

**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CONGO AND SUSTAINABLE  
PEACE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO  
KIVU PROVINCES 1996-2016**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Rev. Assan Biruli, declare that this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated is my own work. Data and other information were generated by me unless specifically acknowledged and referenced in the dissertation as being sourced from other persons.

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_ Rev. Assan Biruli

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The closing stage of academic work such as this is unique. However, it can be said that no work is really original because in the field such as Religion and Social Transformation there are pioneers and professionals who shed light and made a difference through conducting research on which current and future researchers base their findings. In this respect, I am indebted to all my advisors for their support, inspiration and the relationships that have shaped this dissertation to reflect on a noteworthy topic in conflict transformation and peace studies. My appreciation and thanks go to all of them. First and foremost, I acknowledge the sovereignty and providence of the Almighty and Most High God through our Lord Jesus Christ who took care of my life during all the times when this appeared to be a ‘never ending journey’. An academic report of this nature cannot be complete without academically qualified supervisors. I am indebted and would like to sincerely express my appreciation and gratitude to Prof. Lilian Siwila who enthusiastically agreed to be the intellectual advisor of this work until its completion. My sincere thanks go again to Dr. F. Settler who promoted this work to its academic significance. Special thanks and gratitude go to Gate of Life Pentecostal Church, the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ under my leadership and all the ministers and church members in South Africa, without their supporting prayers this work would have been incomplete. Eventually, special thanks to all of whom that in one way or another contributed voluntarily to promote this remarkable work. Finally and most importantly, my heartfelt thanks on a personal level to people that contribute to and share in my life: Yvonne Biruli my loving wife who never ceased to encourage me when I looked and felt tired. To all my blood sons and daughters (the Birulis) who did not get too tired to hold my feet determinedly in position with ultimate commitment and energy. What then shall I say? Here is the fruit of your patience. And to the greatest Shepherd Jesus Christ constantly and eternally, to Him and Him alone is all the glory.

## ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis was to determine how the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC) is able to become a resource in re-building sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces using non-violent methods. The study rests on the idea that the CCC as a key stakeholder in the processes of all-inclusive peacebuilding in the regions. This qualitative study relied on existing literature to explore ways in which the Church of Christ in Congo has contributed to maintaining peace in the Kivu provinces of the DRC. Therefore, the key research question for this thesis was: How can the church of Christ in Congo, contribute to addressing the perpetuating conflict in DRC in its quest for sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces? While most researchers consider the Peace and Reconciliation programme to be aimed at the deportation of non-Congolese immigrants back into their respective countries of origins; and the bringing together of conflicting parties for dialogue as key elements for peacebuilding in the region, this study specifically examines the role of the Churches in shaping sustainable peace in war-torn provinces of the DRC. The study examines the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC) also known in French as “*Église du Christ au Congo* (ECC)”, in its efforts to support the Peace and Reconciliation programme, through the use of its member churches across the country.

This study, takes as a hypothesis, that peacebuilding successful in troubled areas depends on engaging existing local structures effectively, such as the Church networks – due to their being closer to the grassroots and this makes them influential. Through the use of conflict transformation theory, the study will attempt to show that the CCC has contributed to settlement efforts using practical means and non-violent approaches. The nature of the research required that a mixed method is employed; hence I combined phenomenological, autobiographical and explanatory methods. This allowed me to combine popular narratives shared among the displaced people of Kivu, with media and scholarly accounts to weave together narratives and stories as suggested by Mishler (1995). The initial methodological ambition was to draw on accounts of those church leaders and members who survived the conflicts because there are no official accounts of the church’s involvement in peacebuilding. Due to ongoing conflict in the region and because my own resources to travel to the region was limited, I relied on written materials provided in from churches in the region. These arrived in fragments, provided by my own contacts as well as by members of the diaspora and it informed my explanatory methodology. For the rest, I relied on variously published accounts as well as

irregular reports from humanitarian agencies and member churches to construct a social history of the church's role in building sustainable peace

The research further argued that when addressing peacebuilding and reconciliation it is important to take into account the role that civil society is able to play in this kind of activity. The study sought engagement with influential civil society as well as grassroots level activists produces constructive results. The study similarly drew on the theory of conflict transformation for non-violent approaches for the transformation of violence into cultures of peace. The study examines the efforts of the Church of Christ in Congo in their various attempts to promote sustainable peace, through religious mediation, forgiveness, and reconciliation. This I believe will bring about sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces. Peacebuilding is a central church activity that is concerned with the well-being of the entire community. The outcome of this study discloses that by drawing on the views of scholars, civil society activists, religious leaders as well as members of the diaspora, on the matter of Kivu conflict and sustainable peace is possible. Engaging all these stakeholders in the DRC, including the Church of Christ in Congo can possibly achieve its aspiration of de-escalation of the war, stop the of militias into the region and reconstruct flourishing communities. The study hence argued that an end to the war in the Kivu Provinces may be one approach of promoting sustainable peace and opening the economic interests of the investors. Lastly, a paradigm shift is needed in the conceptualization of what constitutes conflict transformation, more so peacebuilding interventions. This includes new theoretical thinking based on gaining vital views, insights, and perspectives from non-state actors such as the Church of Christ in Congo. The study found that where faith communities participate in peacebuilding efforts, whether only the Church of Christ in Congo or including other churches and organizations in the region, chances for social and political transformation in respect of peacebuilding in the Kivu Provinces in significantly increased.

**Key Terms:**

Peacebuilding, Practical theology, Sustainable peace, Church, conflict transformation, Kivu

## **ACRONYMS**

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
CEPGL	Economic community of the Great Lakes Countries (Interpreted from French)
CNDP	Congress National for the Defence of the People
DESD	Decade of Education for Sustainable Development program
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EALA	East African Legislative Assembly
FBO	Faith Based Organization
FECCLAHA	Fellowship of Councils and Churches in Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa
FDD/CNDD	Force de Décence pour la Democracy
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FDLR	Rwandan Liberation Democratic Forces
FMR	Forced Migration Review
ICD	Inter-Congolese Dialogue
ICC	International Criminal Court
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
HRB	Human Rights Based
MLC	Movement for Liberation of Congo
MONUSCO	United Nations Mission in Congo (Interpreted from French)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NIV	New International Version
OAU	Organization of African Union
UN	United Nations

RCD	Rassemblement Congolais des Démocrates
RIM	Refugee and Immigration Ministries
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WCC	World Council of Churches

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## CHAPTER 1:

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

#### 1.1. Introduction and background to the study

This study seeks to investigate and explain the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in fostering sustainable peace in the DRC and in Kivu Provinces. I understand that there are several factors that contribute to the persistence of the conflict in the DRC. These factors intensify each other and are closely related to each other. The outcome of these conflicts is that the communities, especially at the grassroots, suffer the most in terms of social security, economic opportunities, insecurity about one's future, poverty, loss of lives, sexual and other forms of violence and the fight to protect basic human needs on a daily basis. In these regions, ethnicity has been shaped into a significant subject and is being replicated on a daily basis to the extent of becoming the most important public interest issue for mobilisation and recruitment of armed groups. In Kivu Provinces, as mentioned early, the absence of legitimate government has resulted in the unending conflict, whereby people have organised their society to provide their own security up to a certain extent. These findings are based on theoretical research of literature and on my personal experience as a victim of these wars.

The people of the Democratic Republic of Congo have been experiencing the most horrific socio-political instabilities for almost two centuries now. This simply means that people of the DRC have not properly experienced what "*sustainable peace*" means as termed in this research. The situation is also politically horrific because, since its own independence from the western rule, the DRC has not had a government of its own choice which is legitimate and credible through free and fair elections. This, of course, is well known to be triggered by both the external and internal forces that have had a social, economic and political interest in the country. The conflict that found its way to both the North and South Kivu provinces of the DRC, has affected the entire Great Lakes region, as a result of this, the DRC people have been subjected to a variety of oppression and exploitation leaving a devastating impact of the next generation of people.

The political system in the DRC is “oppressing” because it has plunged the people into innumerable forms of suffering notably inhumane perpetration of physical, psychological and structural violence thus impacting their lives, values, social systems, human dignity, employment, livelihoods, and well-being. The political system is also “exploitative” because of the horrible physical exertions of violence, just as it was during the period of the Belgian King Leopold II (1865) to the DRC’s independence (1960). The DRC land is still being exploited in the interest of the unlawful and undemocratic extraction of both natural and mineral resources. Parallel to these practices is also many critical interventions from different stakeholders including the religious groups, who on behalf of people are trying to find sustainable peace in the face of the numerous atrocities by the neo-colonizing forces and militias.

It is against this background that the intention of this study under the topic, “*The Church of Christ in Congo in the Democratic Republic of Congo and sustainable peace in Kivu regions*” is engaged. As a religious social formation, the CCC is similar to the South Africa Church of Christ in Congo (SACC) in South Africa. The Christian Church formation recomposed itself in the 1960s with the objective of providing both social unities in the body of churches and at the same time attempting to potentially coordinate the churches under its umbrella. At the same time, it also engages in providing a series of interventions in response to the various forms of violence under which the country and its people have been subjected to. The role played by the church during colonization is made evident in the study as it helps to map the historical role of the church in responding to social issues. The research is located in Kivu Provinces, a series of Eastern provinces of the DRC and because it borders with Burundi and Rwanda, it has a major melting point of conflict for the direct and proxy confrontation between local, national and regional armed groups. The conflict in these regions has led to the death of countless people and the internal and external displacement of millions of people. The protracted conflict may be accredited to numerous reasons but the most considered in this study is the lack of a political strategy by the government that requires inclusiveness and a bottom-top approach in addressing conflict, starting from the grassroots as suggested by Hayes, (2002: 19). It is also worth noting that it is widely known that the Kivu Provinces are the most affected areas of the war due to their fertile land and mineral resources.

The area’s geographical position, with its almost uncontrolled borders with its neighbouring states in the East, seems to be part of the factors for persistent invasions and continuous instabilities. From its title, therefore: this research focuses on 1), the formation of the Church

of Christ in Congo, 2). In terms of this focus, the spotlight falls on the years 1996-2016 with the intention to provide an epistemological bridge to the catastrophic situation in the Kivu provinces of the DRC, for sustainable peace.

## **1.2. Church of Christ in Congo's view of the State and its failure**

In terms of responsibilities, Geldenhuys (2001: 2) is of the opinion that the state is the most appropriate form of political organization to meet the needs of the citizens. According to Huntington (1998: 33), states are the major, as well as the only, main players in world affairs. They uphold armies, conduct diplomacy, negotiate treaties, fight wars, and control international organisations while influencing and shape production and trade to a considerable degree. Smith (1999: 172) claims that "state" represents both the *institution* and the *process* at the core of government. Mazrui (1995: 2) on his side, identifies six vital functions of the state including controlling of its sovereignty, governing its territory, supervising national resources and rational extraction of revenues and the provision of goods and services, the creation and maintenance of an adequate national infrastructure, the delivery of basic services such as sanitation, education, housing and health care and general governance and the maintenance of law and order. The conceptual state has the means to attain a change in society through the diffusion and regulation of social interactions, the extraction of resources and the appropriation or use of such resources in determined ways. The DRC central government has lost control over the Kivu Provinces, and because its territory that has been occupied by rebel forces, the State has control of all natural resources, infrastructure, revenue, social services and general governance in these areas.

Mthembu (2001:367) considers the crisis in the DRC as complicated due to historical oppositions in the Great Lakes regions, including extensive anger of Tutsi from Rwanda residing in south Kivu who later on tried to usurp the name of Mulenge to become its clan " Banyamulenge" and, a long running dispute over their entitlement to Zairian/ Congolese nationality. The conflict soon spread further south, and in early October 1994, the deputy Governor of South Kivu ordered the Tutsi to leave the country within a week and return to Rwanda. Instead, the order triggered the mobilisation of a dominant Tutsi Militia, supported by other Tutsi from the Rwandan government and its close regionally Uganda, to defend their position in the Kivu regions. The interference of foreign forces has been by the citizenry as having their hands in susuating violence in the DRC. For those who live in this region, it has

created unfavorable socio-economic and political conditions which include state repression, poverty, corruption, and unemployment, to challenge the nation. The combination of these conditions collectively plays a significant role in the inception and escalation of violent conflict. This understanding is supported by Collier and Hoeffler (2004: 7) who explained that economic dynamics are in fact the key drivers of conflict” while “economic plans are fundamental to the source and maintenance of many civil wars. According to Porto (2002:2), the utilization and control of ecological resources as causes of conflicts are aggravated by both injustice and greed. Lack of control over these resources has given access to the neighbouring countries to maintain the conflict on, but the CCC did not support these conditions.

### **1.3. Statement of the problem and key research question**

There are many factors that contribute to the unending conflict in the Kivu provinces of the DRC, one of them being the absence of legitimate state authority as stated earlier on. Johnston and Mandryk, (2001:198) analyse the problem saying, “The persistence of the turmoil in the country is related to insecurity, gradual economic decline, corruption, and political degradation. Supported by an increased decline of social justice, the non-equitable distribution of natural resources remains assumingly the main cause of the increasing conflict and violence in the country. This characterizes the weak performance in governance that has protracted conflicts and prevented the establishment of sustainable peace.

Ethnicity has been shaped into an important issue and is being replicated on a daily basis using it as the most significant publicity to mobilise and recruit armed groups from within the country as well as from neighbouring countries. While a good amount of scholarship has addressed the role of the Church and peacebuilding interventions in the DRC, very little scholarly work has been done on the role association of churches, known as Church of Christ in Congo and its attempts to address the conflict in the Kivu Provinces. Despite several international and regional peace-keeping interventions, sustainable peace remains a challenge to the people of the DRC, particularly those in Kivu Provinces.

### **1.4. Research question**

The key research question therefore is:

How can the Church of Christ in Congo, contribute to addressing the perpetuating conflict in DRC in its quest for sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces?

In order to answer the key research question, sub-questions have been developed. The sub-questions are:

1. What are some of the contributing factors to the conflict in the DRC?
2. What has been the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in addressing the conflict after the 1996 invasion of the DRC?
3. What, if any, are the theological strategies used by the Church of Christ to promote sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces of the DRC?

### **1.5. Objectives**

Since the aim of this study was to investigate the historical, and possible future role of the Church of Christ in Congo for building sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces of DRC, the following objectives have been identified:

- a) To determine the factors that contributed to conflict in the DRC
- b) To examine the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in addressing the conflict after the 1996 invasion of the DRC
- c) To analyse the possible theological strategies used by the Church of Christ in Congo to promote sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces of the DRC

### **1.6. Key Concepts and Research framework**

The subject matter of this research requires that some concepts be defined in order to enable, clarify and evade what August (1999:10) calls vagueness. As Welman et al. (2005: 20) positioned it; there is no significant statement where the concepts are not established. For this study, only theoretical definitions of these terms are employed to describe them. The subsequent concepts require to be conceptualised: Peacebuilding as sustainable peace, church, conflict resolution, and practical theology.

#### *1.6.1. Peace*

A conception of peace used by most scholars is that of Galtung (1969:168), insofar as he claims that the definition of peace may proceed from the common, social or political practice depending on how one understands what conflict is. Bayer's (2010: 1) research in 'peaceful transition and democracy' insists that most scholars theorise peace as the absence of violence. Nevertheless, the lack of violence does not essentially result in their peace. According to Goertz (2005), conflicting parties may view each other as threats. This has led many peace scholars to

struggle to understand that there are two explanations of peace, (a) negative peace is the absence of chaos, pressure, conflict, and war and, (b) positive peace denotes conditions that are good for controlling conflict, literally known as “resolution of conflict”. The latter is described as harmony related to advanced relationships, tenderness, and love (Boulding, 1978: 3; cf. Galtung, 1985, Fisher, 2005; Ledarach, 2004).

This study employs the concept of peace as the change of the definite or prospective violence into passive (non-violent) processes of social and political change Galtung (1985:168). For Gushee (2012:65; cf. Deist 1984:156) “*shalom*” is understood in terms of well-being/wholeness, fortune, and peace. Wolterstorff (2011:110-11) argues that the concept of “*shalom*” is directly connected to the Kingdom of God to imply harmonious relationships between humans and God, between humans, as well as between humans and nature. Yoder (1985:116) explains that the purpose of God for the world always has a “social shape and peace”. For Taesoo (2006:164-68) there was peace between God and human beings, between God and nature; between human beings and nature and between nature and nature. This leads us to say that “*peace*” is an active thing enjoyed by both humanity and nature as at the time of creation because God created a world of peace as it was also observed by Benson et al. (2011:4) as he claimed that God created a respectable world in a state of *shalom*.

According to Brueggemann (1987:75), “The theological understanding of peace is comprehensive; liberty for creation, justice for humanity, and peace for all people” (Pantoja 2002). Ravitsky in Swartley (2006:33) understands peace primarily as a value, an ethical class denoting the overpowering of strife, quarrel, and social tension, the prevention of enmity and war. Peace is reputable through interactions with God, with self, with others, and with nature. As Wolterstorff (2011:110-111) states, peace is active through the transformation of the broken relationships into right, harmonious and delightful relationships between humans and God, between human beings and between humans and nature.

### *1.6.2. Peace-building*

The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies (2018) in its holistic approach to peacebuilding defines peacebuilding as an activity that aims to resolve injustice in nonviolent ways and transform the cultural and structural conditions that generate deadly or destructive conflict. It rotates around emerging constructive personal, group, and political relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national and racial boundaries. This method includes violence prevention; conflict management, resolution, or transformation; and post-conflict



reconciliation or trauma healing before, during or after any given folder of violence. That means peacebuilding is a multidisciplinary, cross-sector technique or method which becomes strategic when it works over the long run at all levels of society to establish and sustain relationships among people locally and globally, thus prompting sustainable peace.

Defining peacebuilding globally depends on the actors and the activities falling within their scope. Peacebuilding is basically an unstructured concept without clear guidelines or goals Jennifer M. (2007). Peacebuilding deals with economic, social and political root causes of violence and fosters reconciliation to prevent the return of structural and direct violence. Peacebuilding is an approach to an entire set of interrelated efforts that supports peace. Therefore, the common to all definitions is the agreement that improving human safety is the fundamental task of peacebuilding. In this sense, peacebuilding with its wide range efforts aims to address the root causes of violence and ensures freedom of civilians from fear (negative peace), freedom from want (positive peace) and freedom from humiliation before, during and after violence. Peacebuilding does not remedy to violence. It involves a broad range of measures, to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation, and recurrence of conflict.

The University of Colorado (2013) consider peacebuilding as a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace while trying to prevent the recurrence of violence by addressing root causes and effect of conflict through reconciliation, institution building, and political as well as economic transformation. For Galtung, John, peacebuilding is the process of creating self-supporting structures that “remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in a situation where wars might occur. In order to understand peacebuilding there is a need to appreciate factors that contribute to peace because without this understanding conflict is likely to persist. Peace is when everyone lives in safety, without fear or threat of violence and when the systems for justice are trusted, and fair and effective in protecting people’s rights. Peace is also when everyone is able to participate in shaping political decisions while the government is accountable to the people. Peace refers also to everyone having access to the basic needs for their well-being such as food, clean water, shelter, education, healthcare and a decent living environment. Peace is when everyone has an equal opportunity to work and make living, regardless of gender, ethnicity or any other aspect of identity.

McAskie (2006:18) argues that for peacebuilding to be real it is necessary to be sensitive to local necessities or desires and to avoid the obligation of an external model. Peacebuilding is a complex system that necessitates multiple approaches, and long-term programmes to address

both the cause and its consequences. Most researchers argue that for lasting and enduring peace, peacebuilding must be able to address important factors. For Galtung (2001), structural violence exists when people fight for resources because of the unequal distribution and people are willing to die for these resources. Peacebuilding is also meant to re-establish and amend damaged relations.

### *1.6.3. Sustainable peace*

Generally, peace should be defined in terms of an investment that allows or facilitates production and expenditure while creating expectation and culture of peace for the future. The *Review of the United Nations* (2016) described sustainable peace in the following context: “Recognizing that sustainable peace... as a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation, and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to the conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation”

Gert Rosenthal (2017) argues that researchers began to question the use of the term “peacebuilding” because its connotation was limited to interventions after the violent conflict had occurred. Therefore, a more appropriate term was proposed which incorporated preventive measures to avoid violent conflict from recurring; this would be “sustainable peace”. Thus several scholars (Florian Krampe (2017), Reyhler (2006), Mark B Taylor (2016) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in the field have theorized this term sustainable peace, and concluded that it is best understood as (a) an investment, (b) just peace and (c) as a sustainable development (Carol Janson Bond, 2013); What makes it useful as an analytical category is its attention to inclusive dialogue (United Nations General Assembly, 2016) and preventing conflict from re-emerging. Participants expressed the importance of a holistic response to current global challenges, one that integrates peace, sustainable development, and human rights “from conception to execution”. According to UNGA (2016), sustainable peace is both an enabler and an outcome of sustainable development. But Magdy Martinez-Soliman, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Director of UNDP’s Bureau of Policy and Programme Support and Oscar Fernandez-Taranco (2017) in their perspective analysis of peacebuilding considers *sustainable development* and *sustainable peace* as two sides of the same coin. The context of sustainable peace and sustainable development is the fundamental principle that the UN of the 21<sup>st</sup> century now stands for. Therefore, for any country to reach a

lasting peace, the journey must be always be led by its own people. It requires ongoing, dynamic participation (such as the Church of Christ in Congo) from the entire society in its governance and economy to ensure that conflicts don't escalate into violence. That is why a country's development must be inclusive and sustainable; it gives everyone a stake in a shared future (Magdy Martinez-Soliman (2017).

#### *1.6.4. Distinction between war and Conflict*

War has been defined by different scholars in different ways over the period of human history.

**War** is defined as long standing armed conflict between two or more groups over resources, land, cultural differences, or other matters of contention. War is understood as the formal state of hostilities between states (Fox, James, 2003) and it brings many difficulties in life including death and destruction, disease and starvation, poverty and ruin in its wake (Borgen Magazine, 2014). It refers to an armed battle between nations and groups within a nation's pursuit of control over the State (Fearon, 2007). It is also defined as an act of invasion of nations to their opponents with the use of armed forces with other acts of combat, mostly for those who bravely, sincerely and deeply love or yearn to serve and protect their country. War is usually organized and takes long. It is carried out by states (countries) or non-state actors. It is generally characterized by extreme violence, social disruption, and economic destruction. War is actually intentional and widespread armed conflict between political communities; that is why it is defined as a form of collective political violence or intervention.

