the UK, America and Belgium have

interest in Zimbabwe, the DRC, Libya and Sierra Leonne.

The political decolonisation and formal independence of most African countries have not meant a closure to external forces influence (Hyden 2006). Rather, they continue to shape the continent's affairs and rip them of their possessions. Former colonisers still seek continuous relationships with their colonies. One can however ask why so? To this extent, the Scramble for Africa still remains, directly affecting the politics, governments and the indigents in Africa. According to Johwa (2004), Africa's colonisation has opened doors to neo-colonisation. There are systems that have been put in place to maintain and perpetuate patron-client based relations between the West and Africa. As such, such organisations as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank also maintain colonial rules by offering credits to third world countries, continuing to plunge Africa into debt. Thus, scholars have noted that the 1970s and 80s saw Africa's economic downfall as a result of the donor funds which disguised as economic restructuring programmes.

There has been wide spread reports on the involvement of the super power regime in African countries, igniting civil wars and conflicts among groups. The UNDP (2012) report, notes that the attacks in Ethiopia on Al Shabaab in Somalia between 2006 and 2009 were a Bush administration. This led to Islamist insurgencies to emerge in Mogadishu. Thus as Morgenthau notes, power is the main articulation of political interest.

A strong emphasis in the literature mainly covered the external influence in the form of intervention and effecting conflict. The earlier literature used the term foreign interventions mainly as referring to peace interventions in ongoing wars (Gleditsch, 2006). This aided and broadened the current research where the external interventions trigger or prolong an already existing war with the effects being of particular importance to note.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Views on Intra-state conflict

Asked about their view of what intra-state conflict was, 80% of the respondents were aware of this type of conflict, while 8% were not. However, 2% were undecided. Table 1 below illustrates how respondents expressed their views of what intra-state conflict was:-

Table 1: Views on intra state conflict

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Awareness of intrastate conflict	40	80
Non awareness of intra state conflict	6	12
Undecided	4	8
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

From the findings tabulated above, it can be noted that the majority of the respondents had a clear understanding of what intra-state conflict is. However, of interest are the views of some respondents who stated that the presence of external forces in African conflicts disqualifies these conflicts as intra-state conflicts, but transforms them into low key interstate conflicts, where two or more external states may fight to protect their own interests in the host state. One of the respondents said,

"I think when other countries involve themselves in an internal conflict in a sovereign country that conflict ceases to be a domestic affair, but becomes an international conflict waged on the territory of the affected country."

Impact of Activities of Foreign Countries on Intra-state Conflict

Responding to a question about the impact of the activities of foreign countries on internal conflict in Africa, 78

% said that the interference of external forces in African conflict was negative, 14 % thought that it could result in some positive benefit for both the affected state and the interfering one, while 4% of the respondents were undecided. Their views are represented in Table 2 below:-

Table 2: Impact of activities of foreign countries on intra-state conflict

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Negative impact	39	78
Positive impact	7	14
Undecided	4	8
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

The findings shown in Table 2 above indicate that a large number of the respondents from interviews and focus group discussions believe that the interference of external forces in domestic conflicts in Africa has a negative impact on the continent. However those that said that external interference in intrastate African conflicts was beneficial maintained that most African states were unable or lacked the capacity to solve their own problems, be they socio-economic, political or otherwise, and therefore needed the assistance of other more powerful countries.

Views on the Push Factors for External Involvement in Intra-state Conflict

Responding to what factors drive the quest by external forces to interfere in intrastate conflict in Africa, 62% of the respondents were of the view that the external players were driven by an imperialist orientation, while 20% believed that some counties were motivated by the need to spread their influence and ideology. However, 8% said that other countries could be driven by demographic factors, where they seek to establish regimes in Africa that will be receptive to their excess populations. Table 3 below illustrates how respondents expressed their views of what the push factors for external involvement in intra state conflict in Africa were:-

Table 3: Views on the push factors for external involvement in intrastate conflict.