**Conflict** is understood as a difference of belief and understanding of interest, between two or more parties. Collins (1995) defines conflict as a serious disagreement and agreement about something important and also as a serious difference between two or more beliefs, ideas or interests (cf. Kumaraswamy, 1997:96). Collins (1995) further states that conflict is the behavior caused by the way people feel, think or act. Kent (1993) has analyzed conflict and violence and has found that it is an active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles. According to Burgess (2003), conflict can exist without a dispute but a dispute cannot exist without conflict. There are different sorts of conflict; civil war and Political conflict. According to Simon Hackett (2015), political conflict and war is a human, rather than a natural, disaster, created and waged in large part by adult men but with both a direct and an indirect impact on children's development, well-being, and safety (Santa Barbara, 2006). James Fearon (2007) a scholar of civil wars, defines a civil war as "a violent conflict within a country fought by organized groups that aim to take power at the center or in a region, or to change government policies". Polemically, civil war is known as intrastate war, meaning war between organized

groups within the same state or country (Jackson, Richard, 2014). Civil war is a high-intensity conflict often involving regular armed forces that are sustained, organized and large-scale. On one hand, Smihula Daniel (2013:67) evokes the concept of some scholars who see war as a universal and ancestral aspect of human nature; On the other hand, Paul James; Jonathan Friedman (2006) globalizing war, argues that it is a result of specific socio-cultural, economic, or ecological circumstances

#### *1.6.5. Conflict Resolution*

Dayton and Kreisler (2009:5) have another view on conflict resolution where they argue that “conflict resolution is not simply about terminating armed violence, but relatively a method which leads to the setting up of sustainable peace. It is, therefore, a leading initiative of the extensive practice of sustainable peace. The central intention of solving social struggles is not only to come up with resolutions to antagonistic matters. Instead, to grasp reciprocally satisfactory conclusions between conflicting rivalries based on stable power and equitable social and economic dealings together with self-esteem, identity, and well-being. For Anstey (1993:17), “any effort to resolve a conflict should constantly begin by detecting the various visible aspects of it”, and knowing the rivalries involved and the matters over which they are struggling with. Conflict resolution means a process of resolving disputes or disagreements. Jacob Bercovitch, Richard Dean and Well Jackson (2009) define conflict as a perception of incompatibility between two or more actors and aims at reconciling opposing arguments in a manner that promotes and protects the human rights of all parties concerned. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional. Katie Shonk (2019) defines conflict resolution as the informal process that two or more parties use to find a peaceful solution to their dispute.

Conflict resolution processes encompass a variety of ways including negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and litigation. But the Bergghof Foundation claims that conflict transformation on its side aims to transform negative destructive conflict into positive constructive conflict and deals with structural, behavioral attitudinal aspects of the conflict. The term refers to both the process and the completion of the process.

#### *1.6.6 Conflict Transformation*

Conflict transformation is a comprehensive approach that addresses personal, relational, structural and cultural dimensions of conflict using the potential for conflict as a catalyst for

positive change in all these areas. Expressively, John Paul Lederach (2003) indicates that transformation refers to how the outlines of communication and interaction in relationships are affected by conflict. It looks beyond visible issues to the underlying changes produced by conflict in how people perceive, what they pursue, and how they structure their relationships. This study joins those who worry about conflict transformation being presented as quick solutions for deeply embedded social-political problems. These need significant change. It is the concern of conflict resolution. Apparently, conflict transformation is another way to cover up the changes that are really needed. In order to reach sustainable peace in Kivu provinces, there is a need to include justice in order to build the right relationship and social structure through radical respect for human rights and nonviolence as a way of life. That implies finding constructive responses for violent conflict in order to get constructive change.

According to Lederach (2017), the notion and terminology of “transformation” stand questionable because it is too value-laden and too idealistic. The author underlines conflict transformation as an orientation, an approach, and a framework. It is a lens and a strategy for approaching conflict. Lenses a set of specific techniques to draw attention to certain aspects of conflict and help in bringing the overall meaning of the conflict into sharper focus. Therefore, Lederach defines conflict transformation as to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life- giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.

#### *1.6.7. Reconciliation*

According to Lochman (2002:59), the Christian doctrine of reconciliation develops around the perception that God does not abandon the broken world but rather he is involved in it to suffer for it, strive for it, and conquer it in order to free it. Therefore, the way of reconciliation becomes the way of struggle against a world that has rejected the way of Christ and Christ as its representative (De Gruchy 2002:70-71). Lightsey (2012:172) “Reconciliation seeks to restore the lost *shalom* of creation”.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the main theme of the focus of conflict resolution is reconciliation. This understanding of reconciliation finds its roots in the New Testament which proclaims the kind of reconciliation which depends on God’s covenant with humanity and the family of Abraham; on God’s saving revelation in Jesus Christ; and on the permanent

work of the Holy Spirit to renew human life and to restore human community and to renew all of God's creation (De Gruchy 2002:66-7). In other words, reconciliation takes place in the context of relationships that were destroyed in human history (Lightsey 2012:171). A broader description of reconciliation is provided by Villa-Vicencio (2010:164-165) in the following manner: Reconciliation is a slow, multi-faceted process. It takes time, it is both process and goal. As a process it is inevitably uneven, lapsing into counterproductive, even violent ways of redressing conflict. It requires restraint, generosity of spirit, empathy, and perseverance. It is about exploring ways of gaining a deeper and more inclusive understanding of the problems that are the root cause of conflict. It is about opening the way to better understanding, respect, and trust-building.

Above all, it is about finding ways to connect people across what are often historical and entrenched barriers of suspicion, prejudice, and inequality. The goal is a change of values, a willingness to venture beyond the promotion of rigid identities that result in war and cultivate a new attitude towards others – as the basis for addressing the major material and structural challenges that so often cause post-conflict societies to slide back into war. Reconciliation is an art rather than a science. Sometimes when it happens, it is invariably in the wake of hard work that began with cautious first contacts between enemies through intermediaries, personal encounters, rapprochement, talks about possible talks, talks, negotiations, and trust-building.

#### *1.8.8. Church*

Hastings (2007: 33) understands the concept of the church, not only as of the body of Christ but also as the place where godly intervention operates to render the role of the church within society as transformational. Within that context, Schleiermacher (in Campbell 2000:78), sees “the church as a place of communion of those who share in God-consciousness.” This leads to describe the Church as the community that God uses to equip and empower some individuals to serve the community, thus also constituting the focus of practical theology (August 2014:92-96). According to the author, the church is mandated to contribute to the promotion of clemency and justice in all areas and aspects of life. Therefore, compassion and honesty are some of the Church features pertaining also to the undescribed nature of a divine strategy for creation (August 2014). Defining the Church, De Gruchy (2015:29) claims that it is “a community in which deprived people also fit and contribute.”

This research borrows Forster's (2010:89) and Bowers Du Toit's (2005:20) concept of the church and classifies it into three types that describe different social and theological entities.

These are (1) denominations or their followers in a bigger formal or informal structure; (2) townships and worshippers representing resident church; and (3) faith based organizations that are involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. As Bowers Du Toit (2005:20) stated, these units “assist in influencing public life in different ways. This leads this research to say that the church plays a significant role in facilitating peace in many countries affected by civil and political wars, between ethnic groups facing economic and peace challenges in their troubled societies

#### *1.6.9. Church of Christ in Congo (CCC/ECC)*

The Church of Christ in Congo (ECC) acts as a coordinating body for many churches in the DRC. These churches have been active on social issues of peace-building, women’s rights, and democracy. As mentioned before, two churches, Communauté des Eglises de Pentecote en Afrique Centrale (CEPAC) and Communauté des Eglises Libres de Penteconte en Afrique (CELPA), are the driving services in the ECC network. These Pentecostal churches, with their base that’s in Kivu Provinces, can be traced back to Swedish and Norwegian missionaries, correspondingly.

The organization was established in 1970 and was supported by the World Council of Churches. In the 1990s, a group of protagonists within the ECC network in South Kivu initiated a peace and democracy advocacy agenda sustained by Norwegian supporters. For example, the ECC initiated reconciliation efforts between the Tutsi from Rwanda (most of who were ECC members) and other local ethnic groups. The CCC/ECC helped in tabling the controversial issue on the agenda, trying to tackle and steer clear the ethnic tensions.

#### *1.6.10. Region*

Brooks et al. (2010: 691) describes a region as a space measured as a unit for geographical or social motives. In the DRC’s case, the shared ecological unit of the region is the Great Lakes and the countries that are positioned in the surrounding zone of the great lakes in Africa. Most of these countries are found in the East-North of the DRC, namely; Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. That is why in understanding the Congolese calamity one needs simply to consider both the domestic and regional dimensions. A calamity in any state in the region distresses all the others and can smoothly be transported to them. All these states of the region share some common atmosphere and any undesirable effects on this natural setting, by one country, will have destructive consequences for the entire area. This study will use both

terminologies depending on the context. Locally, the word 'region' means 'Province' or North and South regions of the DRC. The word will also be employed to describe all countries that share the Great Lakes with the DRC.

### **1.7. The Place of theology in Peacebuilding**

According to Dietrich (2014:1-2), Theology is considered as one part of Practical Theology because it represents the church's public department. Dietrich (2014:2) additionally argues that theological theory points to the actual character and task of the church. Its practical repercussions are a plea to action, as a response to encounters of human distress, injustice, and care for establishment. It is, therefore, possible to say that the church is an unrestricted institution that God uses to prepare, invest, and assist the public, which, according to August (2014:96), sets up the focus of theological studies.

Consequently, this study is of the opinion that Practical Theology and Theology are linked by the fact that they both support the Church to address the essential needs of the people. The focus on theology is on the consideration that God's action is facilitated by human obedience and achievement through Christian faith (Heitink 1999:4, 8). Practical Theology is based on a critical clarification of theory and praxis of both the Christian fact and current situation (Heitink 1999:118). Therefore, social problems in modern society are the concern of Practical Theology and this permits Christians to be apprehensive with common interests and public ethics. Practical Theology recognises the divine work through His people who reflect on their own situation in the light of scriptures. Osmer (2008:163-64) explains that Practical Theology is at the same time engaged in an intra-disciplinary dialogue with other perspectives within the same fields and interdisciplinary dialogue with perspectives of other fields. It, therefore, establishes interactions with other theological and non-theological fields of studies in order to better describe and shape its various contexts as it explores its mission in the world (Cahalan & Nieman 2008:78-9).

This concept brings us to the next debate as confronted by a theology of peacebuilding in Africa. The above views are in agreement with those held by Ackermann, (1998) who observed during the South Africa Truth and Reconciliation time, stating "We are a broken world, a world in crisis, an age which is difficult." How shall broken hearts live with heart breakers? While the socio- political structure seems to be politicized, the process of forgiveness appears to be



the sole alternative left as a way to resolve more of the ethical and spiritual predicaments for real and sincere cohabitation to take place. Is this the end of justice? It is also significant to realize that compassion in certain circumstances will not escape legal requirements.

According to Traore (2007) who quoted a member of the commission for Truth and Justice for National Reconciliation, “forgiveness does not suggest the end of judicial action, while Truth and justice cannot be conveyed about by command.” This is simply explained by the fact that; while forgiveness stands as an aspect of reconciliation for peacebuilding, it has also been contested. This is why Clegg (2008) advises that the focus of forgiveness and reconciliation should be on the value of coexistence. Therefore, once someone is forgiven, he /she is no longer controlled by the outcome of past actions but is free to decide on a different kind of move that will sharpen his/her future. This is what Lederach (1997) refers to as he claims that: “*forgiveness* is desired in order to be able to let go and move on.” This thesis argues that forgiveness is an imperative element in the reconciliation process that theoretically implies freedom in order for people to leave the negative past behind them and practically strive for new developments. Forgiveness within reconciliation does not condone or encourage the crime committed; instead, forgiveness becomes a compulsory holistic approach and an essential step to move towards the establishment of a sustainable resolution to achieve reliable and sustainable peace in the DRC.

In the case of this study, Theology engages with the issues that emerge from the social- political context of the DRC within several academic fields, besides practical theology which include Conflict Studies and theology itself. A significant aspect of this thesis also refers to theological reflection on the subject matter. However, the aim of theology in this study is to produce proposals that will be put at the church’s disposal in order to address the persistent situation in Kivu Provinces. In the context of this research, the concern is about understanding the strategic role of the Church of Christ in Congo in its desire for finding sustainable peace in the Provinces stricken by persistent conflict. Also, as Ganzevoort & Roeland (2014) note, the insights of theological research are in connection with the empirical, pastoral and public theologies, and this is applicable to this research because it addresses the role of the church, the academy, and the society.

In the unstable conditions, it appears significant that attempts to define a theology of peacebuilding will enhance conditions in the region. Theology of peace in this scholarship

refers to the divine perspective and dialogue about peace. In a perceptive declaration, Dear (1994:15) has detailed well its significance and described theology of peace in a context of the world's conflict and violence, claiming that "theology refers to and replicates upon the divine affiliation and transformation of the violence while expecting the associating hand of human beings in bringing change non-violently". The intention of theology in this context is to locate and understand the divine method out of violence and move out of that scuffle. Dear (1994:15) states that "theology of peace entails the consideration of divine objectives to transform violence into peace and being intricate in conveying that peace". It is a vibrant process that should lead to the formation of sustainable peace.

This thesis opted to use practical theology to analyse the situation of the Kivu provinces, to practically allow the church to act within the setting of religion, and at the service of the community. According to Forrester (1990), as a branch of theology, "practical theology deals with matters or issues related to truth and action while directing to a deep mutual benefit between theory and practice." Ballard and Pritchard (1996) pick on these two (theory and practice) elements and state that: "Practical theology is self-control which contracts exactly with Christian existence and practice within the clerical set up and in relation to the wider culture." This is why the Church of Christ in Congo is connecting its commission to those within its surroundings and those out of it. It is about 'church' and 'community'. It is a matter of inner feeling. When examining Muller's (2000) concept of 'Shalom' it is clear that peace is a matter of feeling secure from the inside out and being capable of having a strong relationship with others and with the creator. Muller (2000) has continuously described moods such as fear, nervousness, and terror as the root cause of the absence of internal peace.

### **1.8. Significance of the study**

The search for sustainable peace within the context of the DRC has been on the mind of many researchers. Most of the researchers who write about the DRC, direct their observations with the aim of understanding the causes of the persistent conflicts in order to produce a prototypical of peace based on the tradition of their approved doctrine and practices.

Kakwa (2014) for instance has oriented his discovery on poverty as one of the many causes that leads to conflicts in the DRC. The gap in the search for sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces, as undertaken by the Church of Christ in Congo as a body, from a theological perspective is the focus of this research. Geographically, the DRC with its wealth in mineral

resources as considered by Johnstone and Mandryk (2001:197) inhabits a strategic and dominant location within the African continent.

Baregu (1999:186-187) calls the DRC an “economic powerhouse” as it is embedded with enormous minerals, agriculture and other valuable resources, potentially able to transform the lives of its citizens nationwide and its immediate neighbouring countries. The main contribution of this research is to identify systems in which the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC with its more than sixty (60) denominations, has been, and is still dealing with the eradication of persistent conflicts in South and North Kivu Provinces by providing an epistemological bridge to the persistent conflict situation and paving the way to sustainable peace in the region.

Little has been researched on the role and the perceptions of the Church of Christ in Congo towards conflict resolution and sustainable peace in the DRC. This taints novel attempts by scholars to explore the strategic approach *vis-a-vis*. The unending DRC’s conflict implies that academics and most peacebuilding players have largely ignored the role of the people at the grass roots in the transformation of their country’s conflict. The outcome of the study will contribute academically and intellectually to the existing body of knowledge on the role of the church in addressing the conflict in the DRC by showing that the people at the grass roots also have a bigger role to play in addressing the problems that face them on daily bases such as wars and conflicts.

The study will also benefit peacebuilding players in making policies related to sustainable peace with the aim to positively transform the lives of their people for a successful development. While religion has been facing a huge challenge and obstacle in relation to peace making in the development studies literature, Clarke (2011:3-12) considers it as a useful tool to be able to bring about changes in the world today. He calls for communities to consider its account because, as termed by James Clarke (2011:3) “religious communities are exclusively well-founded to meet challenges of our time; resolving conflict, caring for the sick and needy, promoting peaceful co-existence among all people”.

Hence the theological contribution of this research is based on the belief that peace is vital in the mission of determining the Congolese future by implementing sustainable peace in the conflict that has destabilised the nation. This view is relevant in the context of the Church of Christ in Congo peacebuilding interventions in the DRC's conflict and sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces. This study addresses the need to grasp the importance of the inclusion of the insights and views of the people at the grass roots to succeed in peacebuilding. The study hopes to develop a perspective that will shape the dynamics of intervention in conflicts such as that of the Kivu Provinces among others. Therefore, beyond the claims and counter-claims by scholars on the role of the Church in conflict transformation, this study emerges as a claim that peacebuilding interventions in the DRC conflict can and should carry another dimension of pursuing durable peace to the endless war in the DRC.

The study finds relevancy in questioning the “why and how” of peacebuilding interventions by the Church of Christ in Congo in the Kivu Provinces. The study also addresses an existing gap by discovering approaches and perceptions that many have towards the efforts of the Church in the DRC peacebuilding process. Finally, the results of the research will provide necessary data for an appropriate political framework that will challenge civil societies to consider peacebuilding from the grassroots and theological perspective as critical to socio-economic and political stability.

### **1.9. Limitations of the study**

According to Creswell, Castetter and Heisler (1994:106) “limitations help to set up the restrictions, exceptions, reservations, and credentials natural to the research topic.” The nature of this study is not exempt from limitations. Primarily, the researcher acknowledges his intentional position in relation to the subject matter and his normatively critical position against the current government of the DRC. In order to address this potential bias and mitigate its effect in data collection and in analysis, I limited myself to a desktop study.

A second limitation is a rapid pace at which changes unfold in DRC politics. Indeed, since the 1960s, the DRC especially the Kivu Province has been a centre of conflict research, almost all published works on the country's crisis “risk” being overtaken by new/unforeseen authenticities within a reasonably short time. This study may not be exempt from this, as possibly significant changes may occur between the completion of this study and the end of the examinations process. As this study is being examined (December 2018), there are ongoing

violent protests in the DRC about the expiration of the presidential term limit which is beyond the scope of this study.

Additionally, there was also the problem of the language barrier. The researcher is raised in a French speaking environment while most information to be consulted is found in English books thus limiting the speed of understanding the context of what information is relevant. In brief, this research was confined to the desktop data that included academic and relevant materials that were available to demonstrate the role played by the Church of Christ in Congo in its endeavour to participate in solving the persisted conflict situation and bring about sustainable peace in Kivu Provinces.

Another area of limitation is the fact that the DRC is a country with an unpredictable state of security, especially in the interior of the country. This made my initial plan to conduct interviews, impossible because I lacked proper travelling documents and a visa allowing me entry into the DRC to conduct field work. That is why exploratory and descriptive methods were the alternative choice to be employed in order to answer relevant questions related to how the Church of Christ in Congo may have contributed or is contributing to sustainable peace in the DRC, specifically in Kivu Provinces. To satisfy the research objective, I set out to collect information collected from different written sources including scholarly books, articles, news papers, church documents, and pastoral statements as well as relevant internet sources.

### **1.10. Outline of chapters**

This thesis is divided into nine chapters that discuss methods and means applied by peacebuilding players in their quest to find solutions to effectively end the persistent conflict in Kivu provinces of the DRC. These chapters end with a general conclusion.

- Chapter one is an introduction and contains the introduction and background to the study, statement of the problem and key questions, research question. It also contains definitions of those key-words critical for this study.
- Chapter two reviews the literature of the study and creates a clear background of the CCC and the conflict in the DRC.
- Chapter three details the methodology used in this research.
- Chapter four explains the history of the conflict in Kivu Provinces.
- Chapter five looks into the efforts of the church and its intervention to promote peace.
- Chapter six is concerned with constructing a theology of peacebuilding in the DRC.

- Chapter seven deals with possible advocacy practices born out of a theology of peacebuilding.
- The closing chapter eight deals with the key findings of the study and summarises the study with reference to possible future interventions and further research.

### **1.11. Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the study by presenting a brief history and experience of the Congolese people in relation to conflict, its chronic instability, and the humanitarian crisis. The chapter is composed of Problem Statement, Purpose of the Study, Research Objectives, Research Questions, and Scope of the Study, Study Rationale, Ethical Considerations, and Research Outline. This chapter looked at the meaning of different key values such as the practical theology with a number of meanings attached to it, the theology of peacebuilding through different theories; the theology of forgiveness and reconciliation in the context to constitute the basis upon which the Church of Christ in Congo places its engagements to prevent the re-occurrence of violence and instead, cultivate a culture of sustainable peace in the DRC. In this chapter, peace was described to be more than the cessation of war because it encompasses wholeness and the well-being of the all-inclusive creation. The chapter ended with a conclusion to summarise its content. This study is concerned with the key question: How, if possible, can the CCC bring socio-political transformation to the politically troubled zones of the DRC? The question will find its response as the study unfolds.

## CHAPTER 2:

### CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CONGO AND THE PROCESS OF PEACEBUILDING IN THE DRC

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with literature related to the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC and the process of peace restoration in the DRC. The literature will focus on the methodology of the transformation of conflict into sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces. Let us note at this point that the word ‘Church of Christ in Congo will be sometimes used as such throughout this study to imply the Church of Christ in Congo’. The chapter will further review past scholarship and relevant literature on the interconnectedness between sustainable peace and social transformation. Encarta (2007) describes the words *socio-political* as those connected to or linking both social and political dynamics. In a narrow approach, the adjective *political* restricts itself to notions such as government and state.

Prendergast (2017) of the Enough Project in his article “Not on our watch” argues that “there is no single cause of conflict in the DRC, claiming that the conflict is a complex web of interconnected needs, interests, and grievances that exist not only domestically in the DRC but also externally in neighbouring states such as Rwanda and Uganda, that have historically been involved in influencing Congolese politics, economics, and national security to protect their own perceived interests in the region. Prendergast (2017) claims the possibility to break down the primary drivers of conflict in the DRC into three over-arching categories notably, political, economic and military. These factors continued to affect the DRC to the extent of becoming politically a failed state as detailed in the section that follows.

This chapter argues that physical infrastructure, security and the economy, political structures and civil society equally constitute useful elements to implement the restoration of sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces. In other words, this study argues that conflict in the DRC and particular in the Kivu provinces must be brought to an end, if possible by negotiated settlement. This is what Lamb (1997: 9) meant when he stated that the reconstruction of a state cannot be achieved during the war. Concept supported by Nzongola (1999: 75)’s view stating that there can be no military solution to the current war in the DRC. Subsequent to the resolution of the conflict, all Congolese citizens should commit themselves to a process of state reconstruction.

That is why the Church of Christ in Congo has come in as an advocate of sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces. The failure of the DRC state was also characterized by economic conflict and disorder as it is exposed in the following section.

## **2.2 Persistent Conflicts and Violence in DRC**

According to Turner (2013:1), the DRC's economic conflict emerged from the time of King Leopold II (1885) to the invasion of Rwanda and Uganda. These conflicts have negatively crashed on both stability development and the surroundings because many people lost their lives and have their assets destroyed and the natural resources exploited rudely. For Dearing (2012) conflict could only be avoided if the social and economic issues were addressed through a better distribution of the resources to the population. In other words, popular resentment is caused by inequitable distribution of the DRC resources that fuel violent conflict. What Kabemba (2006:114) meant as he emphasizes that conflict in the DRC is due to the meagreness of a government that is unable to meet the minimum social needs of its people. It is important to note that for the exploitation of the DRC's resources, Kabemba (2001:118) initially blames the irresponsibility of Congolese people by stating that "the DRC's resources were exploited by foreign forces, multinationals, and individuals in collaboration with Congolese themselves. For Kabemba (1999: 11) the persistent contest for political power and the material riches of the country has been central to the repeated crises in the DRC. The concept has been supported by Weinstein and Imani (2000:17) by underlining that resource extraction has been popular with post-independence leaders who, just as their former colonial masters, sought to accumulated vast personal fortunes.

According to Dixon (2018), the present dictatorial regime has amassed a fortune with interests in at least 80 companies in a range of industries, including diamonds, copper and cobalt mining, and telecommunications. Mireille Tankama (2017) of the Justice and peacebuilding programme speaks of the "Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources in the DRC. The eastern region of the DRC notably the Kivu province is recognised as one of the world's largest reservoirs of cobalt, and copper. According to Barume (2004), natural resources play an influential role during and after conflict. The warring parties use them to fund their military operations or enlarge their own funds. The resources possibly are also used to swell the public treasuries of friendly countries and allies. Consequently, the people living in resource-rich



conflict zones such as the Kivu provinces often suffer some of the worst human rights violations, slavery, even cannibalism. This has been the situation in Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the DRC. According to Barume (2004), the concept of conflict natural resource becomes such because it provides revenue to an armed conflict. The Global Witness (2001:3) ascertains that the problem with this kind of resource does not benefit or improve the living conditions of the people in a country where the population lives in absolute poverty. Instead, this income is being used primarily to purchase arms and maintain the troops.

According to Raid (2017), greed and corruption block democratic progress. International policy makers in Europe and Washington considered the deteriorating economic and political situation in the DRC. Based on the growing evidence have accused President Joseph Kabila, his family and close associates of bribery and corruption. According to the Congo Research Group (Undated), Joseph Kabila has amassed a fortune through his stakes in more than 80 companies earning tens of millions of dollars. He has direct control over a \$ 13 billion hydropower project, a \$6 billion Chinese minerals contract and exercises considerable authority over other major mining deals. Raid (2017) also argues that Joseph Kabila's lack of transparency has deprived the state of valuable resources it desperately needs to tackle poverty and a growing humanitarian crisis.

While the causes of the state fail of the DRC are enormous, Stephen Steadman (in Onadipe & Lord, 2001:3), links them with multiple grounds of conflict in Africa that are classified as power struggles, ethnic competition, militarism, hostility, and deep-rooted historical, socio-economic and cultural fundamentals. Nevertheless, it is possible to consent that state failure in Africa is reliant upon internal and external factors. Internal factors staunching from poverty, lack of economic opportunity, ethnic hatred and a history of political abuse and corruption fuel the violent conflict. External factors have also had a major impact on the extent and cruelty of the conflict, especially the intervention of strong state and the activities of non-state actors, mostly profiteers such as diamond timber and arms-traffickers.

According to Reno (2000:301) fragile institutions and lack of economic development support to open an arena for foreign mercantilists to enter and manipulate rules and rebels. In fact, investors prove able to operate in chaotic surroundings, in partnership with local rulers to control local anarchy and to benefit from external order that commercial conventions and foreign government provide. Let us look at some contextual factors. Although conflict

situations are not the only cause of the state fail in Africa, Onadipe and Lord (2001:2) explain that no place of the globe is immune to conflict: Europe, Asia, and Latin America have all experienced incredible bloodshed and material destruction in the past century.

Azarya and Chazan (1987: 106) retain that there is a disconnection of the state in Africa; meaning that states are not centred, and the character and capabilities of politics at the centre can be dictated. They claim that the state has a commitment paradigm, which leads to the weakening of the state in some cases. One could add to this the issues of war, violence and the general phenomenon of the state fail as further causes for the weakening of most African states.

According to Allen (1999:377), the prevalent violence found in a number of African countries is to be sought in the internal dynamics of "plunder politics" in which the crucial goal of those competing for political office or power is self-enrichment. In such regimes, corruption is immense and prevalent but highly determined. Over time, the self-destructive of prebendalism that accompanies such relationships undermines the fiscal capacity of the state, and the state ceases to provide the most basic social services. This encourages conflicts, which may assume violent forms and warlordism. In the process, the state asserts control through intimidation and intensified militarization, and thus violence becomes the dominant feature of political interaction and change.

There is, in fact, some length of time over which such states exist without violence. Consequently, continuance beyond this period leads to State failure. Azarya and Chazan (1987: 106) mention that the concept of the enfeeblement of the state has been drawn mostly from the experience of sub-Saharan Africa, where the state has proved to be the weakest. Across the range of the state capacities and capabilities, there will logically be graduation and difference in the strength of different states.

The context of the DRC in this study has found that the country position itself as the tiniest on the range. Even in the area of amending diamond mining, this country has exposed itself ineffective: failing in its attempts to control activities that would continue regardless of its efforts to intervene, and has rather opted to legalize them. Breytenbach (2000: 2) asserts the noticeable permanence since the end of decolonisation including economic war and the nature of African politics and culture. According to Allen (1999: 367), African politics in the nineties a large number of the states have seen violent contests for the power of the State, only to result in the collapse of the State.

It is commonly accepted that the conflict in the DRC, be defined in conditions of a war economy, whereby the warring parties maintain the intractable conflict through the expropriation and abuse of the country's resources. This has been backed by Reno (2001: 219) who stated that the problem for Congolese crisis is not essentially the weakness of their organisations or their demands but that their leaders have been proficient in dominating the country's abundant natural resources and to call on a large group of outsiders to help them abusing them. This does not exclude the fact that the root of the economic conflict in the DRC is not connected to the country's colonial past. According to Laurie Nathan (1997: 2), the regional conflict in the Great Lakes can be traced back to the legacy of colonial rule, including sharp underdevelopment, land shortages, and ethnic rivalries. But the most lasting element of this legacy is the ongoing disputes stemming from the imposition of false borders that did not reflect the demographic realities of the region. Ethnic communities are divided by state borders, for example, the Tutsi, who are scattered throughout Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and the DRC, while the Lunda, are also scattered in Angola, Zambia and the DRC. Lemarchand (2001: 327), has identified three structural features that have contributed to shaping politics in the Great Lakes region and have set the prospect for today's confrontation. Initially, there is a lack of agreement between the demographic and geographical maps of the region. Secondly, there is the population density and the resulting pressures on land all over the region, and lastly, there is a significant refugee population in all four countries of the region, which has had an intensely disruptive impact on the host communities.

Lemarchand (2001: 327) further claims that these structural features are also connected to a number of other factors that have also assisted in igniting and fuelling the current fighting in the DRC. The most prominent of these is the poor rank of governance; the inability of the government to protect its border or to prevent rebellion, smugglers, currency manipulators or militiamen for using its territory to engage in malicious activities in neighbouring countries provokes retaliation.

### *2.2.1 Ethnic Conflicts*

The DRC is recognized as the second most ethnically diverse nation in the world (T. Karbo and Mutisi, 2012). Most states in Africa have inherited behaviours of brutal abuse of the country's resources from a complex set of external as well as internal factors that lead new leaders in poor preparation to cope with the general task of governance. They are ineffectively weak in resolving the concrete problems of their particular countries. This results in perpetual crises, instability, and disorder. For decades, the political situation in African countries has

shown diminutive improvement. It is the case of the DRC where constant power struggles and the ongoing conflict in the provinces of Kivu have attracted different local and neighbouring militias to continue being the main driving force behind numerous regional and cross-border conflicts. Geldenhuys (2001: 12) asserts that ethnic conflict disrupts the authority of the central government and its ability to provide essential security and welfare services to its citizens. Thus, it diminishes the state and precipitates its fall down. According to Mazrui (1995: 28), ethnicity has played an important role in the failure of most states in Africa. He points out that a state can fail either because it has too many ethnic groups or, inconsistently, because it has too few. He supported his argument citing countries such as Uganda and Somalia which are characterized to a certain extent by ethnic wealth of the society - the outstanding diversity of Bantu, Nilotic, and other groups, each of which is itself internally heterogonous and the inability of the system to resist the gigantic pressures of challenging ethno-cultural claims. For Somalia, the fall down of this state was caused by a lack of ethnic diversity just as Mazrui stated above. Somalia's pluralism hanged about at the level of sub-ethnicity, with a culture that legitimises the clan system - one of the central causes of discord. Rwanda and Burundi can possibly also fall into the same category.

The roots of ethnic conflict in Kivu provinces have created one of the country's most intractable problems worse. It is important to understand that, although ethnicity issues were caused by the colonial state, the imposed war that started in 1996 through the invasion of the eastern part of the DRC precisely in North and South Kivu by the Tutsi community from Rwanda, aggravated the situation. Rwanda sent different warlords such as Laurent Nkunda and Bosco Ntaganda to lead an open rebellion in Kivu to ask for nationality for their countrymen Tutsi who fled from Rwanda during ethnicity clash prior to the 1994 conflict that resulted in genocide in Rwanda. Hundreds have been killed; thousands of women raped, and over a million Congolese have fled their homes.

It is important to additionally elucidate that ethnic social organisation was distorted by politicians turning them into political parties. This practice is now evident within the Great Lakes Region also, as a new wave of special interests or ethnically-based political parties emerges. Consequently, the DRC has seen a weakening of its historical political parties, even the church leadership. Relating to colonial history, Gran (1979:71-72) explains that political parties shaped during the period before independence were ethnically oriented. Nugent

(2004:54) considered Congolese parties at that particular time as exceptional in Africa because of its ethnic classification. Nugent (2004:54) clarifies that “ethnic recruitment continued on the basis of lived practice which tended to result in violence and insecurity. Katanga was not the only province affected by tribalism. The Kasai province was also affected by the internal tribal conflict as the Lulua and Baluba could not go along (Nugent 2004:54; cf. Meredith 2006: 100). Till independence Congolese were divided from the regional to the national level.

According to Villafaña (2009:18), political activities intensified transversely the country, subsequent to the uprising that was motivated by Lumumba’s speech in October 1959. Meredith (2006: 100) explains that Belgian mediators, at the conference, were eager to agree on a phased transfer of power over a period of about four years, but the united front of Congolese delegates (UFCD) resisted the idea. Thrilled by the prospect of power and position, they demanded the instant elections and independence on 1 June 1960. Prior to this, Lumumba was jailed and was only released to participate in the “Conference of Brussels” in January 1960. The conference was called by the Belgian government in order to discuss issues related to the independence of Congo.

Defining ethnicity from a psychological perspective, Abercrombie, Hiller & Turner (in Blanche & Stevens 2011: 348) describe it as “a dynamic expression of individual and group identity based on shared social features such as language, religion, customs, traditions and history within a particular social group.” Understanding ethnicity anthropologically “ethnic group” is defined in relation to a particular culture that contains others. Cultural similarities and differences are the main elements that define ethnicity. One ethnic group is distinguished from another on the basis of language, religion, history, geography, kinship or race (Kottak 2004: 384). According to Spears (2010:9) and Richmond & Gestrin (2009:11), ethnic groups have their own plans and strategies that serve them for their own survival in times of hostility and apprehensive situations. Thompson (in Blanche & Stevens 2011: 348) argues that they are shaped by their context. That is why conflict should be understood within the circumstance in which it is experienced. This is also the reason why this section dealt with the DRC issues of ethnicity trying to trace them from the colonial period to the Mobutu regime. This study underlines that the colonial system was founded on preferential treatment and the use of ethnic stereotypes as it was observed by Turner and Young (1985:143). Some particular groups were treated as productive, intellectual, and open to civilisation, faithful collaborators or otherwise deserving special consideration.

According to Meredith (2006:526) when war erupted in Rwanda in 1994, a million and a half people mainly Hutus, unexpectedly sought refuge in the eastern region of Kivu. At the same time, tensions between the indigenous inhabitants and the Tutsis from Rwanda intensified their pressure into the DRC to try and take land in South Kivu and live in there. Reybrouck (2014:411) ascertain that “the Banyarwanda were in Kivu but were undesirable elements, intruders, outsiders, profiteers, foreigners, people who didn’t belong”. (Turner 2013:114) and Cooper (2013:12-13) share the same analysis and state that the presence of Tutsis in the east was negatively perceived by the indigenous peoples of the eastern Congo. Meredith (2006:529) supports his observation by giving an example of the local Hunde chiefs who regularly complained about the pressure this exerted on grazing land. He points out that in Masisi district; Banyarwanda families inhibited 60 per cent of the available land over the process of time. This situation institutes a direct connection between conflict and underdevelopment because some people have access to the land when others are simply marginalised. According to Meredith (2006:528), “the Kivu region had been host to large numbers of Banyarwanda, both Hutu and Tutsi, for many years. In the nineteenth century, Tutsi emigrants from Rwanda settled on grazing land around *Mulenge* in south Kivu. In the 1960s this study argues that they were hosted to care for cows in the surrounding of mount Mulenge but still as Rwandan Tutsi refugees who arrived after 1959 massacres in Rwanda. Their curiosity and their intention to belong to the area stirred them to start claiming Congolese nationality and other political rights access including land by laying claim to the status of authentic Congolese. Their presence aroused strong local resentment, notably among the Bafuliiru and the Babembe. It is not hard to know that Tutsi are not Congolese. Till today, they speak original Kinyarwanda and have double nationalities: sometimes in Congo and the other times they are in Rwanda.

This study also argues that the May-May group, as nationalistic militias, was reformed to resist against all foreign influence during the animosity between Congolese and Rwandese in the eastern Congo. This was applied during the Mulele war in 1964 and now has spread all over the east provinces from Kivu to Katanga. In Kivu provinces, the May-May militias were stimulated by the Simba militia who fought against Mobutu and his Western allies (Reybrouck 2014:411). As far as the current conflict is concerned, Turner (2013:103) suggests that the creation of the May-May was made in response to the Rwanda-Uganda invasion. Relating to the nature of conflict in the Kivu provinces, this study suggests that, to the best understanding of its context, placing ethnicity within the causes of the Kivu war is not perceivable; although

the true nature of the conflict appears to be ethnic, there is something of ethnicity in the conflict. The persistent conflict is more economic than ethnic.

### *2.2.2 Violence and Gender*

Kivu provinces are ravaged by the cyclical and prevalence of intensified violent conflicts placing it at the highest position worldwide. According to Michael van Rooyen of the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (2014), the eastern region including the Kivu provinces has become the worst place in the world for a woman to live. Michel clearly and importantly stipulates: “rape in Congo has metastasized amid a climate of impunity, and has emerged as one of the great human crises of our time whereby every day massive number of women and children fall, victims of sexual violence,” perpetrated by members of the DRC armed forces (FARDC), armed rebel groups and members of foreign armies. They rape their sisters, mothers, and daughters without any compassion. Dixon (2018) describes violence in the DRC as roiling the country as a strategy to keep the tyrannical government in power. The violence in the DRC has been characterized by massacre, home and houses torched to the ground and unburied dead. The author supported his claim by discussing the United Nations discovery of 80 mass graves in the Kasai region as a recent scene and incident in the context of a troubled nation spinning out of control. According to Ida Sawyer of the Human Rights Watch, the scheme was being carried out as a plan to derail elections scheduled for December 2018 in order to keep the dictator and his team in power, to violate the Catholic Church mediators negotiated deal in which the president was to step down in 2017. It is known as a “strategy of chaos”.

According to Chris McGreal (2008), the decades DRC’s conflict and wars cause 45000 deaths a month, half of them being children. According to the reports by respected observers such as the Human Rights Watch and the International Rescue Committee have found that sexual violence crime in the DRC has attracted very large amounts of international attention due to its forms, magnitude, and brutal nature. The practice of rape as a weapon of war in the DRC widely practiced in the affected zones such as Kivu provinces and these include kidnapping, sexual slavery, gang rapes, and forced marriage - as tools to win and maintain authority over civilians in territories occupied by rebel groups. These practices are often committed in front of families and villagers to terrorize and control the local population. According to Malokele Nanivazo (2012), sexual violence is used as a weapon of war by all parties involved in the long-standing conflict in the Kivu provinces. Women and girls of all ages have been raped. A recent study from health centres in Kivu has estimated about 40 women are raped daily while others either

contract HIV/AIDS or die as a result of the rape. It has also discovered that most victims do not report the crime for fear of being rejected and stigmatized. They chose to rather suffer life-long physical and psychological trauma, impairing their ability to participate in the development of their communities and make them more vulnerable.

Marchal (2008: ix, x), claims that foreigners who are interested in the products of the DRC, exploit them to the expense of the death of thousands and millions of Congolese. Congolese are exposed to the most unbearable episode of their history. Human beings are the first commodities to be extracted by Europeans in addition to natural resources. For (Turner 2013:9), Congolese are exposed to forced labour and to state confiscation of land as it was under the rule of King Leopold II of Belgium. All these abuses never allowed the Congolese to effectively work for the wellbeing of all and because they were denied rights. Casement (in Reader 1997: 579) who gathered evidence of people who were forced to collect rubber in the DRC claims that people were going further into the forest, and when they failed and when rubber was short, the soldiers would come and kill them.

Finally, Autessere (2007) in the Review of African Political Economy (No: 423-441) has observed the source of dynamics of violence during the transition from war to peace and found that it is located in the interaction of local dynamics with the national and regional dimensions of the conflict. Local conflicts over land and political power increased and became self-sustaining, autonomous, and disconnected from the national and regional tracks. According to Autessere (2007), peacebuilding action was required not only at the national and regional levels but also locally. Supporting the concept, Roushbeh Legatis (2013) argues that existing local expertise and strategies in the DRC, are supposed to build peace structures at the community level but official debates and media coverage continued to focus predominantly on military interventions, thus ignoring local actors who seemed to be isolated from the global peacebuilding process.

### **2.3. The Church of Christ in Congo, Peacebuilding and Transformation**

In the quest to understand the role of the church as a stakeholder, I see the church as an institution who acts for or represents another. As an institution, the church is an active cause or power who works secretly for a government or other organisations to produce a particular



effect or change. Understanding Brookes (2010:14, 136)'s description of an agent, it is possible to conclude that the church may serve as a negotiator or mediator who acts effectively to positively affect change (Green 2008: 436). Within this context, the Church of Christ in Congo is considered as an agent of change to effect sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces. The research attempts to determine how the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC and its management has contributed to the backing up of sustainable peace in the most affected areas of Kivu provinces.

The participation of the Church of Christ in Congo in the affairs of society was generally under the banner of religious networking. However, this section is considering particularly the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC in order to establish its participation in restoring sustainable peace in Kivu provinces. The church (this study will use the word 'church' depending the context to mean the Church of Christ in Congo) begin by training itself on how to confront elements that are destructives and impart the sense of love that respect all human beings and promotes their dignity (Mugaruka 2010). The Church had to deal with ethnic tensions and promote the value of reconciling within itself before it could embark on the importance of human justice applicable to all human beings. This implies again that the church is a reputable organisation that assists people to repair the wrongs of the past through restitution. Hastings (2007: 33) suggests that the Church of Christ in Congo worldwide is a divine agency functioning within different societies as transformational tools for the betterment of people. Its activities are connected to the administration of sacraments, preaching and teaching the word of God and guide God's people by serving all and defend the voiceless poor, confront the powers, and transform communities. Furthermore, the global church is the community that God calls in order to empower it so it becomes useful to society.

This empowerment characterizes the role of theology as it is understood by August (2014:92, 93, 96). The Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC participates in the advocacy of mercy and justice in all areas or facets of life. As part of its role, the Church of Christ in Congo is able to act in response to the challenges that face the society at any time. For De Gruchy (2015:29), poor people are part of the community that is served by the Church of Christ in Congo globally. Johnstone & Mandryk (2001:24) argues that the church helps to influence public life in various ways (Bowers Du Toit 2005:20) and plays a significant role in failing societies. Globally advocating about the Church's role, most African countries consider the church as a useful social organization that is able to bring sustainable peace between ethnic groups, cope with the many economic, health and education challenges in breaking up societies.

In relation to the Church of Christ in Congo socio-political transformation, a number of social scientists and theologians even some church workers cleave to the concept that the church should not play or take part in the socio-political transformation of communities as suggested by Aboum (1996:99). Nevertheless, considerable proof agrees that the church represents a significant force that can bring about a remarkable socio-political change as admonished by Sakala (1996:117-129) and Rakotonirainy (1996:153-178). Borrowing the understanding of Bellagamba (1992:33-34, 91) on the role of the church to socio-political transformation, this study highlights the importance of the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC as it helps the government and people to embrace and implement values that constitute the well-being of all. The church does this by calling and holding the leaders answerable. The Church generally is expected to speak out against oppressive rule and all forms of oppression and exploitation.

Assmann (1976:30-32) claims, the jurisdiction of politics is entirely embraced by the term 'society', and not simply formal interactions with the state. Everything in society has a political dimension. For that purpose, he retains that politics has to be superseded, if not dispensed with. Each human performance, even the most secretive, retains not only a social content but also a political gratified because it is always subject to change or stability in society. Therefore, socio-political transformation has to do with processes of social and political change at different stages which can be supported out by transformed people of the community, particularly the leaders, even church leaders such is the case of the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC. Hence in this study I focus on the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC in its quest to transform the socio-political persistent conflict in Kivu Provinces into sustainable peace.

Globally the church is known as a cultural and spiritual institution; its role is to bring people together and fulfil its mandate of moulding total men and women. Prior to the debate related to its active commitment to foster peace in societies divided by violent conflict, it will be important to grasp the etymological significance of 'church'. Fairchild, (2013) defines the word "church", "to mean 'public' or 'individuals' as per its Greek origin form "ecclesia." When thinking of political power, the word 'Church' takes the meaning of 'called out assembly'. Léon-Dufour (2003) connects the Apostles' implication to this secular meaning as he refers to "the gathering of believers of Christ as an assembly."

These forms lead to the description of the word "church" as a group of followers that have been 'removed' from the world to epitomise God's purpose. According to Bosch (1991:114-115) "the church fundamentally has been called out of the world, at the same time it has been given

a task back into the same sphere as a missionary.” From the definition above, it is possible to say that the church is inseparable from its commission, which goes beyond every position in order to reach the total need of the human being for its real transformation. This dimension connects us to the intentional reflection of the Church’s involvement in specific situations, which also include people’s life related to political matters. It will be useful to describe what the Church really represents in the context of this study; for purposes of the readers, the word “Church” will refer to denominations representing the body of Christ as represented by the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC) commonly known as “*Eglise du Christ au Congo* (ECC), in French.” Africa as a continent faces countless socio-political issues such as infrastructural deficiencies, marginalization, and exploitation of ethnic minorities, old people, women, and children, as well as political turbulence and insecurity. This study argues that the Church’s universal mission should be undertaken in unity to support progressive reform of society.

Focusing on its biblical mission, the Church of Christ in Congo has been concerned with socio-political discontent among the citizens of the DRC and has taken concrete steps to initiate change and sustainable peace. This research argues that given the prevailing situations in the DRC, the church cannot but act, and double its efforts geared towards promoting sustainable peace.

In other words, generally speaking, the Church exists because the society exists and therefore the transformational good news of peace should be transmitted to all people. For Kalemba (2012:197) the good news of peace as preached in the Gospel will result in no significance to human hearts if it drops outside their consciousness. Mugambi (1995:6) supports the involvement of the Church in society by stating that: “it was started by the Lord Jesus who was involved in both individual and community affairs.” He prepared and urged his followers to participate in social change. That is why Dolamo (2001:295) urges Christians “to prophetically back positive government programs, that relate to developments and that will advance the value of life for all, specifically the poor.” This study asserts that the above is the main objective of the Church’s contribution in the fight against all forms of socio-political problems. The church advocates on behalf of the voiceless in situations of war, financial inequality, and joblessness that is still tarnishing the continent of Africa. Congolese people essentially require social transformation, if sustainable democracy is to be projected for the future.