Push factor	Number of respondents	Percentage
Imperialism	32	64
Ideology propagation	10	20
Demographic factor	4	8
Others	4	8
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

From the results shown in table 3 above, the majority of the respondents cited imperialism related factors as a major driver for external interference in intrastate conflict in Africa. For instance, some respondents said that external forces, especially those from the now called global south, are motivated by the desire to extract the resources of African countries in the midst of their fighting. One respondent said,

"Personally I think most of the conflicts on the African continent are man-made, and in the sense that powerful countries can either cause or sponsor conflict in Africa so as to create chaos on the continent, which allows them to siphon unabated the continent's resources in the midst of the conflict. A lot of these big economies in the world were built using African resources stolen through this kind of conflict entrepreneurship by more powerful countries"

Another respondent said,

"There are also cases where other more powerful countries support conflict in Africa so as to create a testing ground for the effectiveness of their new weaponry, as well as to prop puppet leaders to power so as to indirectly control the affairs, economic, ideological or otherwise, of the targeted states. As you may be aware, countries like the US, France and the UK have supported various wars of regime change in Africa and also beyond, often engineered by self-described revolutionary movements that seek to overthrow the existing government and establish a new socio-economic dispensation, including conditions and content of citizenship."

A separate respondent said,

"The phenomenon of external interference in intrastate conflict is as old as statehood, but in recent times can be traced back to the Cold War period, where the two super powers, USA and the Soviet Union sponsored proxy wars through aid, cash transfers, provision of weapons or technology and advisory or combat support. Each of the super powers was driven to spread its ideology to the greatest extent possible to maximize its pools of alliances and achieve realpolitik goals of maximum Security. And even today, the concept of proxy wars still prevails and Africa has been a major victim…The great powers prefer to compete by proxy without direct conflict on their own territories.

Major Foreign Countries Interfering in Intra-state Conflict in Africa

Respondents were also asked which countries were mostly involved in intrastate conflict in African countries, where 58% said that European states were the greatest culprits, while 36% believe that the United States of America (USA) was a major player in that regard. Their responses are shown in Table 4 below:-

Table 4: Major countries interfering in intrastate conflict in Africa.

Actor	Number of respondents	Percentage
Europe/ USA	24	48
Transnational companies	17	34
Africa	9	18
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

The findings tabulated above show that European countries and the USA are largely viewed to be among the biggest culprits in as far as interfering in intrastate conflict in Africa is concerned. European countries such as the United Kingdom (UK), France and Germany among others, together with the USA have been fingered in fuelling conflicts in countries such as the DRC and Sudan for instance, as well as master minding the demise of perceived unfavourable regimes in other countries such as Libya, Egypt and Algeria.

However, with respect the conflict in the DRC, some respondents said that fellow African countries such as Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi directly supported rebel movements, while countries such as Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Chad and Sudan supported the Kabila regime. This recalls Münkler (2005)'s comment that the conflict in the DRC, which erupted in 1998 and came to be known as the Second Congo War, was an international conflict rather that a Congolese one. In like thought, Susan Rice, who was then Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs under the Clinton administration, lamented that the Congolese conflict had become akin to Africa's first 'world war.' Interestingly, respondents pointed out that although SADC countries justified their military intervention in the DRC on the basis of offering critical support to a fellow member facing external aggression, in accordance with international law and the charters of the United Nations and the African Union, there is no doubt that the personal motivations of the leaders involved as well as the economic and geopolitical interests of their countries influenced the decision to intervene. Responding to why so many African states became embroiled in the Second Congo War, a respondent said,

"Countries like Angola had obvious interests in the DRC, including the protection of its petroleum and diamond exploitation zones. Moreover, Angola feared that the Savimbi rebellion would once again use an unstable Congo as a rear base its operations. For counties like Zimbabwe, intervention was more economic than anything else…You might be aware that the Kabila government owed millions of dollars to Zimbabwe for military equipment and supplies obtained during the war of 1996–7. Additionally, Zimbabwe considered the DRC a lucrative market for Zimbabwean goods and services, especially textile and agro-industrial products."

Another respondent said,

"Some of the numerous African states that involved themselves in the DRC war appear to have been motivated by the principle that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. From this perspective, their actions can then be understood in terms of the neo-realist theory which says that enemies of allies are considered enemies, and on grounds that even if such actors may not have been directly hostile to the focal state, its allies may draw it into an intended or unintended conflict. For instance, while there may be other reasons, the involvement of Uganda in the DRC conflict could have been to support her ally, Rwanda, which had security concerns with the DRC."