Such responsibility can be attributed to the Church because it is viewed as an institution that is able to produce significant change. The Church is well positioned to teach communities and

their leaders, eliminate ignorance and dishonesty from political representatives, while at the same time stimulating discipleship. However, Dolamo (2001:296) evokes the problem of “‘economic justice’ as a priority for reconstruction and development.” He argues that such reconstruction should effectively be started for positive change to be attained at all levels in society. According to Dandala (2001:30) “social change, justice and integrity should be considered as fundamental material of resolution.” From a historic and biblical point of view, many people of God were involved in socio- political affairs of their government. Taking the example of Daniel in Babylon; Amos and other prophets in the Bible, they got involved in the socio-political affairs of their nation as well as that of the neighbouring nations. This responsibility was not limited to the Old Testament prophets; men such as John also assumed it in the New Testament the Baptist relating to the governmental anxieties of their generation. They spoke confidently as God's representatives against the manipulation of political influence by calling for integrity to prevail. This kind of advocacy leads the Church to be "salt and light" not only in the world but also in politics without being distrustful from holiness. The point that follows relates to the strategic key used by the Church to intervene in political affairs. Harris (1999), talks about the procedure of “prophetic ministry.”

The word “Prophetic” here may refer to ‘speaking’, building, or problems handled carefully and holistically on behalf of people broadly or of a community specifically. The example of people such as David Russell and Desmond Tutu in South Africa can be cited as classical models of the prophetic practice in relation to our time. Christians are called out to set moral norms supported by the word of God. The Church has prophetic ethical norms that if adhered to, can lead in to resolving a political impasse in the country.

In the view of the above, this study argues that the Church should participate mutually with the government on issues such as integrity, exploitation, governance, financial obligation, accommodation, learning, health care, protection and safety, rule and whatever possibly contributes to the wellbeing of the nation. That means the church should be courageous enough to say "yes" when it is needed, as well as to say "no" to rules that are not in favour of people. The Church should position itself and be able to oppose whatever thought not promoting people’s transformation, and back obligations that justifies tangible determinations to control crime and promote education as a major objective for social change.

According to Caldecott (2001:5), “part of the Church’s moral theological concern is social, political and economic charity and justice.” The central concern here is that the Church is

genuinely committed to the improvement of society in the light of the changing conditions through exploration and expression of the social demands of its faith. In other words, the church is one of the civil society bodies with appropriate strategies to serve as a leader, teacher and at the same time a servant of the people.” Therefore, its participation in public matters should be considered as important to avoid what Berger (1999:18) calls “catastrophic collapse of the nation.” Supporting the above concept Sakala (1996) validates the participation of the Church in private life and acknowledges it as a substantial power, which transfers a profound socio-political change.

Its contribution to socio-political transformation as a globalizing and transnational organization in public life has been termed by Kalonji (2000) as “part of the Church’s commitment to liberating nations and freeing societies spiritually, traditionally, generally, financially and diplomatically.” This gives the Church a wider perspective of responsibility beyond its faith supporters and extends it towards outsiders and unacquainted individuals who are oppressed in one way or another to bring about a positive social change in their lives. Thus the intention of this scholarship is to demonstrate how the transformative activities of the Church in society can serve peace restoration in the DRC and other conflict stricken countries. Many local and universal institutions have taken up critical roles in their search for stability in eastern DRC. World Vision and the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC are carrying out their obligation to alleviate people’s sufferings and provide basic and immediate needs accordingly (IRIN, 2006a). This study will argue that most denominations that participated in the preparation for the 2006 elections in the DRC are still involved in different socio-political activities, campaigning and sensitizing people to become actively involved in advertising the values of sustainable peace.”

### *2.3.1. Biblical and Theological perspectives on Social justice and Peacebuilding*

Rasmussen (2001) once said: “In a world where war is everybody’s tragedy and everybody’s nightmare, diplomacy is everybody’s business. Debating on biblical and theological involvement entails the Church's contribution of unique contents to the public moral discussion. This section deals with the biblical and theological perspectives of the Church in dealing with public life.

Wheaton argues that true biblical Christian justice is anchored in God’s loving heart (2009: 3). He maintains that God has an extraordinary interest in the welfare of those at the lowest end of

the social steps: widows, orphans, legal aliens and people living in ghettos and others who are oppressed or excluded. The Church that has these at heart should lead the world in striving for social justice by defining ‘social justice’, determining key biblical principles of social justice and developing a strong position on any action connecting social action to address prevailing social problems.

Altmann (2013:1), during the tenth World Council of Churches (WCC) assembly address, as the outgoing moderator, defined social justice as a ‘common walk’ of fellowship for an ordinary future. He described the role of social justices as seeking common good by tackling privilege, economic injustices, political and ecological exploitations and evil powers that take advantage of the powerless. Therefore, social justice is the competence to systematize with others and to achieve ends that benefit the whole community (Novak 2009: np). Social justice assures the protection of equivalent access to rights and opportunities as well as taking care of the least advantaged members of society (Robinson 2014:2). Instead, people should be worried about the approach used to shares available resources between them (Miller, 1991:11).

Miller’s proposal points to a practical notion of social justice, where the focal point is not on the elimination of *the* root cause of injustice *per se*. rather, social justice should be practised in respect of the several organisations, many of them in the public sector though not exclusively, that is responsible for the allocation of economic, political and social settlement in society. In this sense, it is significant to pursue social justice, not only in respect to race, gender and class inequality in general, but also in respect of particular institutions such as in schools, in education departments, in hospitals and clinics and in government, in the allocation of municipal services, in the access to public institutions, including departments like Home Affairs and the Social Grants Agency, in how government acquires goods and services and so on. Additionally, social justice should be practiced in respect of impartiality in how businesses take care of and pay workers, in the differentials between the executive echelon, managers and junior staff, in the structure and so on. Van Der Heijden (2013) recently made a persuasive case for social justice interventions in the South African food economy such a plural approach to social justice also implies more local senses of justice.

At this stage in this study, we speak about the theological role of the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC with its struggle during the mission to restore sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces. This mission can be compared to the inclusive mission of the Church during

apartheid in South Africa as it was witnessed by Walshe (1997:383-99) and De Gruchy (1997:445-54). This study argues that the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC does not exist for itself. It draws its strength from the creator who never lives for Himself as God. The fact that God created the world implies his attachment and involvement with the world. According to Migliore (2004:100-01), God's act of creation is one of his generosity. With this perspective, the Church of Christ in Congo is called to be a missionary Church sent into the world to serve by participating in the reconciling love of the triune God who reached out to a fallen world through Jesus Christ.

Social justice is a biblical subject that runs right through the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Crossway (2001:1) quotes 69 scriptural pieces in the 69 books of the Bible that bear a direct call to social justice. The first book of the Bible, Genesis, carries the story that humans were created in the image of God so that humans are like God as no other earthly creatures are. The creation stories tell of the special dignity of being human. This underlies the common origin and destiny of humankind (Ogbonnaya 1994:3).

Behind the central message of the Bible, there is God's call to social justice as humans have a common source and God's purpose to fulfil in their lives. According to Kane (1978:97), it was God's original intention that humans should live in harmony with His laws and his purposes. God took humans into partnership with himself and made them his representatives on earth to execute his justice. Regrettably, the Israelites got wrong their election through Abraham and their exodus from Egypt, and all the privileges and rights that went with it, as their private privilege that should partake only by the Jews. For the Jews, the connotation of neighbour in Leviticus 19:18 meant to them and 'their associate'. Consequently, Jews understood a neighbour as a 'member of their community'. The Israelites were to treat such persons fairly and kindly and were not to cheat or rob them. But their conduct to non-Jews was such that they did not consider them to be human as Jews were. Jesus came to change this perception. Out of the four Gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Luke is very clear in his 'retelling' of Jesus' intentions to correct Jewish wrong perceptions of neighbour. Where the Jews understood social justice as doing good only to their fellow Jew, Jesus stood against that assumption and taught that the neighbour, a person who should receive the best in terms of social justice, is not only a blood relative but also a stranger (Lanier 2013:1). According to Luke, Jesus used incidences such as the story of the hated Samaritan as the hero in matters of social justice. A hated Samaritan is heralded as a champion because he put his life at risk by stopping in the bush where robbers might have been hiding, treating the Jew's wounds, placing

him on the Samaritan's own animal with his ceremonially unclean hands, and taking him to a neighbouring inn (Lanier 2013:3). And yet the religious leaders such as the Levites and priests bypassed without assisting the wounded Jew. Jesus exposed and blamed their legal system and contrasted it with the original purpose of God with regard to social justice.

### *2.3.2. A (practical) theology foundation for peace education*

It (peace education) aims at facilitating the individual to apply a faith-based understanding of peace in everyday life practice. Accordingly, (Gehlin, 2016:185) considers peace education in terms of applied theology. As a theological concept, sustainable peace is rooted in the Church of Christ in Congo's commitment to building communities where differences are treasured and valued. Gehlin, (2006: 191-238) in his Prospect for Theology in Peacebuilding elaborates that peace as a theological responsibility promotes biblical teachings that oppose isolation, extremism, and violence by setting relation issues and mutual accountability high on the agenda. This again gives to the Church of Christ in Congo an immediate relevance of peace education which brings such issues to the fore.

Practical theology supplies a resource for the time-consuming processes of forming a peaceful mind, converting towards peaceable lifestyles and attitudes, and opposing theological legitimisations of violence. Gehlin (2006:248-251). Peacebuilding theologies serve the behaviour of faith-based diplomacy in ways that extend over long periods of time. Theological peace education is one such way, wherein students over time acquire keys and tools for scriptural interpretation and theological construction that prepare for the prospering of peacefully oriented values, beliefs, perceptions, and worldviews.

The Church of Christ in Congo also embarked on what may be termed as moral education and ethical living. separately from mobilization and social analysis, community people are learning to know their obligations and accountability towards each other and towards the community as a whole as well as their own civil rights (McDowell & Beliles 2008:190-191). People learn the truth for the wellbeing of each person and for the common good of the community. According to Kouzes and Posner (2001:89) "people learn and react to what we are".

Linthicum (2003:77) suggests organising people's improvement project that would mobilise the poor and supply to the needed community their own services. Following the same concept, Bellagamba (1992:58) advises that people should rely on the talents they have received from



God, as their own experience. They should foster hope, based on the God of the Bible who has revealed might by raising the poor to high places and has given every good thing to the hungry while sending the rich away empty.

The promising actions and responses to be considered as initiatives in this perspective include opposing the mistreatment and tyrannical system of political leaders who do not care about the needs of their people. This is what Linthicum (2003:77) had in mind when he advised that the Church should be an advocate for the defenceless. Along with the above action and reaction, Linthicum (2003:76) is of the view that communities should also practice or apply their faith by working for social justice and peace, just as it was in the book of Jeremiah 29:7 in order to encompass and create positive actions to protect their surroundings. In view of the modern renewal of religious based violence in all kinds of local and global disputes, Appleby (2000) suggests a rising need to relevantly apply religious principles and instruments to the practical work of conflict prevention and resolution. There is the need to develop the theory and praxis of faith-based peacebuilding, which is a moderately new expansion in the field of international relations, as a form of unofficial diplomacy: known as "track two" diplomacy. It refers to "unofficial, informal interaction between members of opponent groups or nations that aim to enlarge strategies, to influence public opinion, organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict" (Montville 1991: 162). The integration of the dynamics of the global church with international peacebuilding could combine reconciliation and conflict transformation in an inspired approach. In fact, theological peacebuilding not only pursues the conflict resolution but mostly the restoration of a healthy and respectful relationship between the parties.

According to Tompson (2000:1-2), peace is both the gift of God and the fruit of human labour that should be considered on the basis of fundamental human values, trust, justice, freedom, and love. Biblically, peace is the revelation of God to humanity in the context of human activities as viewed by Baum and Wells (1997:4). The people of Kivu provinces in the DRC live in precarious and complex circumstances, meaning they need the peace of God as guidance in their lives. This will benefit them to embrace the approach of 'let it go' and resolve issues amicably. It is not easy to achieve sustainable peace in a human perspective. Peacemakers are described by Luz (1989:24) as a biblical universal remedy for violent conflict impediment, conflict management, and conflict resolution and conflict transformation around the globe.

According to Friesen (1986), Sampson and Lederach (2000), Schreiter et al. (2010) it is possible to say that no theology is required on the incarnation of God that calls for practical witnessing in life. Following the example of Christ, the peacemaker *par excellence* between earth and heaven, it is clear that all theologies come out of specific Christian experiences and are in fact the reflection of Christian spirituality, practices, and communities as mediating the reality of God. In relation to these aspects, Schreiter et al. (2010) argue that some particular characteristics that are fundamental Christian peacebuilding patterns include truth telling, pursuing justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

## **2.4 Peacebuilding interventions and conflict transformation**

Globally, it is the duty of the church to serve and be peace actors in the community where it is functioning. Theologically, this is one of the characteristics which manifest the Kingdom of God. However, the church has been sometimes accused of not living the scripture in this regard, as was the situation during the colonial period, when both the church and mission schools divided Congolese citizens by leading many in tribalistic differences. According to Reybrouck (2014:115) “mission schools were used as industries for tribal discrimination”. The above attitude affected even the education, to the extent that graduates were not well prepared for the political future responsibility because education was entrusted to the church as part of its mission. It is, therefore, possible to argue that the church carried on with the colonizer’s ideology in every aspect of life thus losing its genuineness. This has been illustrated by Longman (2001), who explained that during the thirty-two years of the Mobutu regime in the DRC, the Roman Catholic Church was seen as having failed in its role as a peacemaker by its wrong management. This was due to the ethnic, personal and ecclesiastical divisions among its bishops who were seen as reducing the church’s capacity by not using correctly the prophetic position before the regime in place. In our days, things seem to be changing and taking another shape. According to Bunting, (2005) most African politicians and state structures have lost almost all reliability and legitimacy, especially during elections time. With the lamenting situation the proliferation of churches has reached its practical appearance in the public space in many societies Moghadam, (2003), Laguda, (2013:27) and Adesina (2013:36, 37), believe that religion in Africa has re-emerged as strong socio-political apparatus in stimulating people and systems, as it was also observed by Rubin (1994) who claimed that “The political significance of the church in Africa resounds with special strength in its societies”. This implies

that the socio-political challenges in Africa as it is the case in the DRC have brought the Church into meaning as a major role player in people's aspirations for a recovered life and peaceful coexistence. According to Peel, (1968:36), "it is fundamentally because most beliefs, values and moral systems of any given individual or community are located in the sphere of their culture and religion.

In recent times, most involvements and peace processes have stressed peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict societies. In this setting, the contrast between all sorts of interventions and peacebuilding has melted. This leads us to claim that peacebuilding interventions in a post-conflict situation can proceed differently, depending on who the actors are and their interests in a post conflict situation are. Intervention and conflict transformation are contextually understood by Du Plessis (2000:1), as any procedure of "meddling of one state in the affairs of another state thus consequently in the transitory disruption of normal two-sided arrangements of relationships between the two".

Leurdijk (1986:90) and Holsti (1995: 204) describe an intervention to label "any activity that purposely strives to change the political leader(s) or the constitutional structure of an external political jurisdiction". It appears that the theory of intervention shields a variety of concerns and phenomena to adjust the inner social structures with or without the consent of the target states. Intervention may also denote those arrangements undertaken by states or groups of states with the support of international organisations such as the UN Security Council, regional organisations such as the AU and sub-regional organisations similar to SADC. According to Du Plessis (2000:5), and Schwarz (1970:175-177), the fundamental factor is that these intimidating or non-coercive actions have their trajectory objectives, such as re-establishment of democracy and peace. Consequently, peacebuilding interventions include all activities taken by geopolitical bodies, states, civil societies and NGOs to recognize and support structures that reinforce and solidify peace in order to avoid deterioration into conflict (Ghali, 1992:8). Nevertheless, most scholars would like to know on what conditions and when peace players are certified to intervene in peacebuilding. This background informed the wider debate on peacebuilding intervention in the DRC. The situation thereof has attracted many peacebuilding players both internationally and locally in their attempt to end the DRC conflict and find sustainable peace. Adogla (2010), Le Roux (2014), Whetho and Uzodike (2008), have claimed that the DRC population comprises of about eighty percent Christians. When the Church united with other civil society peace actors, it impeded the peace processes that prompted the official

end of conflicts by supporting the April 2003 Sun City Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD) in South Africa. According to Whetho and Uzodike (2009), the success of both 2006 and 2011 elections was fundamentally attributed to the role played by the church in the peace process.

#### *2.4.1. Peace-building and the Church of Christ in Congo, in Kivu Provinces*

The actual situation in the DRC is somehow improved than before. Nonetheless, the damage imposed on the country from the mid-2000s remains weighty. Taking Samset (2012:230) on his conflict evaluation account as from the year 2000 to 2003, the definite situation in the eastern parts, larger scale violence was intense in several zones. According to Samset (2012), Kivu cannot be claimed to be peaceful or directly at war. The situation at hand indicates that the entire country is in much need of development and change towards more peaceful relations.

The author indicates that there are 2.6 million internally displayed persons (IDP) in the DRC today who have been involuntary obliged to flee frequent times because of instability. According to the World Bank (2005), 71.3 percent of them are living below the poverty line, while their land is opulent and fertile. The situation in Eastern DRC, in the Kivu provinces, is particularly unstable. United Nations News Centre wrote in 2012 how they found the situation in the Kivu provinces “tense fragile”.

Autesserre (2012) makes this very clear in her commentary on the situation in the eastern parts of DRC: Life conditions in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo have deteriorated significantly since the end of the transition to peace and democracy in late 2006. Every year, the people of the eastern provinces feel more insecure than the previous year. Armed groups including the Congolese armed, uncompromisingly commit horrific violations of human rights that have left the society feeling inhumane in many ways.

The Congo has fallen twenty places (from 167 to 187) in the Human Development Index, officially becoming the least developed country on earth. General, the current conditions for the populations of the Kivu Provinces in Congo remain among the worst in Africa (Autesserre 2012:202- 203). Further, Autesserre (2012) argues that “not only was the condition in the Kivu region not improving but it was actually deteriorating”. While there has been one significant change related to the defeat of M23, the fact remains that the present situation is not stable. The causes of the continuing conflict in the Kivu provinces are countless. Vlassenroot

(2004:42-45) provides three predominant reasons for the conflict. Firstly, he draws attention to the former “nature of the Zairian State”, thus implicating Mobutu and his supremacy. Secondly is the land issue in the *Ituri* and Kivu provinces, this is challenging both at local, national and international levels. Lastly, the issue of citizenship for the Tutsi from Rwanda continues to be more and more complex. These three causes are significant to understand why the conflict is persistent as will be discussed later in this study. The fact that the DRC has not been such a strong state beforehand, history has influenced the conflict found today. Another factor is related to land control, which applies to the neighbouring countries’ envy of it as well as the many local and foreign militia groups, which each seek to take control of their own territories. According to Insight (2014), this has triggered much damage to the local population as well as amplified political tension between Rwanda and the DRC. The last aspect is with regard to citizenship and is in relation to the Hutu-Tutsi ethnic issues that also emerge from the neighbouring countries.

According to information accessed from the Church of Christ in Congo (2007) document, “the national head office of the CCC (ECC) is located at 2000 km away, in Kinshasa that makes it practically impossible to monitor the daily activities that occur in the East region.” In addition to trying to find spaces of engagement in national politics, churches in South Kivu engage actively in civil society at the province level. Their capacity to organize civil society is substantial, as Prunier (2001) also observed. Congolese civil society is organised as a formalised structure known as “la societe’ civile” led by an elected president, served by office staff and with a hierarchy stretching from the national level to territories and ‘collectivities’. The fact that most trade unions and other traditional civil society organisations are weak; it gives the church more strength and significant influence because of the church availability particularly important during times of war and foreign occupation.

The role of the Church of Christ in Congo as it is known globally in French (Église du Christ Au Congo, ECC). The Church of Christ in Congo is a canopy organization that covers most of the protestant Churches in the DRC. According to Mutombo-Mukendi (2011), “it is the countrywide officialdom of all the Protestant Christian worshipers in DRC.” It comprises more than sixty-two member organisations known as Church communities. Members of the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC) are found in almost all Provinces of the DRC, including the east where two of the largest denominations are found (Communauté des Église de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale, (CEPAC) and Communaute’ des Eglises Libre de Pentecote en Afrique,

(CELPA). Boëthius and Ånderå (2011:10), argue that these “Pentecostal churches in Kivu were founded by Swedish and Norwegian missionaries.” Being a member of this Organization and a practitioner part of the narrations in this study comes from my experience as a church leader in the Church of Christ in Congo. The Church of Christ in Congo is headed officially by a President and a Vice-President that represent the organization in government and public affairs. Under the leadership of the later, the Church of Christ in Congo has managed to train some of its members who are involved in socio-political affairs to tackle different issues related to development, politics and social Affairs during and after conflict. That is to say, ECC oversees schools and other social community development programs such as the Peace and Reconciliation program at both the local and national levels. The role of the different departments formed in different local Churches is to tackle new issues as they emerge. For instance: providing counselling when a woman is raped; providing food for those displaced by new armed forces or militias. That among other responsibilities was the concerns of the local Church.

According to the World Relief (2015) after years of horrors of conflict in the Kivu provinces, the Church of Christ in Congo generally stands as the only social structure standing as true peace for survivors of violence. Sometimes questions such as: Why should the church get involved in the socio-political affairs of the country? This section tries to answer this question out of what has been expressed above. It is important to understand that the church is also traumatized and affected due to many people within have been also displaced from their homes after surviving grave atrocities and ran in search of safety. During unspeakable hardship, the Church of Christ in Congo stood for unity and reconciliation as a key stakeholder for building sustainable peace. As one of the most structured institution, the Church of Christ in Congo continues to struggle for the restoration of human dignity and justice in the DRC. With so many killings in the provinces of Kivu the Congolese justice system remains in the spotlight of the International Criminal Court of Justice.

According to John Kalala of the Federation of Human Rights (2004), the past of the DRC has been characterized by severe social conflict and war. It has also been punctuated with very alarming acts and even atrocities committed by warring parties.

The conflict transformation theory that reinforces this general debate acknowledges that the world is aware of the country’s challenges of increasing insecurity gaps, high unemployment,

and a culture of violence that has far-reaching negative consequences. The Church of Christ in Congo has advocated these concerns making them a priority in its efforts to forge innovative sustainable peace which has been producing positive results despite political challenges. This study has drawn attention to a new approach that is suitable for social stability, ethically responsible with standards and guidelines, well-developed programmes and innovative organizations committed to the betterment of the DRC people ensuring a level of transparency in their peace process. Theological social responsibility as modern practical theology is movingly reflected in the Journey which suggests that the Church should engage a holistic perspective, and find interactions that will contribute effectively to the transformation of the people of the DRC. The Church has an impact across all society; which simply mean the Church is highly significant. Relating the role of the Church and its impact on social life, King (1994), draws values of good governance, as relevant theoretical and implementation apparatuses to facilitate the debate of a contemporary, transparent theology for social transformation of the DRC people. As discussed in this chapter, a theology for social change in the DRC, in the Kivu Provinces particularly, should be outlined from the groundwork of theology that discourages any form of oppression and dehumanization of humanity and nature. While the Church of Christ in Congo energetically resists violence, it seems to be disengaged from it, as it focuses on its main mandate, preaching spiritual and physical salvation; presenting this as a universal remedy for all difficulties.