However, respondents also pointed out that while African countries were directly involved in the hostilities in the DRC, some of them had the express support of some big international powers such as the USA and France. One respondent remarked that,

"The United States and France have strategic interests in the resources in the DRC which include rare metals, and as such, they fear that such resources might fall into the wrong hands, particularly those of international terrorist groups, and therefore will always influence who holds state power in the country…History books will tell you that a US military and diplomatic team was sighted at the Rwanda-DR Congo border when war broke out on 2 August 1998, and there could be no better expression of support for Rwanda's aggression in the DRC. Despite official US statements that Rwanda and Uganda had to withdraw their troops from the DRC, both countries continued to receive assistance from the United States and the World Bank In order to continue their aggression in the Congo."

Pull Factors for External Interference in the DRC Conflict

Asked about the pull factors for external interference in the conflict in the DRC were, 60% of the respondents said that the country's vast natural resources had wooed more powerful countries to institute schemes to gain access to the resources by either creating chaos through conflict among the Congolese people, or by manipulating the country's internal political dynamics. 30% of the respondents said that weak internal political and institutional structures was also a pull factor for external interference in the DRC. Their responses are shown in Table 5 below: -

Table 5: Pull factors for external interference in the DRC conflict.

Pull factor	Number of respondents	Percentage
Resources	30	60
Weak internal structures	15	30
Climate	3	6
Others	2	4
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

From the results tabulated above, it can be said that the issue of resources in the DRC and the country's weak state institutions were the main pull factors for external forces to interfere in intrastate conflict in the country

especially for the period 1996 to 2005. One respondent said,

"The DRC is arguably the richest nation in Africa in terms of natural resources and this in itself is a source of instability as more powerful nations will stop at nothing to benefit from those resources at the expense of the rightful owners of those resources, who are the Congolese people. This explains why despite being resource rich, DRC is among the most underdeveloped counties not only in Africa, but in the world. It is a typical case of a country suffering the so-called resource curse, where instead of enjoying national economic development and peace on the back of natural resources, a country suffers from man-made conflict and poverty."

Another respondent said,

"DRC is a vast country in terms of total land area, as well as a diverse one in terms of ethnicity. While this is the case, the country lacks strong state institutions to foster national cohesion and unity. The sum total of these scenarios makes it easy for external forces to manipulate some disgruntled sections of the country's population, pitting for instance one tribal group against the other. Such countries are usually easy targets for conflict entrepreneurship."

Expressing a similar sentiment, a separate respondent said,

"Since its decolonization, a group of rather poorly governed societies came into being and the Congolese government and key politicians were not united and with a weak political system were easily swayed and moulded to the ideologies of the bigger powers. As such, the weak political system in the DRC has made the country a target of and a victim to the superpower contest."

Another respondent commented,

"Countries such as the DRC should develop adequate institutional capacity at the individual and especially institutional level, to conceive and carry out decisions effectively and efficiently, so as to ensure that the country is full proof to external interference."

Views on the Effects of External Forces Interference in the DRC Conflict

Respondents were asked about their thoughts on how the activities of external forces affected the conflict in the DRC between 1996 and 2005. 76% of the respondents said that external interference had worsened the conflict, while 16% said that external forces had significantly contributed to the de-escalation of hostilities in the DRC. The responses of the respondents are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Views on the effects of external forces interference in the DRC conflict.

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Worsened the conflict	38	76
Helped resolve the conflict	8	16
Undecided	4	8
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

From the views tabulated above, it can be said that the majority of respondents think that the actions of external forces worsened the DRC conflict. However, those that said that the presence of external forces in the DRC helped resolve the conflict made reference to the coordinated conflict resolution cooperative efforts of SADC, the AU and the UN, out of which a number of peace agreements have been signed, albeit some were hardly observed. This for some of the respondents was another form of involvement in the conflict, albeit in a non-military way. Of note was the mention of South Africa's role in facilitating the inter-Congolese dialogue that

resulted in significant processes of national reconciliation and transition to democracy as a positive reinforcement of the need for African solutions to African problems. Equally important was the recognition by some respondents that peace and security in central Africa can only be established by establishing a strong state in DRC, which can play an effective role in ensuring stability and sustainable development across the entirety of the Great Lakes region.