## **2.5. Conclusion**

The literature at our disposal has underlined different issues. It consisted of opinions related to the root cause of the conflict and underlined the role of the colonial era as the engine behind the ethnic and political disorder in the DRC. The chapter also pointed out that the DRC invasions have had a tremendous impact on the population. These elements are discussed in detail in the upcoming chapters. This chapter also examined the historical involvement of the Church of Christ in Congo in relation to peace- building in Congo, before and after 1996. The involvement of the Church of Christ in Congo in public affairs started earlier in the 1900s alongside the Roman Catholic Church, under the label of Congo mission, there after 'Congo Protestant Council (CPC) and progressively in the 1970s the Church of Christ in Congo was constitutionally adopted

This chapter further examined the various activities of the Church of Christ in Congo prior to and after the independence of the DRC in 1960. The chapter elaborated on the painful experience left in Congo as a legacy by the colonial rule. This chapter established that national change was part of the Church's task because it consisted of advocating for the weak and the exploited. This chapter also highlighted several of its activities in the DRC, which included caring for victims of sexual violence, disbanding child-soldiers and reconciling opponents. Three other areas were identified and underlined as part of Church failure: "corruption, tribalism and compromise or siding with dictator's regime" (Tshilenga, 2005). This chapter looked at the 2001 post-electoral results that have been singled out as one of the destabilizing aspects constituting the persistence of the conflict in Eastern of the DRC. The chapter ended by claiming that networking also was part of the Church of Christ in Congo values in relationship to other denominations in the development of finding sustainable solutions to the persistent wars in the area. Beyond its commitment to local and national relationships, the Church of Christ in Congo is convinced that peace comes through dialogue and understanding, as long as it is inclusively from the grassroots. The chapter discussed the recurrence of conflicts in the Kivu region and its consequences on the population. The chapter argued that conflicts and mass killings in the DRC are a legacy left by colonial rulers.



## CHAPTER 3:

### METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

#### 3.1 Introduction

Every successful research project is based on a practical and workable methodology that can be applied to achieve the study's set objectives. This thesis utilized a qualitative approach to collect its data through the use of existing literature. It is non-empirical as it used literature as its form of data. Although the researcher originally intended to interview people in the DRC and in the diaspora, due to security reasons and the fragility of peace in the identified areas of research. Although there are other forms of interviews besides face-to-face such as telephonic interviews or use of emails, I felt that to use these methods would not reach the intended targets in the area of research through these means. One of the qualities of this a literature based research project was its flexibility, and that it helped me to attain my objective. Although I was able to turn the study into a literature-based approach, I sought as far as possible to insert myself into the research field as both a producer of the data through reading and remembering my own experiences of the conflict, and as an analyst through reviewing and critiquing. Hence the research focused on a theoretical method of data collection to provide more clarity on how the DRC populations experienced conflict and the response of bodies such as the CCC to the conflict in the Kivu provinces.

The first part of this chapter presents the research design, methodology, and methods of analysis that were engaged during the study. Silverman (2000) describes the role or the importance of methodology by claiming that it outlines how one will go about learning the phenomenon while the methods are the techniques that are utilized to assemble the data. The indication in this unit is to clarify how data was obtained, tested and presented throughout the study and to position it in the context of the debate through the use of theoretical framework which is the second part of the chapter.

### 3.2 Qualitative Research

Bryman (2012:380) proposes three categories when talking about a qualitative approach to research. First, the relationship to theory is inductive because a theory is produced through research. Second, the epistemological position is interpretive, as it stresses the understanding of the social world by examining the way the participants understand the world. Lastly, as the ontological position is constructionist, the social phenomena are understood as something that is continually achieved by social players (Bryman 2012:710).

While the study identifies with all the three approaches, it relates more to the inductive position. Bryman notes that it is not rare that the abdicative thinking is used, meaning that the researcher moves between the theory and research more effortlessly than in a strictly inductive method (Bryman 2012:401). Swinton and Mowat (2006) speak on swift, 'method' referring to it as specific techniques that may be used when gathering and analysing data. In accordance with Shank's (2002) definition, this research employed a qualitative approach because it provides a deeper analysis of the day-to-day experiences and challenges. The researcher was also encouraged by Denzin and Lincoln (2003:1) to choose the qualitative method because it offers significant insights in analysing one's objectives to the point that they become active stakeholders in transforming people's lives and the societies they live in.

A qualitative method was also used to explore and learn what approaches, concerns and opinions the CCC hoped to use towards its peacebuilding interventions (Domegan and Fleming, 2007; Hopkins, 1980). The strength of a qualitative research method is that it permits the researcher to discover a complex phenomenon; in this case, the role of the Church of Christ in Congo's peacebuilding mission in the Kivu region in a holistic approach could be that phenomenon. Lastly, it tackled the propensity of the researcher to impose personal assumptions or biases, conclusions, and results from the data; thus it obviates prior conclusions as viewed by Wiersma (1995: 211-212).

Fundamentally, the main purpose of qualitative research centres on an explanatory approach to social reality and in the narrative of the lived experiences of human beings (Creswell, 2009). Due to the opposing ways through which social realities can be approached, a crucial duty of this study was to find the best method to design how to approach the phenomenon intended to be explored. This was to be understood by having an operational research design that is able to distinguish the kind of evidence needed to effectively address the research questions, objectives, and problem statement (Mouton, 2008:49). Debatably, the value of a research

design is such that it guarantees that whatever evidence is collected in the course of analysis should empower the researcher to efficiently answer whatever queries the study intends to confront (Creswell, 2013). The next unit of the chapter is an exposition of a theoretical framework, data analysis methods and ethical considerations prepared throughout the research. The ethical considerations controlling this study were embedded in protecting the autonomy of the different consulted materials and ensuring that they were well quoted where necessary during the collection and analysis of data.

The materials were systematically searched for significance as Onwuegbuzie and Leech, (2007) suggested. When the data collected was examined, it yielded a coherent account of the outcome of the intended results (Green et al., 2007). Thus, the analysis of data was engaged in order to establish definitions on the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in contributing to sustainable peace in Kivu Provinces. The study used both thematic and content analysis to analyse the data drawn from the literature on the role of CCC in addressing the conflict in the Kivu provinces.

### **3.3 Positionality and Reflexivity**

A significant challenge in doing this research of this nature is dealing with the self. As Reinharz (1997) stipulated, the word self-translated in the Greek ego is the key fieldwork device and the personal identity of a researcher that can affect his collaboration with the interviewees and affect the data. As a researcher, I tried as much as I could on my part, to be contentious and deal with impartiality, as it developed to be my anxiety all through the stages of the study. As a Christian researcher, a pastor, and a victim of the 1996 socio-economic calamity in the Kivu Province, in my country, I had no option than to constantly reflect on my role as a researcher, at the same time as an exegete of the thoughts of others who have researched the same situation. As hard as I tried, I could not be neutral.

Nevertheless, as Denscombe (2005) elaborated on a similar situation, there are certain personal attributes that are ‘absolutes’ and which cannot be changed on a whim to satisfy the needs of the research interview. Sex, age, ethnic origin, accent, even our professional status, all are characteristics of ‘self’ which, for practical strength of mind, cannot be distorted. With this concept in mind, qualitative research, do not allow me to detach my personality from creating and taking data. In other words, knowledge is imparted within us as through dialogue, we also participate and exchange ‘what we have’ and the ideas we obtain from others. Despite the

presence of all the necessary make-up mentioned above, I determined to maintain the principle of objectivity by decreasing the impact of my personal identity. Denscombe (2005) suggests, “Compliance and neutrality are the order of the day. The authenticity of my experience implies that it is not easy to detach my views totally, from what other researchers are saying. In this research, the views of academics and assembled materials replace the voices of my respondents. I consider their concept as active participants in the research processes. Their views and interests are somehow stories that I could present or ignore.

However, Kenny Goodman (undated) argues that dealing with self implies thinking hard about how well you actually, honestly know yourself. It means trying to write down my own characteristics, values, and qualities in order to get the best out of myself. This is only possible when I take the time to study myself and really know who I am and be able to define myself. Taking time to research, myself and getting to know myself properly makes all the difference to how I shall approach my work, make it more effective. It will also help me to resolve various issues that are holding me back professionally. I will be doing something I love to do because I will be passionate about it and will desperately throw myself into it’ll be engaged, inspired and motivated to make a difference to my own life, and those of others around me. However, dealing with self also depends on the motive or motivation.

The self in my thesis refers to my own struggle to find an appropriate research design. Just like most other researchers, an attempt to research within the field of my own vocation and my own loss. I struggled to find means to draw out, clearly express and decide on an appropriate approach. In the process of developing the thesis, my intention was to design a picture, which at least would untangle some of the complexities of my research and remain neutral. It was not always possible to separate my role as a church leader and my position as a researcher. My desire also was to disclose my personal anxieties and memories, without feeling a sense of fear. My personal engagement was to express my understanding of a reality lived and experienced during the 1996 invasion and establish a necessary reason, for adopting a narrative theological approach.

This process brought me into awareness that my constructed plan of reality, through my interpretation and my resourcefully skilled text contributed into understanding the power of personal narrative and how it connected me into the structure of a wider world study of the culture of durable peace in the East of DRC that I was researching. Patton (2002:116) terms the concept as an idea of story of personal narrative that overlap with our earlier examination

during our auto ethnography analysis in which the researcher's story becomes part of the inquiry into the conflict phenomenon of interest. This narrative approach helped me understand that the applied methods were an appropriate means of telling my story. Ellis and Bochner (2000:734) explain the use of third-person, passive voice as the standard, as elements which give more weight to abstract and categorical knowledge than to the direct testimony of personal narrative and the first-person voice.

The fact that some sort of personal accountability are not stressed on, the use of first person active voice brings with it a degree of risk because it exposes feelings, beliefs and attitudes. It also leaves one open to criticism because of a perceived lack of objectivity. However, if the perceived reality of the writer is presented as is, in an open way, i.e. without claims to be the truth, then the story conveys the message, that is the meaning and guides the reader in the construction of the reality. After being aware, that I was a subject and at the same time an object of the research, I also understood that it was equally possible to be both an insider and an outsider within the phenomenon I was examining.

As a researcher, I identify myself as a victim of the conflict in the Kivu provinces. Writing as an insider, who has been affected by the war and forced to relocate to other parts of Africa as a result of the conflict in the region and country as a whole. I wish to also discuss some of the challenges of the conflicts in the Kivu regions to humanity and how it has also contributed to migration. The 21st century has experienced an intensification of international migration that continues to draw a lot of attention from policy makers. As a result of the impact and increased movement, people crossed national borders to search for safety and opportunities in order to live a better life. Morley (2001) argues that the globalized context of migration is affecting the world to an extent that it is becoming almost insolvable due to its cultural demarcated and spatial bounds. Nevertheless, Mattes *et al* (2000) have indicated that Africans migrants, including refugees, make a valuable contribution to the country's economic growth and development, and they bring in linguistic and cultural diversity in the countries that receive them. According to Karim (2007) "the notion of borders frequently observed through the lens of relocation from the different parts of the world, the word 'change' has repeatedly been restricted to "non-white" people who continue to consider themselves as minorities in their new countries of habitation." Morley's (2001) view is that "the contemporary international migration development that continues to attract a lot of attention from policy makers as a result of the global impact and increased movement of people crossing national borders in search of safety and opportunities for better livelihood, the globalized context of migration and

information, is affecting the world to an extent that it will become almost indivisible as far as it is demarcated and spatial bounds are concerned culturally.”

Cohen (1997) indicates that the Congolese diasporas, as a group of Africans, have been a victim of labour, trade, and cultural imperialism to mention a few. In some countries, Congolese immigrants have gone through collective trauma, banishment, servitude, due to enslavement mentality, poverty, denigration, exploitation and the loss of self-respect. It is believed by most of them that faith has helped them to stand firm against different sorts of humiliations. Their experience and contribution in a foreign land are historically presented in the section that follows.

### **3.4 Experiences of Congolese diasporas in peacebuilding**

The history of diasporas in bringing change in their country of origin has been increasingly acknowledged in the past decade. Often of their own accord and effort, diaspora groups are concerned with poverty reduction and economic growth for development in their home country. For common understanding, it is important to describe the word. ‘Diaspora’ comes from the Greek verb ‘speiro’ which is interpreted as ‘to sow’ and its proposition ‘dia’ denoting ‘over’ (Cohen, 2007).

Diaspora is literally translated from Greek by the word ‘Tölölyan’ (1996) as a scattering of a people from its original homeland. According to Butler (2001), although people have been in endless motion, their waves did not continuously result in ‘Diasporas’. Tsagarousianou (1996) affirms that just recently the term ‘Diaspora’ was systematically introduced and used in academic and policy discourses. Horst (2006) offers an explanation related to the concept ‘diaspora’ by referring to it as “emigrant minority groups that have been detached from the birthplace but have a collective remembrance, trust in an ultimate return, therefore are dedicated to the preservation or rebuilding of their motherland, due to their combined identity, group awareness and cohesion.” Many Congolese left the country before and after independence. Their concern is, in fact, to see the transformation of their country according to their experience they get in countries of refuge.

Diaspora communities are described by N’Gambwa (2011) as: “an unexploited resource for development. This implies a cluster of personalities with resilient expressive influences to their homelands with intense curiosity in its political, economic, and social well-being.” Diasporas are partners in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Bekoe and Michelle Swearingen (2009)

label diasporas as being a double-edged sword able to promote peace at the same time incite conflict.

Demart and Bodeux (2013) indicate that diasporas are composed of pressure groups such as those now commonly known as combatants (Fighters). They are spread all over the world especially in big cities such as Brussels, Paris, London, and other main cities of America, Canada, and Australia. In South Africa, they are mostly found in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban. Characterized by their opposition to the actual regime in Kinshasa, although lacking open support base within the DRC, diasporas are politically-active and made up of representatives within political parties, political-community movements, and pressure groups that emerged in the early 2000s. These pressure groups target the political power in Kinshasa expecting to see a real transformation taking place in the DRC. They are known as fighters (the Combatants). According to Dorina Bekoe and Michelle Swearingen (2009), while it is possible for some in the diaspora to support conflict and play destructive roles in conflict, often by providing support for warring factions, they do this as a reaction to display their grievances. Kaldor (2001) and Lyons (2007) connect to the claim by arguing that the “undesirable effects of Diasporas’ inspire on conflict backgrounds.” They describe them as posing a danger of perpetration and trans-nationalisation of the war. They stress the fact that diasporas possibly will not only offer factual and political provisions to the conflicting parties, but they also transfer resistance to conflict and replicate them within the diaspora.

Nevertheless, Bercovitch (2007) argues that diasporas are able to contribute in various ways to peacebuilding and create structures and tools which will guarantee not only obedience with the terms of peace settlement but also a vital and more peaceful plan that will thwart the conflict from repeating. As far as conflict and non-conflict settings of the country of origin are concerned, it is important to understand that peacebuilding is a political scheme that most members of the diasporas would not or cannot wish to engage in amenably, depending on prospects and restrictions encountered in the motherland. Kaldor (2001) and Duffield (2002) argue that, as a political task, it often creates inner divisions and fragmentation within the diaspora, resulting in a variety of issues. For Cochrane (2007), diaspora contributions to peacebuilding processes are embedded in the engagement of their own imaginations that consist either of promoting lucrative negotiation procedures or subsidize to economic and social improvement, thus generating the grounds for sustainable peace. Therefore, it is my wish

as a refugee that the diasporas contribute to ways of addressing the challenges faced by people in the Kivu provinces through this academic work.

### **3.5 Theoretical Framework 1: Conflict transformation**

The theoretical viewpoint shapes the outline for this thesis and the structure that the study is understood within. The theoretical framework of this study is conflict transformation which includes concepts such as peacebuilding, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Different aspects and characteristics of these concepts will be explained below, but first I begin with conflict transformation theory and its practicality as a predominant theory in peacebuilding.

Conflict transformation is the key theoretical framework that this study implemented to address the opinions of advocates of conflict transformation and peace research such as Galtung (1969), Kriesberg, (2004), Lederach (2005), Ramsbothams, Woodhouse and Curle (2011), who argue that the sources of war and difficulties of sustaining peace are so complex that no single approach can be used to address them. Conflict transformation and resolution developed as a non-violent reaction in the contribution approach to “resolving” rather than covering or managing conflicts. According to Lambourne (2004:21), after the era of the Cold War, there had been an increase in intra-state conflicts, particularly in Africa due to poor leadership and frustration of the peoples’ lack of basic needs (Connolly 2012). This led to numerous peace researchers being preoccupied with the quest to comprehend the sources and non-violent ways of terminating conflicts. This concept is embraced by scholars such as Johan Galtung (1964). It is with this kind of approach that most researchers have found the development of conflict transformation theory as an arena of study and occupation. As an arena of research into what sorts of war and how to non-violently end it. Lederach (1995b:17) claims that “conflict transformation arose as a quest for an acceptable etymology to enlighten the peace-making venture”. It became “a reasonably new discovery within the wider field of peace and conflict studies” (Botes, 2003: i).

For that purpose, theorists such as Miall (2005:4) are of the view that any intervention in any conflict should exceed “reframing of position and the identification of win-win outcomes” because, when violence or war breaks up, many approaches of intervener’s tend to address bitterness between top conflicting leaders and militant group leaders without addressing the root cause(s) of war that frustrated basic human rights and needs (Sandole, 2010:9). For Auvinen and Kivimaki (1996:3, when conflict arises, peacebuilding players should strive for positive changes instead of sustaining the demands of the fighting parties. These authors argue



that there are other victims that are more important and involved in a conflict, than at the level of conflict.

Likewise, Spence (2001:45) claims that conflict peace players are supposed to be flexible, advice-giving and collaborative, working from a background of the root causes of conflict". Additionally, Miall (2005:4) is of the opinion that "conflict transformation has to be a process of engaging with and renovating the interactions, interests, dialogues, and if needed, the very constitution of society that backs the persistence of violent conflict". This resulted in the formation of a positive-negative peace theory. Positive-negative peace theory views conflict transformation in terms of violence as direct and indirect violence, which also requires an expanded understanding of peace. Galtung (1964: 2) was adopting settings that draw closer to peace while avoiding violence. That is why he conceptualized negative peace as the absence of violence and positive peace as the integration of human society. Nevertheless, he contended that these two dimensions of peace are intimate; one leads into the other. Galtung (1964) maintains that negative peace is characterized by ceasefires with the intervention of the world's dominant nations such as the UN or NATO, equipped with their coercive military power; trying to find sustainable peace and put an end to war or violence. Sandole (2010:9) espouses the same idea and argues that "negative peace might be an essential condition for positive peace although it is not adequate." According to Sandole (2010), negative peace lacks changing deep-rooted causes and conditions of conflict which might arise.

When violence or war ends, many strategies of conflict resolution tend to address antagonisms between top leaders without addressing the root cause(s) of war. According to Galtung, effective conflict resolution requires engagement with all actors in the violence (victim and perpetrators) within the society at large, policy makers who shape policies and governance of a conflicting society (Staub, 2005). Modern conflict transformation strategies focus mainly on termination of war, drafting constitution and electioneering without analysing and understanding the deep-rooted causes of conflict and all the affected parties" (Wellerstein, 2007:13). As a result, conflict transformation theory (MCTR) in the field of conflict and peace research was adopted, to mediate different opponents; this is relevant to this study because of the strategic method that was adopted by the Church of Christ in Congo. The Church took the initiative of consulting different groups and bringing them to the table of negotiation using influential leadership at the grass root in various communities. The practical attempt of the CCC was supported by what is known as practical theology as described in the following section.

### 3.6 Theoretical Framework 2: Practical theology

The particular major theological procedure utilised so far originates from practical theology and allowed the researcher to think as a person of faith. According to Heitink (1999:10), there is a necessity to keep in mind the role of theology which consists of “the unity of knowledge, faith, and action”. The kind and context of the research at my disposal, which focuses on the conflict in the Eastern region of the DRC, and the approach to restore peace, contains some fundamentals of appropriate theologies. It is therefore vital to understand what theology and practical theology is all about. Farley (cited in De Gruchy, 1986: 48-49) explains theology as “self-control, a self-confident academic initiative of understanding” and “applied know-how essential to ministerial labour.” Tracy (cited in Heitink, 1999:118), supports this idea by stipulating that: “Theology is the self-restraint that expresses reciprocally critical relationships between the sense and truth of a clarification of the Christian element and the connotation and the truth of an interpretation of the contemporary situation.” For Plant and Weis (2015:54), the reproduction of theology in our context is prepared from the “performances and involvements of a specific faith community”; in this study ‘the Church of Christ in Congo in DRC’.

Hence, it requires biblical, natural human rational and church belief standards without exceeding the limits of human comprehension. This is why Barth (cited in De Gruchy, 2015:128) underlines theology “as belief in search of grasping.” This research argues that theological reflection in this context will emphasise how a theory of conflict transformation is important in determining the Congolese struggle and institute sustainable peace in eastern DRC. Consequently, the theological mission of the long debated existing condition of the disaster in the DRC will reflect on the concept of ‘sustainable peace’ as an approach of determining the war and implementing defensible peace. The attention to practical theology is on the appreciative work of God’s exploit which is facilitated by human achievement through faith. Practical theology is grounded in an explanation of the concept and praxis of both the Christian information and modern condition (Heitink, 1999). Hence, it is possible to claim that social complications such as ‘corporate comforts and unrestricted morality’ in current civilization are the purview of practical theology. To sum up the idea, Campbell (2000:77) states that: “*Practical theology is the study of both the clergy and public structures and specific organizations, with an intention to transform them.*”

Expanding the concept, Osmer (2008:12-13) emphasizes that, as a theological restraint, *“practical theology constantly constructs an appropriate bridge between the sub-disciplines of academic of itself and between the academy and the church.”* Actually, what Osmer (2008:163-64) is saying, is that practical theology is involved in an intra-disciplinary negotiation with other perceptions within the same arenas and interdisciplinary discussion with viewpoints of other fields. Ballard and Pritchard (1996) argue that “practical theology is often connected to other theological disciplines while each division of theology reliantly draws on and services the work of the other.” This means that the three theological methods used in this research should not be viewed as separately used.

Practical theology is often employed in different settings to represent different aspects of different situations. According to Ballard and Pritchard (1996), “practical theology is problematic.” However, most descriptions and clarifications of the theory of applied theology as delivered by academics. For instance, Forrester (1990) points to applied theology as “discipline that is anxious with knowing the reality in relation to exploiting.” Practical theology targets exchange between theory and practice, whereby theological consideration not only points to exploit but likewise comes out of practice.

This view suggests two important elements, ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. It is, therefore, possible to assert that “practical theology is a specific restraint, which deals explicitly with people’s existence, and practices inside the Church and in society.” Practical theology extends its service not only in the life of the cleric, but also in the community, and in the individual to favourably recover the past and develop a theology for the future. From this point of view, it is also possible to argue that practical theology involves the individual outside the church, to reflect on the historical spirituality to expand the current theological understanding. Practical theology is not merely concerned with ‘practicality’ and opposing ‘theory’. This study will use both theologies to systematically guide the process of responding to peacebuilding in the DRC Kivu region (Kothari 2004:8). This study appreciates the fact that it is possible to have different methods and dimensions of viewing the gradual and proxy sources of war in the DRC. The aim of including the theological approach is to demonstrate how theological reflection can be utilised to discuss the role of the CCC’s peacebuilding approach in the DRC’s conflict, particularly in the Kivu Provinces. Therefore, this study contends that even though the CCC is a non-state peace player, its contribution to peacebuilding may enhance a sustainable peace process in the DRC’s conflict in one way or another.

### **3.7 Data collection**

As expressed early in the introduction, due to circumstances that surrounded the nature of this study such as security risks in the areas designated for this study (North and South Kivu), my lack of international valid travelling documents, coupled with financial constraints and the University permission to travel to the field site, it was not possible to undertake interviews or to do empirical field work. While the study is qualitative in nature, data collection that involves gaining complex details about a social phenomenon that includes witnessing feelings and thought developments of participants (Creswell, 2012), was not done. Instead, to complete my study, I opted to do draw from relevant existing popular and academic literature, coupled with my personal experience as a pastor who worked in Kivu during the conflicts and as a victim of displacement that resulted from the conflict.

Because of the conditions and limitations outlined above, collecting information from different member Churches of the CCC was not an easy task. For this reason, I opted to ask the regional representative leader for assistance to collect relevant data needed for the topic of this study. This produced other challenges that needed to be given a lot of thought. While I am one of the Church leaders in one of the Churches connected with the CCC, namely the Community of Pentecostal Church in Central Africa (CEPAC), I needed to seek permission to access data about church activity within the Kivu regional areas of operation. The focus of my study was related to the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in contributing to sustainable peace in affected areas in Kivu Provinces. Since my work was limited to the Kivu Provinces, I had to get authorization from the regional leader of the CCC (see attached in the appendix at the end of this study, the letter for permission to collect relevant data).

The nature of this research required that I construct an experimental or exploratory breakdown. Hence, through the collecting of qualitative data from academic literature, it became possible for this study to frame the complexity of the phenomenon. I also consulted materials sustainable peace produced by non-governmental organizations, humanitarian, and relief agencies, government materials, and a fair number of church-based sources on peace-building. Through drawing on such a wide range of sources, I was able to construct a social history of the violence in Kivu and the impact it had on those who suffered through it. I was also able to get access to material demonstrating the methodology used by the Church of Christ in Congo – although this was mostly gathered from the internet as a result of organizations that focused on local people participation in peacebuilding from grassroots to address violence and other important matters such as land, migration, and sexual violence as an important part in peacebuilding. An

exploratory study such as this strives to discover a particular ground by analysing a scope of available data that is paralleled, distinguished and examined.

For this type of research, as Garbers (1996:287) also claims data is collected from current primary and secondary sources. Therefore, this study was prepared qualitatively through an exploration of views, insights, and attitudes of different scholars in relation to the CCC's peacebuilding contributions in the DRC's Kivu provinces conflict. It was undertaken in a method that helped to produce what Domegan and Fleming (2007) call "rich data" as far as the topic under study is concerned. As a qualitative method, the exploratory approach enabled this study to understand the complex phenomena related to the role of the CCC's peacebuilding interventions which were carried in a holistic approach (Magilvy, 2011:152). Additionally, it accommodated the affinity of the researcher so as to incorporate personal expectations or experiences and conclusions from the data.

### **3.8 Analysis of Data**

This analytic section concerns establishing order, structure, and meaning in the data obtained. Throughout this process, appropriate themes and outlines are identified within the reflected data as also expressed by Ngulube (2009); Corbin and Strauss, (2008). In this study, content and thematic analysis were the focal processes that were adopted to activate the process. Krippendorff (2004: 9) describes content analysis as "any technique for making implications by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics within a text". For Lasswell (1949:120), content analysis pursues to find out "who says what, to whom, why, to what extent and with what effect?" Weitzmann, (1995:95) on his opinion perceives that "in any content analysis, the task is to make interpretations from data to certain aspects of their context and to defend these implications in terms of the knowledge about the stable factors in the system of interest".

Content analysis in this study meant that data be presented under developing themes. The information was taken in different forms to facilitate the researcher in situating data in the research context. The significant reason for doing this was to outline the object of inquiry (Altheide, 1996: 14), and to position the data in the framework of the main aspects of this study.

In this study, validity and reliability were grasped by observing Lincoln and Guba's (2000) four constructs including; credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability.

Credibility was established through the exhibition of a complete interpretation of this study in a very truthful way. The researcher attained dependability through the protection and retaining an impeccable description of the data analysis process of this study. Therefore, the researcher respected the fact that academics can have different views on certain issues.

The dependability of this study was attained by the purposive nature of the authors and sources selected: the researcher used authors and sources that he considered rational about the topic. In relation to transferability, the researcher assured that the conclusions of this study be practical to other contexts: contexts in which peacebuilding peace players can draw from the knowledge of the CCC on its country's conflicts. For example, the discoveries of this study can be applied to peacebuilding interventions in the Great Lakes region and among other conflict-torn nations. It is important to stress that this research does not generalize its discoveries but it is adding to an exceptional body of knowledge on the contribution of the CCC in peacebuilding interventions in the Kivu Provinces. Conformability in this study ascertained that the researcher reflects the real reactions and viewpoints of authors.

As a practitioner, international student and coming from a country that is marred with identity conflicts, the views from different authors as presented in this study documented the researcher's subjective self in this study. The researcher hails from the South Kivu, a region that is yet to be restored from the impacts of 1996- 2016 violence. The above information has assisted this study to understand its research question on what the CCC considers to be proxy and immediate causes of war in the DRC.

Ethical considerations should be taken into account when undertaking any nature of research. Diener and Crandall cited in Bryman (2012:135) identified four different types that can be employed as ethical framework: There is need to find out: "(1) is there disadvantage to the participant, (2) is there absence of knowledgeable consent, (3) is there an invasion of privacy and (4) is there dishonesty involved". These concerns have been preserved during the research. The department of Religion and Social Science at UKZN has approved the study. The study was at both personal levels, meaning some personal narratives were shared to explain how the situation in the Kivu remained.

### **3.9. Conclusion**

This chapter deliberated on methodological approaches that were used during this study. The qualitative method using an exploratory research design was adopted as a research strategy. This chapter discussed the rationale behind the used methodology for assembling, analysing

and interpreting data. The focus was to introduce selected desktop material in line with the research question. The study is designed to find out how the Church of Christ in Congo was practically involved in contributing to sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces. The used literature has channelled the study towards CCC networking as a forum that takes together different denominations at the grassroots of the conflict. The data gathered from written documents were considered as the main sources of data.

As explained in the first chapter the reason of missing the fieldwork and interview was because of security situation in the areas of interest for this topic, notably North and South Kivu, the lack of proper travelling documents, the abstention of visa to the DRC and the financial restraint attached to it were the main cause of not doing the fieldwork. An exploratory method was adopted to describe and analyse data collected from various researchers and material sources. The chapter advocated that peace players not only need to end wars but also address the sources and causes of the situations that trigger conflicts.

For the sake of providing a holistic background of considering the interests of the CCC's peacebuilding contribution in the Kivu Provinces, the chapter discharged the views of practicality. This study revealed that in its traditional conceptualization the CCC is considered as a non-state actor who possibly has no considerable role in the peacebuilding process. The chapter debated research design, methodology, and methods, data analysis and presented the CCC in varied themes. The chapter defended the use of the qualitative study methodology for this study. I am confident that the data collated from the various sources represents a rich sample of information about the CCC's contribution to the DRC peacebuilding process. The review of significant documents on the topic was used to gather data. Data gathered was analysed through content and narrative analysis, presented by means of diverse themes, depending on the researcher's level of understanding political and ideological styles. The chapter ends by underscoring the ethical considerations that guided this study and its methodological limitations. The next chapter leads us to the background of the conflict in the DRC with a special focus on the Kivu provinces as indicated in the topic of this study.

## CHAPTER 4

### HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT IN THE DRC WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON KIVU PROVINCES

#### 4.1 Introduction

The DRC's struggle goes beyond civilian protection or armed groups. Externally, it has been characterized as Africa's First World War with its foreign armies and invasions. The perpetual killing and dying that seems to achieve nothing has turned the Kivu provinces into the battleground of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where to some of those who have fought it, it is a matter of the very survival of nations, while to others it is the enormous wealth that drives them. Nevertheless, what are the true roots of this conflict, and what maintains it? The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the conflict in Kivu provinces. This chapter explores historical antecedents of the conflicts in the DRC; specifically, the chapter explores the role played by rebel groups that continue to cause disturbances in the Kivu Provinces. This chapter takes a chronological approach to outline the conflict in the DRC, and the role played by the various actors. Although the focus of this thesis is on the crisis in Kivu Provinces, it will be of great importance to grasp the context from as far back as the post-colonial era of 1960 until the current dispensation.

The unending war in the DRC led to an interruption in the day-to-day activities of the populace; the United to End Genocide, (2015) article affirms that “this is evident in the number of countless deaths and destruction of economic livelihoods due to wars between 1996 and 2003.” Obviously, the people of the then Zaire were tired of the dictatorial regime of Mobutu and wanted political change. In his article, “Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe” Prunier, (ND) seems to indicate that a revolt commanded by Laurent-Désiré Kabila with a coalition of rebel forces of five different groups, including armed forces from Rwanda and Uganda, emerged in 1996, starting from the Kivu and heading to the capital city of Kinshasa. The broader goal was to overthrow Mobutu, subsequent to the unsuccessful peace debates between him and Kabila on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1997, prompting Mobutu to flee the country. Laurent Désiré Kabila proclaimed himself President in May 2007, centralised power around himself and the AFDL, and named the country like the Democratic Republic of Congo.



After Kabila revealed the hidden agenda of his allies, he thanked them by sending them back to their countries of origin that led to a new rebellion backed by Rwanda and Uganda sparking a second war known as the Great War of Africa. The array of the resource necessity organized by the Belgian foreign law joined with the deficiency of a constitutionally responsible government throughout the liberation period, stimulated the fading and shattering of the then Zairian administration. The concept is evidently using the example of the overall situation of the invasion of the eastern part of Congo. As Laurent Kabila extended his leadership, he was informed of the hidden agenda of his allies that included “overthrowing him and extending the ‘Hima’ kingdom, as well as annexing the mineral-rich part of the two regional powers” (Gondola, 2002:169). According to Nest, Grignon and Kisangani (2006:19) speaking on characteristic of a failed state added that “Laurent Kabila’s short period was a time of political, social and economic reconfiguration as he worked hard to increase revenues and rebuild state capacity to consolidate its authority and control over strong forces throughout the country, in order to provide public goods while increasing the legitimacy of his government to the population.” Subsequently, when Kabila was murdered in January 2001, his adopted son, Joseph Kabila, seized power. Since then there has been progress, the cessation of hostilities in some parts of the country, the holding of general elections was possible throughout the country in 2006 and 2011.

The interconnectedness of actors in the conflict of the DRC has made the country’s situation not only complex but also difficult to reduce to one single frame of analysis that unfolds their inclusion to national, regional and international dimensions. Sherman (2001a:25) claims that “the DRC’s intertwined conflict has taken a regional nature due to the involvement of several central African actors resulting in a multifaceted security dilemma.”. Forces involved in the DRC conflict included the Congolese Armed Forces with its external and domestic pro-government allies comprising the Maimai militias and the former members of the Forces Army of Rwanda (FAR). Other important actors in the DRC conflict are the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Ugandan Army. As stated above, the conflict in the DRC has been termed by most researchers as highly complex due to the fact that it involves a variety of actors. Cunningham (2013:1) has classified it as “the second most violent country and the third most fatal over the course of the data sets coverage (1997- 2013) was concerned.” According to Cunningham (2013): “The M23 rebel group which often interacted with Congolese military

forces and UN peacekeepers, constituted the most violent non-state group in the country since its emergence in April 2012 in east DRC.” The Quarterly African Studies Volume 1, *Issue 3* (1997) also Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers (2004: 397) remarked that the “nature of the Zairian State implicating Mobutu and his reign, the land and the issue of migration have contributed in transforming the DRC in to becoming a battle field for most foreign political players and many arms groups taking advantage of a state that has been characterized as weak.” The Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF, ND) stated that: “Armed individuals are just one portion of the difficult problem plaguing the DRC; they also remarked that the inability of the government in South Kivu to bring some sort of sanity in the region has further complicated issues.” Rotberg (ND) has explained that “the DRC is among the world’s most failed states.” He noted that “unsuccessful states do not offer important governmental goods” (Rotberg (ND)). Rotberg further describes a failed state as a leadership that is no longer competent or willing to deliver important services to its people.

## **4.2 Factors behind the invasion of the DRC**

The chapter looks into the factors behind the multiple invasions of the DRC by both foreign and local actors; the outcome of the 1996 invasion as marking the end of the Mobutu regime; the invasion of the DRC by surrounding African countries; the interconnectedness of actors in the conflict of the DRC, the effects of the conflict on infrastructure and natural resources in Kivu provinces and **the** history of impunity in the DRC.

### *4.2.1. Foreign influence*

Kastfelt (2005:2) claims that:

“Certain nation states in Africa, such as Southern Sudan, northern Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC are currently considered as the sight of violent civil wars and killings. Their activities are considered to be inherited from imperialists’ brutality, and related to the historical impact of slavery, slave workforce, plantation labour, plantation horror and combative gun culture which all have to be engaged and accounted for when clarifying the existing condition. Thus, African conflicts have multifaceted histories supported by differently portrayed motives and outcomes.” For the DRC the struggle then found its peak at the assassination of Lumumba in 1961. For Bayart (1994: xii) “foreign interests fuelled the conflict in the DRC.” This assertion is supported by the fact that immediately after the declaration of independence, the country descended into

conflict ignited by the colonialists that were still struggling over the control of the DRC resources by trying to neutralize the force of regionalist ideologies. The colonialists managed to create antagonistic blocs between the Congolese, hence the war belonged to the western imperialists struggling for possession of the DRC's mining industry. According to Gondola (2002:132), "the nationalist approach of the independent fighters in the DRC led to fears amongst the Western imperialists that their economic interests would be threatened if the DRC attained independence. Reactively, they decided to employ three strategies aimed at abating the autonomist movements: the killing of national leaders under the pretext that they were pro-communist, propaganda against local leaders, and the fostering of ethnic divisions."

Thus, it is clear why the western colonialists aggressively managed to create more or less self-protective measures by using Moise Tshombe whom they persuaded to create a break-away state. They also promised to support him to stage tribal disagreements between local tribes from other provinces so that territorial unity would be fragmented, and the agenda of the eradication of colonial conditions called for by Lumumba in his independence speech would not be implemented. Gondola (2002:108) further argues that:

"the country was plunged into chaos due to the forced regional tribal created among leaders struggling for power after the departure of the Belgian administrators. The country was left with almost no skilled bureaucrats, until 1956 when it was able to get the first graduate from University."

Fundamentally, no one in the new nation had a clear idea of how to cope with a nation state of such size. Deliberative votes in 1960 presented Patrice Lumumba as prime minister whereas Joseph Kasavubu was elected president of the then Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since this transitory period of freedom, democracy started to disentangle. On 5 July 1960 Congolese armed forces rose up against European officers, which resulted in a rampage breaking out in the capital city.

Gondola's (2002:14-15) understanding is that when the richest province of the DRC, notably Katanga and Kasai, withdrew to form their own country under Moise Tshombe on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1960 and 8<sup>th</sup> August 1960, imperialists tried to restore order by sending paramilitaries and mercenaries to protect their interests. Nevertheless, Lumumba (1961) in reference to this strategy exclaimed in the paraphrased statement, "We know the objectives of the west.

Yesterday it divided us at the level of tribes, clans, and chiefs. Today because Africa is freeing itself, it wishes to create antagonistic blocs and satellites and from that state of Cold War accentuates the divisions with a view to maintaining its eternal trusteeship". In his capacity as Prime Minister, Lumumba stretched his hands towards the USSR for support. Writing on the assassination of Lumumba, Ludo (2001:1) claimed that "Colonel Joseph Mobutu ousted and detained Lumumba. On 17 January 1961 he ordered that Lumumba be imprisoned in Elisabethville (now Lubumbashi) in Katanga," where, according to the media, he was beaten and obliged to eat copies of his own speeches. After being tortured along with two others, he died in custody. This turbulence and upheaval overwhelmed the regime until November 1965, when Mobutu, by then Commanding Officer in Chief of the national army, took power and declared himself Head of State of the DRC. He rapidly combined his power of incumbency and crusaded to remain unchallenged as president until 1970.

In a movement of traditional consciousness, Mobutu retitled the country the Republic of Zaire in 1971 and obliged residents to embrace African names and do away with foreign names. Absolute peace and stability triumphed until 1977 and 1978, when Katanga rebels, established in Angola, sprang a sequence of attacks (Shaba I and II) into the Shaba (Katanga) area. The rebels were defeated and according to Gondola (2002), "Mobutu effectively retained peaceful governance throughout his period despite resistance from some parties such as the "Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social" (UDPS), which looked dynamic and had the support of a large part of the populace." His efforts to suppress these political parties attracted substantial global criticism, but he succeeded in keeping the then Zaire a one-party state until the 1980s. Internal and outside pressures on Mobutu intensified throughout the late 1989 and early 1990; to the extent that Mobutu was enfeebled by sequences of internal protests and by intensified worldwide criticism of his government's human rights abuses that negatively affected the economy.

His administration became notable for gross exploitations of the nation's resources and brazen corruption. Due to further pressure from within and outside the DRC, a multi-party arrangement that would open up the country to other presidential candidates and adjustments in the country's constitution was constructed. The democratic adjustments did not do much to quell the unrest in the country as pockets of demonstrations continued and the military joined the demonstrations by staging a protest for their unpaid salaries in September 1991. The political condition in the eastern area of the DRC became aggravated by the existence of a large

number of Hutus and Tutsis in the Kivu province, raising the tension among the local residents. Although their position has continuously been a source of argument between the eastern residents of the DRC, the new upsurge of political 'invaders' from Rwanda, led to additional tension in both North and Southern Kivu.

The magnitude of violence, intimidation, and killing increased, and the situation in eastern Congo was exacerbated. Despite many meetings of peace by the international community, the situation went from bad to worse. The inadequate development of critical restructuring in justice, security, land and meagre governance; the consecutive armed movements which were unsuccessful in eradicating foreign and national armed groups, and the people's suffering, triggered conflict and great scale dislocations. A series of disasters developed. The failure of the many attempts of both the government and other foreign peace players was due to them ignoring the key roots of violence. According to Oxfam (2011:145), the true cost of the conflict was witnessed while control mechanisms over people continually shifted between armed players, keeping people trapped in between, and causing them to be the most vulnerable to human rights violations. There was a need for intervention, and the Church of Christ in Congo responded to this critical obligation. The geographical location of Kivu provinces exposes it to multiple sufferings such as the one that took place in Rwanda, in 1994.

Consequently, the DRC became a country of refuge for people affected by violence in the aforementioned countries; their porous borders allowed the penetration of foreign mercenaries from neighbouring countries. On the years following the genocide in Rwanda, Leraand (2013:1), claims that: "Kivu has been affected by instability due to repeated threats from the government of Rwanda and the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a militia from Uganda." At the same time, further conflicts characterized by massive internal and cross-border displacements proliferated in all provinces of the DRC. As far as the 1996 war in the DRC is concerned, it would be unfair to avoid relating briefly the Rwandan story because it is ultimately connected to the 1996 changes that the genocide in Rwanda triggered, a disaster that had been dormant for many years, and later was extended far elsewhere.

#### *4.2.2 The 1996 invasion and the end of the dictatorial regime of Mobutu Sese seko.*

The year 1996 marked the beginning of the end of the dictatorial regime of Mobutu and opened the way to liberation and oppression by invaders. As Kabila and his allies invaded the eastern

DRC, not only the entire population but also the national army, could not wait or resist welcoming the invaders. “They quickly progressed to topple the regime thus forcing the President and members of his cabinet to seek asylum abroad” (Nzongala-Ntalaja, 2002:1). The question one would ask is: “Did the toppling of President Mobutu mark the end of oppression and hardship in DRC?” The Congolese political conflict had continued since 1996 and had spread to both the Kivu Provinces of the DRC causing socio-economic and socio-cultural challenges. According to Human Rights Watch (2014) and Stephen Bucklet (1996), “the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), backed by Uganda, invaded Congo in November 1996 under the banner of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire, AFDL).” The invaders aimed to destroy the refugee camps, following the mass exodus into the then Zaire of the overthrown Rwandan regime with armed forces and mercenaries for fear to rearrange and restructure their armed infrastructure and destabilize the Tutsi administration (MSF, 1995).

After the deposition of Mobutu and his regime, Katongole (2011:203) posits that “the new government used the same script and brazenly plundered the country’s resources in an authoritarian manner that was not different from the deposed government.” Charlotte Mathews (2017:1) describes the situation not only as a geographical scandal on the foundation of the massive mineral treasures concealed there but also as a curse. For Mathews (2017:1). “It was better if the DRC’s political leadership could have managed its resources better for the betterment of its people. Instead, the regime continued to revisit the mining code in order to extract more money from the few companies that operated there, instead of offering concessions to attract legitimate businesses that could help to stabilise the economy.”

According to the United to End Genocide (2015) article, “the situation that started since the mid-1990s, has plunged the country into a conflict that has been severally defined as Africa’s World War.” The article further argues that “many people have lost their lives, while others have been raped, maimed and internally displaced.” The article continuously stresses that “the public atrocities committed comprise murders, kidnappings, and mandatory enrolment of residents into the military and militia groups, mainly children.” Many people have been displaced from their homes while others were left without humanitarian assistance.

Any historical exegesis of the conflict in the DRC would be incomplete without mention of the invasion of the country by surrounding African countries. Ansorg (2011:173-187) points out that “the root causes of wars in the Great Lakes Area are forceful, complex, and involve several and interconnecting regional and transnational players.” It is globally believed that the crisis was provoked after the plane of the Rwandan Hutu-president Juvénal Habyarimana was shot down in April 1994. While claims that the attack was launched by the Tutsi guerilla the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) are still disputed, Kanyangara (2016:12) agrees that “wars in the Great Lakes Area shares features and is related to power matters, ethnicity split, structural ferocity, manipulation, admittance to natural wealth and land.” It can, therefore, be said that the characteristics of conflict in the DRC should not be separated from what is taking place in other countries in the Great Lakes Region. They are interconnected because of the resilient cross- border proportions and large-scale traditional distinctiveness often exposed to undermine the entire province. This is why this study is of the view that war in the DRC is multifarious.

Beside the factors of inequitable access to state and natural resources, this study also observes an absence of sufficient prospects to governmental power and the propagation of small weapons that continue to extend conflict in the region. Political ground and the implementation of essential democratic and respectable leadership values such as freedom of expression, the right to protest, multi-party system, transparency, fair elections, and responsibility continue to be frustrated by continued totalitarianism. The concept of democracy articulated by Mansfield and Snyder (2005:59), can be explained as blaming the western powers for imposing it prematurely on African nations in the early 1990s. This apparently resulted in unexpected chaos, as it is now being observed in the GLR countries.

Democratic principles have shaped innovative pressures and emphasized old grievances related to social inequalities and ethnic variances at both national and regional levels. In relation to many factors that led neighbouring countries to invade the DRC, the Telegraph news report (2002) indicates that “Rwanda launched its attacks on the DRC to secure its border against Hutu militia who fled to Congo after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.” Most critics accuse Rwanda and Uganda of using the Hutu militia as an excuse to achieve its long economic goal of exploiting DRCs rich mineral resources. This was the reason why the war was prolonged and regardless of many peace agreements signed in 1999, peace remained fragile and fighting continued because it was mainly a conflict born out of economic interests. The need for the International Community to intervene seemed unavoidable; the UN peacekeeping mission

mandated to defend citizens who were in imminent threat of physical danger. Kivu remained under siege, targeted as the source of conflict. Many explanations have been posed to express the interest of outsiders to South Kivu, such as natural resources, land, migration, and lack of transparent leadership, particularly.