Effects of External Forces Interference on Internal Politics of the DRC

Respondents were asked to specify how they think the interference of external forces negatively affected the politics in the DRC. 40% said that external interference weakened the state, 30% said that ethnic gaps were further widened, 20% said that it created bands of banditry, while 10% believe that external interference strengthened the country's military. Their responses are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 7: Effects of external forces interference on internal politics of the DRC.

Effect on internal politics	Number of respondents	Percentage
Weakening of the state	20	40
Widening of ethnic gaps	15	30
Creation of banditry	10	20
Strengthening of the military	05	10
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

The results shown above show that the interference by external forces in the intrastate conflict in the DRC negatively affected the country's internal politics with some far reaching consequences such as weakening of state institutions and widening of ethnic gaps, which in turn act as pull factors encouraging more interference, thus creating a self-perpetuating vicious cycle. One respondent said,

"Since the break out of the Second Congo war in 1998, where a number of regional and international actors were involved one way or the other, ethnic affiliation has become an even more dominating and noticeable factor in the DRC conflict with armed groups using it in their recruitment strategies for new members. In the face of a lack of stable and continuous governance, ethnicity has indeed become an excuse to use violence to gain control of assets in the politically fragile environment. This viewed in the light of the colonial legacy and its favouring of some ethnic groups and the exclusion of others, these issues have become an ever self-birth giving obstacle on the road to peace, and with a constant overshadowing threat of a disastrous full scale war or extensive violent clashes with deadly outcomes. For a long time, the war was in a constant perpetual mode."

Responding to the same question, a separate respondent said,

"As foreign forces invaded the DRC, a corresponding network of international financial criminality including states, mafia groups, and rogue business operators, which thrive on profiting from crisis situations, also descended on the country. Acts of banditry therefore soared, as these international gangs, coupled with local criminals, competed to make the most out of the prevailing crisis."

Socio-Economic Effects of External Interference in the DRC Conflict

Respondents were also asked about the socioeconomic effects of the external interference in the Congolese conflict. 52% of the respondents said that external interference lengthened the conflict thus deepening poverty levels in the country. 20% said that the activities of external forces in the DRC conflict resulted in the collapse of social services, while 20% said that it caused widespread destruction of infrastructure. 8% believe that some level of economic growth was realized in the DRC due to the impact of the external forces. Their responses are

as tabulated below:

Table 8: Socio-economic effects of external interference in the DRC conflict.

Socio-economic variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Poverty escalation	26	52
Collapse of Social services	10	20
Destruction of infrastructure	10	20
Economic growth	4	8
Totals	50	100

Source: Primary

The results shown in the table above show that the interference by external forces in the intrastate conflict in the DRC had a wide range of socioeconomic effects, including poverty escalation, collapse of social services and destruction of infrastructure. One respondent said,

"Had this been a purely domestic conflict without some external forces fuelling it, the war would have long been over. Now because there are those countries that are sponsoring rebels in order to create chaos and steal the country's resources, the war has dragged on and on and in the process, huge quantities of resources have been stolen through a network of transnational companies. This war had little engagement between the belligerents, but even allies would fight over turf for the control of resources. You would recall the fighting that erupted three times between the Rwandan and Ugandan armies in Kisangani in 1999 and 2000, as they tried to partition and plunder the country. Resultantly, development stagnated, and poverty levels continued to deepen, while, the little infrastructure there was got destroyed."

CONCLUSIONS

1. This study concludes that intra-state conflict in Africa is a major concern which the African Union as a continental body seized with the security of Africa should seriously focus on. Regional bodies alike should also be seized with this matter as a majority of respondents during the study indicated that this is a real problem. In terms of academic enquiry, the study concludes that this is an area worth focusing on as intra-state conflict in Africa has remained the Achilles heel for the lack of progress on the continent.

2. The study also concludes that in as much as other reasons may be cited for the involvement of a foreign hand in intra-state conflict in Africa, the imperial desire for control on the African continent is the major driving force. This conclusion was reached based on the number of respondents who cited the imperial desire as a major driving force in the involvement of foreigners in intra-state conflict in Africa.