Stearns et al (2013: 14–20) argues that the province of South Kivu has been at the heart of the conflict in the eastern DRC. As indicated before, it was here that the First Congo War (1996–7) took place. Since the end of the Second Congo War (1998–2003), the province’s potential to cause broader regional destabilization has decreased, but violent local conflicts have multiplied, fueled by political opportunism and local struggles over land and power. It was around the town of Uvira on Lake Tanganyika in September and October 1996 that tensions between the so-called Banyamulenge, a Tutsi community from Rwanda, escalated, triggering the first clashes in a war that would eventually overthrow the Mobutu regime. The problem of migration has been termed difficult due to the fact that in the late 19th century, Rwanda had already been trying enviably to mix the sectors of Masisi, Kalehe, and Idjwi into its area. Schwab (2001) elaborates on the attitude of the colonizers and argues that they stressed the division of the land, division of the people, thus imposing policies. After independence, displacement had notable consequences; it has generated anger and tribal clashes in North Kivu, in Uvira, South Kivu, and other places of the DRC, because those who implanted them in these areas had no longer power to assure their protection.

Schwab (2001) concludes that “the colonial strategy in the Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi was deadly and willingly established on racism, as in the Congo millions died under genocidal schemes. Colonialists also implanted the spirit of political marginalization as their legacy to African countries. They practiced this ill method by selecting one tribe to serve the colonial bureaucracy, thus depending on the colonizing nation, at the expense of other cultures.”

#### **4.3. Infrastructure, natural resources, and land in Kivu provinces**

William (2015: 285–286), argues that “since 1996, Kivu provinces have been the sight of intense battles committed by foreign and local armed groups.” That is why this study is of the opinion that the impact of conflicts in both the GLR and in the Kivu Provinces, in particular, has impacted brutally and harmfully on civilians. It may be also suggested that the conflict has



enabled the continuation of violence by encouraging reprisal attacks and counter retaliations, resulting in extensive destruction of civic and reserved infrastructure. For Mushi (2012:17-20) “the persistent hostilities in the Kivu provinces of the DRC are caused by a philosophy that is in favour of violence and a concept that is inconsistent with the non-violent nature of most people living in the region.” Contrary to the protracted conflict that has bedevilled the region; the dwellers of these areas are known for their hospitality, which makes it easy for their neighbours to find refuge every time they have conflict in their countries of origin. If the local people have participated in any form of violence or hostility against other people, the cause should be considered as an element of self-defence only. Another possible cause of the conflict in the region may not be unconnected to the claims to the name “*mulenge*” by the Tutsi ethnic group from Rwanda. The name *mulenge* is derived from a mountain known as ‘*Mulenge*’. The mountain is considered by the indigenes of South and North-Kivu as ‘guests’ or refugees, as migrants from Rwanda that failed to integrate themselves into the host communities. Instead, they maintained an intention of wanting to overtake and overrule the local people by claiming different lands which they have been hosted in, notably in South Kivu plateau and Masisi in North Kivu.

According to Vlassenroot and Hugginst (2005:124), “land is not only a source but also a resource for the perpetuation of conflict.” This may be explained by the fact that as a supply it has different components which include a public ground, a commercial reserve, a basis of governmental income, and a common asset, substantial in terms of cultural identity development, of the rules and returns-streams of resident routine leaders, and dissemination of countryside markets. Therefore, rivalry for property plays a part in resident differences and it is possible to argue that it is one of the sources of war in the region. The issue of land has been connected to the national struggle for profitable mechanisms and politico- armed power.

The problem of the land issue lies in the claim that issues of land should be reformed. This claim is seen by indigenous people as an act of provocation that started during the colonial time, as a measure to benefit migrants from Rwanda. From this perspective, it is possible to argue that the initial years of liberation of the DRC were stricken by political turbulence and the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, despite the intervention of the Combined States, and the rule of Mobutu (1965–1997). The reform of land in order to favour migrants is considered as a continuation of prevailing customs and socio-political arrangements aimed at subjugating

indigenes. Muzuri's (1982:29) argument that "nearly the whole portion of the Eastern part of the DRC was marked by a consolidated political party" is here understood by the fact that lands were controlled by a chief known traditionally as 'Mwami,' who served as custodian of the land. The commercial routine of space in Kivu Provinces customarily mirrored the collective group.

This explains the fact that entering industrious land and livestock areas, was nothing other than the fundamental constituent of incitement to the people of Kivu. It is therefore understood that entrance to the land was not easy because it was controlled by various political and collective dealings grounded on traditional bonds and clientele connections. In various areas of the Kivu provinces, notably the volcanic plateaus in North Kivu and South Kivu nearby Bukavu, different structures of land ownership are formally recognised. The land-tenure systems such as those established in Ufuliiru, Uvira and in Ubembe in South Kivu, were ranked lower and extra malleable, this was because there was enough land for farming, which restricted the authority of the customary chiefs. To own a dwelling space in different provinces was attended to by compensation through a value tax. Each culture ensured its own tax-system, even though the overall standard was analogous for most cultures. These levies constituted the fundamental source of the resident moral budget. Admittance to property was more complex during pre-colonial and colonial relocations. This is the reason why the ongoing presence of refugees from Rwanda, for example, remains a source of a deep antagonism between diverse ethnic groups both in North and South Kivu. The above also explains why those who migrated to Kivu could in no way claim possession of any land no matter what the reason behind it was.

It is possible to support the argument by stating that accessing land in zones similar to Kivu Provinces is confidentially bound up with the perception of domestic individuality. The stories of the 'Tutsi from Rwanda' in search of land in the Kivu provinces, is akin to allocating scraps of indigenous land leading to further political exclusion. The Church of Christ in Congo through its dialogue strategy has spent much time bringing people together and explaining the process of acquiring or accessing land in every area, following the structure of the local place. The effects of land hostility on resident societies are also clarified by Mararo (1990:518) who attributes the cause of dispute of land to colonial rule.

The campaign of the relocation of labour forces from bordering areas in Rwanda to the DRC in North-Kivu intensified local competition for land. Connecting with the broader political methods disturbing the GLR, these issues have resulted in explosions of violence in various places of DRC, particularly in Kivu provinces. These tactics introduced by colonial rule, are believed to be a continued source of conflict. They aimed to intensify fights by allowing dubious residents to settle on the land. This leads to the conviction that colonization and local political proceedings had a key influence on Rwandan refugees living in the Kivu provinces. It is universally agreed that the chronological growth of these events is accountable for what is taking place in Kivus currently. While it is difficult to find reliable evidence of the first arrival of immigrants of Rwandan descent in the Kivus, the Kivu National Committee (Le Comité National du Kivu, C.N.K, 1928- 1953) is of the opinion that the colonial project in Kivu assisted in the making of the Mission 'immigration des Banyarwanda (M.I.B.), meaning the objective to transfer the Banyarwanda from their place as in 1933-1957, to Kivu in the Congo. Vlassenroot and Huggins's (2004) understanding are that the colonial project had three basic intentions namely; to relieve the demographic pressures on the over-populated land of Rwanda, to transplant people who will support a struggling Belgian plutocracy and finally to fill the mines and factories with labourers throughout North Kivu province. Another point to consider in talking about causes of conflict in DRC is the politics of esteeming one tribe to the detriment of another. For example, Rwanda and Burundi had another horrible legacy on two leading ethnic groups the Hutu and Tutsi. The most disastrous example of this colonial legacy climaxed with the massacre in 1994, which plunged the African Great Lakes Area into chaos and affected most neighbouring countries.

The responsibility of the Church of Christ in Congo was to settle the dispute and encourage the migrants to keep safe the relationship that they had with local residents. The same strategy was used in the DRC to promote one tribe over another. Turner (2007:587) has this to say

“In their exploration for supporters and assistants, they contrasted the Baluba in Kasai and influenced them to separate from among the Lulua and the Luba-Kasai people. This division resulted in the foundation of traditional and ancestral wars and massacres now becoming an outstanding form of legacy in the former Belgian colonies currently known as the Great Lakes Region (DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi).”

From the above context, it can be argued that this revenue-generating characterizes uncertainty, propagation of small arms, intense conflict and local trafficking networks in the region. This

leads us to summarize the idea of the regional conflict by stating that the security complex was due to inappropriate experiments of different actors and stirring issues related to leadership challenges, instigated by a fragile state inadequate to regulate prosecution. Consequently, resources that are supposed to advantage the province and its residents have been misused in funding war because there was no authoritative commandment. The persistent armed conflict and forced displacement of the DRC wars that started in 1996 resulted in destabilizing the eastern DRC and plagued the region by a diverse collection of armed troops comprising foreign individuals, regional mercenaries, and a mostly disobedient national army that frequently constituted transitory and adaptable coalitions. When reading Henning Tamm and Claire Lauterbach (2011), they provide a summary of facts representing consequences and effect on civilians' women and children, from the time when the outbreak of the war in 1996 took place. Generally, after war signs remain divisive, mostly for the east of the DRC due to personal insecurity, persistent presence of armed groups, the lack of state capacity and the extensiveness of poverty. While it is not the intention of this thesis to go through all these facts, I will consider the sexual violence practised in the eastern province which led the Kivu Provinces of the DRC to be labelled "a forgotten war zone" (Oxfam, 2000). It is generally agreed that rape and sexual violence of women have now gained global attention. This has been supported by the United Nations claiming that during the conflicts, rape was considered as a weapon of war to embarrass and undermine individuals, to split relations and to confound people (UN Action, 2007). However, Baaz and Stern (2013:96-106) advocate that "the practice of rape as a defensive tool during conflict can eventually be stopped."

The claim is supported by Wallstrom (2011:1) who has dismissed sexual violence as a cultural 'phenomenon'. She stated that "forcing women for sex and gender-based intensity in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo is a mortal disaster which needs to be condemned and brought to an end. This bestial act in modern conflicts undermines not only the value of women but the whole community". When raped, women and girls consider themselves as deceased, hurt, dispersed and traumatized. Despite these difficulties related to the practicalities of bringing perpetrators to persecution due to huge obstacles of gathering evidence, observers and survivors often lacked access to justice structures which were produced by factors such as distance, poverty, and lack of knowledge (Jackson, 2015). Most women are embarrassed and threatened by offenders. Furthermore, relatives desperately try by all means to conceal this humiliation for various reasons.

More than this, it firmly figures in their mind that justice is a slow process. This thesis is of the opinion that the 1996 conflict has damaged infrastructure substantially. The opportunity for transforming the regime system and for reaching justice for corruption is still nearly impossible. This leads to the question of whether ‘the world cares’. In the view of the above, this thesis agrees with the above report, claiming repeated military operations and violence, including rape, disruption of humanitarian assistance, pillage as a strategy of war that comprised looting, torture and extortion, sexual exploitation and many more, characterized the long-planned intention to plunder the DRC by foreign troops. According to Prunier (2009), “the war officially ended with the Lusaka agreement, followed by a series of accords signed in Pretoria, Sun City.” The arrangement resulted in the placement of the MONUC (French) for the United Nations Mission to the Congo to establish the transitional period and allow the country’s first general elections of 2006 to take place. But practically it was not so. Violence remained constant and people continued to be violated, predominantly in the North and South Kivu provinces. The resolution in Lusaka and in Sun City was noted by Koser (2007:1), who assumed that those who fled the DRC earlier before the 1996 wars, all through the Mobutu era would eventually return and participate in the democratization and reconstruction progress of the country. But Turner (2007), indicates that the situation at the ground was unsafe because most Hutu soldiers, militias and high ranked officers who fled to neighbouring countries were heavily armed putting the security of both, the Congolese people, the Tutsis that were living in Congo and those in Rwanda, under threat. Ruth Collins (2016:1) in her article ‘The struggle for Africa’ clarifies the situation by stating that Bukavu, the unassuming capital of the DRC’s South Kivu province, has been a scene of rape, pillage, and destruction countless times over the last 15 years.

#### **4.4. History of impunity in the DRC**

As it may be agreed “impunity incorporates all the different aspects disguised in the term probably because of its nature which has become so ubiquitous” (Penrose, 1999). According to Black Law Dictionary (1983) the term ‘impunity’ means “exemption from penalty or punishment”, but it has been described by Vinuales (2007:2) as a ‘vague term’ which has been interpreted in different ways by different scholars. Defining impunity, the United Nations Commission of Human Rights (UNCHR 2005: 6) describes impunity as “the impracticality of compelling the criminals of damages to justify their activities.” The International Commission

of Jurists (ICJ, 2012) speaks of impunity as “an act of having Authority without Accountability.” Undeniably, a protracted armed conflict, dangerous poverty and autocracy continue unprosecuted in the DRC. The consecutive wars continue to be complex adding to the existing impunity issues supported by the participation of several players. Considerable dislocation, physical and sexual violence, continues to be a normal exercise in various places specifically in Eastern DRC. According to the UN Planning Report (OHCHR, 2010), the greatest human rights abuses in the DRC were enacted by local armed groups and neighbouring regimes. But most of those involved in such atrocities have never been prosecuted or apprehended. Although the establishment of legal mechanisms was suggested, no tangible development has to date been effected.

The undesirable effect of impunity was also experienced during the 2011 elections. The government has been implicated in many of the human rights abuse cases recognized in the eleven months before the elections. Most abuses targeted adherents or supporters of opposition parties (MONUSCO 2011). The UN Security Council (2004a) emphasizes that the continuation of the philosophy of impunity is a strong one. While sentence for past abuses may have the potential to undermine peace, it is also clear that exemption is an even more unsafe formula for going back into war. In its quest for peacebuilding, the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC considers it extremely important for worldwide and nationwide organizations to think through additional practical methods in the expansion of strategies to deal with impunity.

The widespread nature of impunity has been handled by the Government disproportionately with unresponsiveness, to the degree that citizens have accepted the fact that there is no prevailing law in the country. Impartiality is never considered as effective, especially with regards to corruption and the meddling of politics in legal substances. Up to now, the idea of impunity has generated a group of people who are free to commit crimes and do not face any prosecution. These VIPs (very important people) may be categorized and characterized as local people or aliens who have influences either with regime executives or prominent members of the military or police.

Hall and Annette La Rocco (2012) say the absence of liability for conflict, as well as the killing of residents, rape, looting, and enslavement, remains among the key obstacles to generating an atmosphere of peace in eastern Congo. The historical evidence needs to be dealt with for the nation to experience positive transformation. This has been expressed and supported by Hall

and La Rocco (2012) who stress that “coinciding with truth-telling experience; the most horrifying criminals must face the law if sustainable ceasefire should be considered in the DRC.” This is understood to be saying that if the justice system is not re-built according to internationally upheld norms, the nature of impunity will reign. In the same line of social transformation, there is a need for the DRC army to be reorganized to protect civilians rather than being a predator for the state. This requires military transformation.

The problem of transformation of military law and provisional justice, though multifaceted and politically disruptive, requires radical determination from the current DRC leadership and from the Army Forces of the DRC (FARDC). Through the pressure of the global community, stress should be used to back local struggles that aim to change the army. The contribution and effort from local communities, residents, and customary leaders need to be acknowledged, to avoid living the past in the future. This opinion was supported by a United Nations official observed by the UN News Centre (2013). He emphasized the necessity of dealing with impunity and claimed that people will not go through the past blunders and perpetrators should not enjoy amnesty due to the grave crimes they have committed. This study argues that the violation of human rights by not sanctioning perpetrators has also been one of the many reasons registered by Congolese people in the diaspora. But how does the diaspora relate to the historical conflict in the DRC? The next section describes the importance of considering the role of SADC in the DRC conflict.

#### **4.5. The Role of SADC in the DRC**

The conflict in the DRC, which started decades ago, has had vast negative impacts on not only the nation but the entire sub-region. The crisis has led to the immigration of millions of Congolese to neighbouring countries, thereby stretching the already limited infrastructure in these host countries. Thus, it is pertinent to discuss the role of the regional body in the South African Development Community on the conflict, vis-à-vis the conflict resolution efforts put in place. This section seeks to discuss what the contribution of the Southern African in relation to peacebuilding has been. To this extent, SADC’s activities in the DRC have been challenged by multiple factors. The most embarrassing is its inadequate peacekeeping practice and the absence of financial resources for peace structure (Dzinesa and Laker, 2010).

According to Dzinesa and Laker (2010), “SADC’s authority to perform is basically sensitive, rather than preventive; thus, most times the war actors seem to always be ahead of the SADC’s

attempt at resolving the conflict.” However, the efforts of the SADC in mitigating the battle in the DRC cannot be under-emphasized; the regional body has played active roles in ensuring that the conflict is managed and that it does not spill over to neighbouring countries. The organization has accepted the necessity of establishing institutional structures to participate in a healthy approach to peace restoration and reconstruction in the DRC. In particular, it has recognized a combined office with the African Union (AU) in Kinshasa.

According to Katongole (2011), “the complications of Africa should be understood in the framework of the harm made by colonialism to the people of Africa.” He supports his claim by the plunder executed in the current DRC by King Leopold of Belgium who sacrificed the lives of many Congolese as he looted the nation of its resources. However, Solomon (2001:45) argues that: “Most external intervention is not based on altruism but includes large measure self-interest.” This example of South Africa’s diplomatic intervention in the DRC was characterized and motivated by self-interest. According to Landsberg (2007:121-140): “South Africa’s national interest was defined by its aspiration to form a stable environment in the DRC to help its companies based in the DRC to trade easily and win lucrative contracts.” Evaluating SADC’s intervention in the DRC, Nathan (2006); Essuman (2009) and Autesserre (2010) are of the view that: “SADC failed in its intervention in the DRC because the conflict has not abated and there is ongoing plundering of the of the nation’s resources.” This predatory nature of intervention programs in Africa has been described by Katongole (2011:46-47) as sacrificing African people as it was practised during colonial times. The failure prompted the AU to get involved.

Historically, with the objective of playing its equitable role in the global economy and tackle multifaceted social, economic and political problems, the then OAU called the heads of states in 1999 and issued a Declaration (the Sirte Declaration) calling for the establishment of what is today known as the African Union. As stated earlier, the intention of the AU was to speed up the process of integration in the continent to facilitate the promotion of accelerated socio-economic integration of the continent and solidify the unity between African countries and their people. The AU agenda included the backing of peace, security and stability on the continent as a prerequisite for the implementation of development and the integration agenda of the Union. Part of its objectives also aimed at minimizing the attempts by the superpowers to manipulate African states and avoid devastating inter-state conflicts as a result of the ideological differences of the African states. The movement was fundamentally born outside the continent, determined by black intellectuals of African descent in the Diaspora. At first, the



movement was basically a protest of black people against their exploitation, against racism and for the dignity and uplifting of the black people. The leaders were middle class intellectuals such as W.E.B Du Bois (African –American) and Padmore (Caribbean). This section does not intend to detail the founder of the movement but to generalize the concept of the AU involvement in the peace process of the Kivu provinces in the DRC conflict. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) which later changed to the African Union (AU) played a role in stopping arms confrontation in the DRC through the Lusaka peace talks with the warring factions. According to Danfulani, (2011) the AU action came after the United Nations had waded into the conflict through the body's Security Council. While there were various initiatives embarked by the African Union only two were outstanding and led to a breakthrough in tackling the crisis in the DRC: the SIRTE and LUSAKA summits. The two Summits seemed to be successful because they shaped opportunities for the warring groups to initiate a series of dialogues on how to doge the crisis that had attracted the armed forces of many countries in the DRC. African Union was seen as trying to stay away for what may be termed here as foreign interference with internal affairs of its own member states.

The crisis in the DRC was observed by the whole continent although the AU seemed to close its eyes despite clear signs of unpleasant violations of human rights and features of territorial integrity. The AU understood that a stable DRC would provide African states with a practical economic and political collaborator with which to conduct diplomacy on relatively unbiased terms. The AU therefore, as an urgent course of action, decided to send the African Standby Force (ASF) to also be operational and prepare for any eventualities in the DRC and other African hotspots. The ASF was to provide a possible alternative to the existing ones to tackle peacebuilding and conflict management challenges, not only in the DRC but also in the rest of Africa. While it is clear that the role of the AU was not fully explored, but it is equally clear that the AU has the potential to take the lead role in resolving armed conflict on the African Continent, although its resource challenges undermine its ability to take valuable steps for intervention. In view of the above, this study ascertains that both SADC and AU were unable to, effectively provide for the DRC's peace and security, especially in the context where the UN is unwilling to set out its help. It is also clear that the various programmes led by government and international partners designed to restore peace in Kivu provinces of the DRC have failed. A new approach was therefore needed. It was conditions such as these, that led the CCC to get involved. Katongole (2011) urges clergy to help reverse the condition whereby the nation-state is taken as a scheme of the western states, at the detriment of the African people.

The church should attempt to solve people's social problems and not operate within a western prototype that splits church and politics. Katongole (2011) speaks clearly on the social dreams of Africa entrenched in the story of creation which he connects to theory and uses as the narrative to display how some Africans ventured to dream and implement the vision for an alternative Africa. The brave story of Thomas Sankara (1949– 1988), who was the revolutionary president of Burkina Faso from 1983 to 1988, is here brought in as an example. Sankara's dream saw the possibility of getting a new Africa only when African governments put their people at the center of reforms by responding to their concerns, then will there be development and a new future for Africa.

Sankara's call was that there is a need for African people to endure the revolutionary madness that will design a new future for Africa. This study agrees that the church as a people's institution is especially well-placed to make this transformation possible. This study joins Katongole's idea that social transformation is possible if African people decide to live their lives to bring about transformation in the limits of society, where the nation-states are not competent to bring solutions. The devastating problem of African spirituality needed an intensified and relevant socio-economic and political reconstruction, with a new form of belief to shape people's lives and perspectives within the community. That is why the church is to adopt an appropriate theological education that will benefit both its leaders and ensure that social transformation can be attained.

South Africa was characterized by global isolation, a bankrupt state, civil unrest, a skills deficit, and racial segregation. During the 1950s and 1960s, South Africa was marked by the apartheid state's tight control over the political, economic and social structures of the country. However, in the 1970s the apartheid state began to weaken and disintegrate due to the nature and scale of the resistance that emerged. This disaster was both economic and political in its backgrounds. Due to these aspects, the state began to experience hostility from both black and white constituencies on a level never seen before in South Africa. Black people developed economic and political power. Together with their children, they opposed the sectional apartheid rule, including its all organisations, considering the state as illegitimate.

Members of the priesthood, scholars and several Afrikaner business leaders started to see apartheid as both wicked and unproductive and thus started to strive for considerable changes. At this level, important political organizations in South Africa such as the African National

Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) were expelled, while most of their leaders went into exile and or were imprisoned. The apartheid state, therefore, became challenged by an entirely new set of forces.

For Bowes et al (2004), “1994 was a time of political sensation in the change process towards an economic and social revival during the first ten years of democratic rule, although challenges over cultural, spiritual and national alignment still hung over it.” The democratic dispensation shaped and opened prospects for the church in South Africa to move from a theology of resistance to transformation, reconstruction, assistance, and cooperation. It was an opportunity for the church to readjust the mind-sets of many and work for the empowerment of previously disadvantaged people in African society.

Kritzinger (2002) advocates by stating that: “This adjustment was able to shape the social justice in every sphere of the South African society to cope with the political, economic, social and institutional practises, as well as the globalization development of transformation within the ranks of the Church and Faith Based Organizations, inspired by the Holy Spirit.” Now, it will be important to understand what and how researchers understand the concept of transformation. Transformation is a comprehensive concept with a diversity of foundations, including political change, economic change, social change, institutional transformation, leadership change, spatial renovation, and spiritual conversion, to mention but a few. The idea was initiated by business management, as a need was felt to substitute old structures with new ones.