3. The researchers also concluded that the imperial desire is rooted in the quest for the exploitation of natural resources that are found in abundance on the African continent. With respect to the DRC which is the case study, one may find out that the abundance of mineral resources in the form of diamonds, gold, platinum and other natural resources has been the major reason for foreign involvement in incessant intra-state conflict in that country.

4. This research also concluded that the quest for resources on the African continent as a major driving force in foreign involvement on intra-state conflict is headlined by the Europe as it was labelled by the respondents as the major culprit in being involved in intra-state conflict in Africa. In as much as other Western countries were also identified as belligerents, it is important to note that the Europe was found to be the major transgressor in fomenting intra-state conflict for obviously selfish reasons.

5. In as much as the above discussion indicated that external involvement in intra-state conflict has had negative consequences this research also sought to ascertain whether it is a fact that it is indeed

detrimental to the African continent. A majority of the respondents therefore concurred with the line of thought that external influence on intra state conflict has negative consequences on the stability and security of Africa. It can therefore be concluded that in as much as foreign entities sometimes intervene on matters that are inherently internal to help out, in a majority of cases this involvement has been found to be negative.

6. This research also concludes that external involvement in intra-state conflict has also resulted in the weakening of the DRC state. This conclusion is reached after a majority of the respondents indicated that the weakening of the state is as a result of the foreign hand in intra-state conflict. Apart from the weakening of the state it is also concluded that the involvement of foreign countries in intra-state conflict results in the widening of ethnic divisions on the African continent.

7. The research also concludes that external inference in intra-state conflict has the consequence of decimating the infrastructure in any particular body politic as well as the failure of the government in question to provide social services. The infrastructure destruction is brought about by the prolonged nature of such conflicts as internal groups will be getting support from foreigners. This results in prolonged resistance which leads to the opposing groups to target strategic infrastructure in a bid to score points against the government in question.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This study recommends that the developing countries of the African continent do serious lobbying to the international community so that laws that are in place to protect the sovereignty of nation states are respected. This could be through sanctions on nations that are found to be on the wrong side of the law as far as interference in internal matters of other countries is concerned.

2. The study also recommends that nations that are at the receiving end of external interference like the DRC should launch and put in their educational curriculum material that emphasises on the importance of patriotism and how it is detrimental for a local to work in cohorts with foreigners to undermine the authority of a legitimately elected government. This could be at primary level, to high school as well as in tertiary education. Such measures would inculcate a culture of national pride which may create a united nation making it difficult for the foreign powers to interfere as well as to use the divide and rule tactic.

3. As indicated above, educational programs are important but if they fail it becomes of paramount importance for the government to enact laws that are deterrent to those who would want to conspire with foreigners in the destabilisation of the state. Such laws would criminalise any activity related to conspiring with foreigners in destabilising the government. Stringent sentences may be put in place in such a manner that it becomes less lucrative for anyone to join foreigners in any activity that undermines the authority of the legitimately elected government.

4. This study also recommends that the governments of Africa and that of DRC in particular should put in place social programs aimed at alleviating poverty so that the citizenry is not enticed by monetary rewards and ending up being recruited to join rebel movements. It is as such because it was noted that recruitment of locals by foreign handlers to take part in overthrowing the governments of Africa is based on their disadvantaged social conditions. The improvement of these social conditions, therefore, helps in eliminating this vulnerability that is exploited by foreign powers.

5. This study also recommends tightening of borders by the DRC government so as to limit the proliferation of arms which is the main ingredient of conflict. The poroussness of borders also results in the creation of loopholes that are exploited by foreigners to ship weapons in and out of the country. The closure of these borders through security measures helps in the restriction of the various avenues that foreigners use to interfere in interstate conflict in Africa.

6. This study also recommends that the government of DRC institutes programs that aim at fostering ethnic harmony. Such programs are important because ethnic divisions are commonly exploited by foreigners

to interfere on internal affairs of independent African states. Such programs would include the devolution of power as well as rolling out programs that makes it a point that there is equal development in the country. Grievances such as unequal development are commonly used by locals to confront the government and more often the foreigners use that discord to interfere and further their interests through the conflict that ensues.

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