According to Duvenhage, (2004) “the motivation and agenda of transformation should be to adjust and improve a healthier state as the status quo.” Duvenhage (2004) also stipulated that “for transformation to act rapidly, progressively, comprehensively and fundamentally with positive change it requires extraordinary dimensions of leadership and management aptitudes in terms of new skills as well as unusual effort, vision and model modifications for it to be successful.”

This evidently does not exclude the fact that during the transformation process, reactionary forces opposing transformation will not arise to cause high levels of conflict and casualties. In this situation, Gramsci (1994), and Mitchell (2005, 2006) argue that new skills and profiles at all levels are important and needed to ensure a successful transformation is attained. In this regard, the church /religion become necessary, because religious discourses can shape groups with ‘ideologies’ that determine the content of group identities. Transformation in clergy institutions and sermons results in an influence on society and politics, particularly in a setting

such as South Africa, where the church has been a significant force. The church holds a substantial role in South African society and politics (Gifford 1998, Hendriks and Erasmus 2001, Koegelenberg 2001, Ellis and Ter Haar 2004). As an institution, the church attempted to effectively order and control public life as stated by Fulton (1991), Marx (cited in McLellan, 1995) and Mitchell (2005, 2006) by providing a setting in which opposing identities were replicated and imbalanced social structures strengthened as the policy of segregated racism was enforced.

According to Hopkins (1989) and Mosala (1989), in 1966, the general synod in the apartheid era declared that the mixing of ethnic groups was sinful, until 1986 when the church acknowledged that apartheid was a sin. In contrast, some black theologies offered visions of freedom that were prominent in black congregations with a broader impact in parts of the mainstream denominations.

Church leaders became energetic in the struggle to end apartheid and made substantial contributions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). According to Borer (1998), de Gruchy et al (1999), Meiring (1999), Kuperus (2002), Thomas (2002), de Gruchy (2005) and Verwoerd (2006): “Forgiveness was definitely stressed and promoted as a sign of being a ‘good’ Christian. The healing process through forgiveness and reconciliation was at the same time the process of peacebuilding.”

#### **4.6. The emergence of Peacebuilding interventions in the DRC**

Geographically the DRC borders the Atlantic Ocean and nine African countries, including the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia, and Angola. The DRC is actually populated by more than 75 million people. Despite this fact the country has plenty of resources to guarantee both human and state safety to its inhabitants, endless conflicts have termed it to be classified by the World Statistic book (2014), among the poorest countries in the world. The country’s limitless conflict has been both national and regional since its independence in 1960.

Due to its productivity in natural resources, scholars such as Collier and Hoeffler (2004:563) have justified their opinions that intra-state and interstate conflict is widespread in countries that are gifted with treasured natural resources such as diamonds, gold, and oil. Because of gluttony, there is an extraordinary tendency of the elite in countries identical or similar to DRC to sponsor violence as a means of competing for natural resources.

Likewise, Hochschild, (1998) claims that the accessibility of valuable minerals has influenced the DRC's neighbouring countries to openly or incidentally contribute to the conflict by either engaging their national militaries or backup rebels. Autessere (2006), gives an example of how the DRC's wars that involved neighbouring states like Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zimbabwe, and Angola, have compounded the conflict in the DRC. Similarly, Crawford (1965), says insurgent groups who claim support from neighbouring countries like Rwanda and Uganda, hold big parts of the country in South and North Kivu. Remembering Mobutu's time in the 1990s, Gault – Hunter (2006), states that he accumulated a fortune for himself and those around him while his people moved into poverty even though they were surrounded by their diamonds and minerals, as the United States looked on. According to Keen (2008: 757) political, social, cultural and economic inequalities among residents are significant promoters of violent conflicts in DRC. Ethnic-based militias took shape and in March 1993 conflict erupted when Hunde and Nyanga militias massacred the Hutu and Tutsi (Rwandans coming in as a result of the genocide). According to Collins (1997), they reacted by fighting back, resulting in the making of new Zairean laws on nationality in 1994. According to the new laws, Zairean nationality was conferred to those who could trace their ancestry within the country to 1885 - the date when the Congo was established as a Free State. This became the root cause of civil war as many people fought to establish their roots in the Congo.

The complicated web of external interferences and insurgencies after the three Congo Wars has made the DRC basically uncontrollable. According to Bratton, M. (2005), this fact has been a reality throughout its entire history since independence; the central administration has never succeeded in setting up a political order supported by the rule of law. This example can be traced during the first and second Congo wars which were characterized by a political vacuum in most provinces of the DRC, particularly in the Kivu provinces. Kibasomba, R. and Lombe, T.B. (2011), indicate that most provinces hanged about politically and logistically disconnected from the headquarters, Kinshasa. This condition made the residents feel excluded. Many armed groups came up well equipped and ready for mineral trading with doubtful entities and external actors with questionable interests. In view of the fact that the Kivu provinces were the most politically, socially and economically disconnected, the logic of a unified national identity and patriotism became weak and created a vacuity that has been filled by militias, rebellions, and unwelcome foreign interests.

The emptiness in the governance has also been supported by the culture of delayed justice for victims of violent conflicts and inadequate peace negotiations in the DRC. A coordinated and healthy civil society was critically needed as an ingredient for conflict transformation. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the CCC and development agencies seem to be needed to strengthen civil society organizations (CSOs) and help them to efficiently work with communities at the grassroots for purposes of peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The fundamental conflict issues sparked from before the First Congo War indicated their complexity and evident ability to ignite unrest in current times. The AU neglected the situation and did not rise timely to the task of supporting DRC citizens in their quest for conflict transformation. Due to its size, wealth and location, the DRC is of gigantic geo-strategic importance to members of the AU. This study will argue that a secure DRC would provide African states with a feasible economic and political associate with which to conduct diplomacy on moderately impartial terms. The AU, therefore, missed an opportunity to prove its ability and its complicity in the DRC predicament by leaving it down in cruel cycles of intractable conflicts.

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

This chapter surveyed historical antecedents of the conflicts in the DRC. Particularly, the chapter explored the role played by rebel groups that continue to cause disturbances in the Kivu Provinces. This chapter engaged in a chronological approach to delineate the conflict in the DRC, and the role played by the various actors. The chapter indicated that most researchers agree that, political, economic and social exclusion are the main dimensions essential for understanding the dynamics of the Kivu violence in the region.

The vital pattern that reappears time and again is one in which the territorial integrity of the DRC land would be violated through the Rwandan and Ugandan ethnic motive of balkanization which paves the way for political exclusion, ultimately leading to rebellion, rebellion to repression, and repression to considerable streams of refugees and internally displaced people, which in turn become the vectors of additional instability. The bottom-line examination shows the dynamics that include the help of foreign interference and the Rwandan Tutsi living in Kivu provinces that supported and led the invasion by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), after the Rwandan anti-Tutsi violence in 1994 which eventually resulted in genocide. In fact, the chapter explains one of the paradoxes appearing in most researchers' comments namely that the negligible country in the region has played such a decisive role; speaking that without the lead

taken by Rwanda, the 'AFDL rebellion' would not have taken place, and Laurent Kabila himself would not have toppled Mobutu.

The chapter underlined the 1996 invasion as an event that marked the beginning of the end of the dictatorial regime of Mobutu Sese seko. A section of the chapter also indicated that a historical exegesis of the conflict in the DRC would be incomplete without mentioning the interference of the surrounding African countries. The chapter also indicated that invaders practised this ill method by selecting one tribe to serve the colonial bureaucracy, thus depending on the colonizing nation, at the expense of other cultures. A section of the chapter claimed that the unending war in the DRC led to an interruption in the day-to-day activities of the people. The political section in this chapter indicated also mentioned the effects of the Conflict infrastructure and natural resources in Kivu provinces. According to the content, since 1996, Kivu provinces have been the sight of intense battles committed by foreign and local armed groups, thus impacting brutally and harmfully on civilians.

While there was no instant threat in 1998, relations with Laurent Kabila's regime had become obviously hostile, and the risk of further deterioration and the subsequent destabilization of Rwanda was authentic. In addition, Rwanda observed in 1996 to 1997 that waging war in Congo was inexpensive, and even profitable by the exploitation of Congolese resources, hence it became progressively more essential motivation to launch another war, relying on a military mode of managing political situations.

Rwanda thus developed a dreadful intelligence, security and military machinery, which became the most effective in the region, and which went far beyond its defense needs. The chapter also looked into the role of SADC in the DRC conflict due to its vast negative impacts not only on the nation but also on the entire sub-region. The chapter has also indicated that there have been grave defilements of the human rights of Congolese at the different periods of the county's history. Different people and groups of people have abused the country's resources at the expense of the Congolese people, some even losing their lives in the processes. After receiving an over-all understanding of the historical situation in the Kivu Provinces, the following considers the analysis of church peacebuilding in the Kivu provinces of the DRC.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CONGO'S INTERVENTION FOR PEACE IN THE KIVU PROVINCES

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter contributes to the theories about peacebuilding in Kivu provinces. In order to embark on this debate, it is important to remember that the research question is concerned with how the CCC informs the Peace program in its quest for sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces. This chapter presents different activities undertaken by the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC and in Kivu Provinces in particular in order to respond to the conflict in the Regions.

Notwithstanding the persistent conflict in the Eastern area, the church has broken its silence and stood up as a stakeholder to claim the restoration of sustainable peace in the region. Kivu provinces, both North and South, a range of church actors including the CCC have chosen to involve in advocacy and mobilisation under the banner of peace finder. Somehow, this commitment has been conducted through the formalised civil society structure known as civil society. This chapter explores the role of the CCC in Eastern DRC as stakeholders for peace since the 1990s, a period that marked the end of President Mobutu Sese Seko's 32-year regime.

The chapter is structured so as to elaborate on the concepts used in the analysis, and in particular the questions related to the applicability of the Church of Christ in Congo in shaping its rationale and strategies. The focus is specifically on different expressions of peacebuilding activism by different peace actors, which leads us to conclude that the CCC has taken has played an important role in peacebuilding in South Kivu although the role is also circumscribed by a number of political and social factors. Lasting peace in the Kivu provinces requires a comprehensive and multifaceted strategy to de-escalate the crisis, evade civilian massacres and tackle the roots of the conflict in both North and South Kivu. This strategy should comprise redressing earlier failures in the DRC peace process related to the integration of former warring factions into a united national army and achieving justice for the victims of crimes committed



during the wars without distressing the fragile peace as well as encouraging economic development. That is why the section that follows deals with the CCC's position as an element of enquiry to a just peace.

## **5.2 Locating the Church in the DRC peace efforts**

While it is undeniable that there is no state religion in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is also clear that Congolese people are known to be mostly Christians and most Christian denominations share one thing: a spiritual aspect that endorses a relationship between God and human beings. Because of that, they all endorse peace and progress differently. Although these churches have different approaches in addressing the questions of peacebuilding and reconciliation, their collective key emphasis remains on how they can attain sustainable peace in the DRC. To claim that the church is called to promote sustainable peace is not an exaggeration. It is possible that the church drew the concept from the scripture as one aspect of its blessing and identity as portrayed in the Bible: "Blessed are the peace makers, they shall be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9). Peace is a divine vision as the execution of God's fundamental justice. That is what practical theology deals with. The Church of Christ in Congo primarily understood that the initial result to the misery of Congolese will not originate from foreigners, but from within the Congolese people themselves (Katho 2013).

The analysis of this chapter is grounded in the previous chapters, especially the review. The Church is the element of inquiry of revelation of peace. According to Esack (1994:20), if the West loses the DRC eventually it will be defeated over the whole of Africa. That is the reason why from the time when the DRC gained its independence in 1960, it has had little peace. The above factor does not exclude other aspects such as the interests of neo-colonial forces that are commonly considered as the main reason for the contemporary crisis in the DRC and elsewhere in Africa. The Church is in an existential battle to generate a new world beyond the extreme levels of violence imposed on people's everyday lives by a tyrannical regime. Brute force aimed at ordinary people protesting is a direct measuring seems to stick for the threat posed to the current regime when hope and the struggle for dignity overtake fear.

What should be when fear and force as the two resources of clinging on to power prevail? The Church broke the mask of fear to quickly respond to the outcry of the voiceless against the situation not only in Kivu but also nationwide. Rensburg (2018) of the *City Press* has cited

Kambale Musavuli (of the friends of Congo) drawing attention to foreign interference, demanding the outgoing regime and the imperialists, neo-colonialists and their African agents to keep their hands off the Congo. According to the article, ever since the death of Lumumba, the West has had a hand in dictating who rules the Congo and orchestrating who replaces him; thus rendering Congo to become an extraction outpost for capitalists at home and abroad. Further, Rensburg (2018) argues that global technology, electronics, automobile, and military industries are all dependent on Congo's strategic minerals for the manufacture of their modern devices. Congo's tactical minerals such as cobalt and coltan are significant to the practicality and profitability of these industries. For Antonio Gutierrez (2008) the secretary of the United Nations reminded the world stating: "The international community has systematically looted DRC and we should not forget that." When peace talks fell apart, the Church does not despair. Through its leaders, the Church continues to be a force for peace in a tumultuous and violent political climate. According to the Catholic World Report (2018) the DRC has seen continued violence and instability as the government and opposition forces struggle over delays in presidential elections. The church was involved as a stakeholder to deal and mediate the process of presidential transaction but faced what was termed as, "lack of political will and openness" on the part of the government. Since then, the church, its activists and clergy have been forcibly suppressed.

### **5.3. Church-based Peacebuilding practices**

Peacebuilding in the Kivu Provinces of the DRC should be considered in the African perspective in order to confront the current political situation that has torn the Eastern regions. From the different researchers' viewpoint violence in the Kivu Provinces of the DRC has resulted in the deaths of millions of civilians in the region. Countries in the Great Lakes Region have been entrapped in violent conflict and consequently have had their lives characterized by poverty, absence of service delivery, political uncertainty, underdevelopment, infrastructural decadence and other issues that discourage the improvement of social safety. Fundamental issues in Kivu before the peace process can be summarized in four: economic exploitation, ethnicity, impunity, and dealing with militias, demobilisation and poverty as already detailed in the previous chapter. These problems continue to subsist and affect people because they were not accurately addressed or inadequately tackled by the peace process. Therefore, they continue to threaten and undermine the fragile peace. Peacebuilding as a responsibility of the church after Independence was introduced by the Catholic Church launched by Pope John

XXIII (1962-5), in order to adapt the life of the church toward ecumenism with great participation of the laity. Its mission originated from the Vatican II Council when the Peace and Justice Commission called the church to address the issues of poverty and social justice among nations.

According to Malelo (2015) in the DRC the Peace and Justice Commission that was formed in 1978 had an objective of lifting the standard of education, research, training, and action for social justice, peace, respect of human rights, democracy, and good governance relatively to the church social doctrine. Wiley (1982) said Kimbanguism focused its mission on spiritual life which consisted of the teaching of the Word of God and reverence of the country's authority while on the social life the church focused on its quest for the well-being of people.

This study also found out that regional ability for war dissuasion should look further in its quest for terminating forceful conflict and then pursue the establishment of the capacity for a culture of a just peace that requires experienced and accountable people who can shape their social ways of living. This research argues that although this acknowledgment is gradually taking grip in peacebuilding activities in Africa, its approaches by the international community have been much criticized. The 1996 conflict has led the DRC to experience the worst conditions since World War II. While the region is alleged to actually possess the biggest United Nations peacekeeping force, the DRC remains afflicted by war. The ongoing conflict in this region represents a failure of the transnational community to uphold lasting peace. This is generally due to peacebuilding approaches that ignore local struggles as being one of the central dynamics of the conflict. Benson *et al.* (2001) have traced the dynamics of DRC conflicts in terms of violence. After the West withdrew their support from Mobutu's oppressive and corrupt activities, his regime weakened and became vulnerable to its geopolitical surroundings.

### *5.3.1 Grassroots education on sustainable peace*

This study argues that within the Church of Christ in Congo, there are opportunities in the form of education that can serve the process of sustainable peace, maintaining growth and dialogue in Africa. According to Dodo, Banda, and Dodo (2016), "Western culture and ideology have brainwashed most African conception, believing that only Western ideologies can offer sustainable solutions for any crisis." As observed, Africa is becoming a hub for the most threatening and destructive conflicts in the world. This study discusses some of these

opportunities and activities; forgiveness, confession, reconciliation. They are applied to the grassroots as mechanisms of promoting sustainable peace in Africa. Dodo, Banda, and Dodo (2016) stipulate that “the Church responds to poverty amongst Black people, reacts to customary African principles, and provides a melting point between modernity and the Christian faith.”

In application, Sampson (1997:15-16) suggests four areas of church intervention: they are, *advocacy, mediating, observing, and educating*. In addition to the above, it is important to state here that in relation to advocacy, the Church strives to empower the underprivileged or destitute by reforming relationships and unfair social structures. This is done by the means of truth telling as a method of healing wounds. The role of mediating involves, good place of work, assistance, and reconciliation. This role of mediation is mostly carried out by church leaders who are to facilitate peace agreement, as was the situation in Sudan in 1972. There is also observation – a role that anticipates the dissuasion of violence, corruption, and human rights breaches. This mechanism has been beneficial in different countries, especially in terms of monitoring and witnessing elections; thus assuring activities related to elections run smoothly. The other element in the traditional religious responsibility area is education. The church through different methods, extending from databases, public schooling, and preparation of social and political materials, provides this element. According to Ngwabi (1999:5) “religious organizations have traditionally provided education to communities through missionary schools.” Through Universities, colleges and seminaries prominent educated African scholars received a balanced education at well-equipped facilities, different from the few government-run institutions that were influenced by the colonial apartheid system. Spiritual leaders also inspire society through their public declarations and activities. The high level of integrity and ethical authority conferred on faith leaders empowers them to handle numerous complex situations.

### *5.3.2 Peace prayers for sustainable peace*

Mobutu’s departure was not the end of dictatorship, it was just the beginning. Then it was war after another. In its search to bring sustainable peace in Kivu, the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC started peacebuilding activities by conducting peace prayers periodically, supporting the ruling government, facilitating and allowing conflict resolution meetings, acknowledging individuals with leadership skills, creating an atmosphere of confidence in

peace and forgiveness, and fostering respect for social structures. These conditions needed the Church because it was well positioned to play such a role.

Green's (2008: 436) description of the term 'agency' includes those administrations or entities which perform and bring transformation definitely or destructively. As far as this study is concerned, agencies or agents are a team of mediators considered as peacemakers and change bringers. In relation to this section, the Church becomes the advocate of compassion and justice in all capacities and aspects of life. Its contribution has been also acknowledged by Johnstone and Mandryk (2001:24) when intervening in many challenging situations. The aim of advocacy by the Church to support those activities that foster peacebuilding.

Nadine Ansorg (2018) of the *Mail & Guardian* claims that there is ongoing violence in other parts of the country including North Kivu and Kasai, where residents are tremendously suffering in the hands of their own government forces. Despite having the United Nations peacekeeping force, which is currently the largest in the world, the troop has been unable to stabilize the situation in these areas. As a result, more than 4.5 million people have been internally displaced and more than 3 million are at risk of starvation. According to Ansorg (2018), the situation is so dreadful, but there is a way out; that of another attempt of mediation. This mediation consisted of the Church attempting to mediate a deal between the regime in place and the opposition as it was in 2016.

### 5.3.3 Churches monitoring peace talks

Trevor (2001) explains the term monitoring by claiming that it refers to the scientific process of collecting information on the basis of which a substantiation decision is to be made. Monitoring is another word of supervising and may not be conducted distantly or on the ground. The monitoring stage is an important element of peace that should be kept closely to the mediator so it will not derive from the parties to an agreement or a specialized observer. Monitoring permits all parties to assess the progress of agreed implementation plans and helps identify opportunities and difficulties in implementing a peace agreement. It thus creates the preconditions for finding solutions.

Studies of the achievement of peace agreements have been ambivalent about the importance of monitoring and substantiation. In an analysis of UN peacekeeping mission composition and peace duration following civil wars in Africa, 1989–2010, Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon (2006) found that the number of unarmed observers was not considerably linked with peace

duration. In contrast, the liaison between armed peacekeepers and peace duration was both positive and statistically significant. This may lead to say that monitoring comes into view as an extent of the peace process. Nevertheless, the presence of armed peacekeepers does not have a statistically significant effect. This study supports the opinion that effective monitoring and substantiation prolong the stability of peace agreements by addressing commitment problems inherent in peace processes. Peacebuilding activities by the CCC include monitoring and providing support for the finalisation of the peace talks.

This has been illustrated by the Forum for Development Studies (2013) claiming that on 29 February 2008, the regional Church mediated an accord on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) which was signed by many. As part of its activities, every local church was obliged to setting a committee to look into different challenges and respond accordingly. There are cases that need medical attention. These are transferred to ‘Panzi hospital’ in Bukavu where they received treatment under the supervision of experts as it was also observed by Lartey (1997), who said that human beings face many hardships that disrupt and injure them differently. Naturally, those who have lost something they enjoyed before would rejoice once it is restored, and those who have been affected physically will be glad to recuperate their health. It is important to remind the reader that many people still have traumatic feelings in relation to their family members that were buried alive in common grave and others set ablaze after they were found praying in a church in South Kivu, at Mutarule on the way from Bukavu to Uvira. With a situation such as this, the Church has to monitor even the reaction of both the survivors and perpetrators in order to recover harmony and resolution. This is only possible through true dialogue and through intensified individual and collective education and close monitoring.

The Church is also involved in the provision of shelters offered to widows as part of the countrywide social security and monitoring efforts. The church also provides tuition to students who also benefit from tuition fees to assist them to continue with their studies at different levels. For the children who got involved in military or armed group activities, the Church tries to arrange negotiation of how they should integrate social life and rediscover their future. These wide-ranging observations lead to the discussion of the discoveries, in the process of finding sustainable peace in Kivu Provinces. These can materialize when closely monitored by the church. This why this study would argue that because peacebuilding is a preventive process,

there should also be an assurance that peace is maintained before the conflict arises or maintain peace after the initial fighting has lessened.

This is a clear indication that monitoring is one of the roles of the Church advocacy and it has been there for a long time. The presence of the church into the stance of political and social life conflict is to mediate and monitor the signed agreement. In so doing, the church remains the most suitable body even in times of intense strife such as the situation in the Kivu provinces. According to Paffenholz (2006:1), “government players are state leaders considered as agents acting on behalf of the government at various stages and promoting change and the needed peaceful transformation”.

Non-Governmental players are often obliged by civil society to compel the government to honour democratic rules and safeguard human rights. A public organization is the third part, considered as intermediate bodies energetically involved in supporting or consolidating democracy. To achieve peacebuilding this study supports the idea of the normative, theoretical, and institutional stages including improvement of policies, strategies, proposing sustainable recognized mechanisms for post-conflict restoration on the regional, sub-regional and national echelons, and on the effective problems, as well supporting preminent practices and lessons learnt from experiences in DRC and beyond. It means that political leaders should promote practices that stimulate harmony in a country or society by creating settings that are suitable for maintainable reconciliation. Such environments are shaped in order to avert conflicts from erupting, hence peace is sustained. Practically these conditions are usually made in a post conflict situation when an end through a conflict resolution mechanism has been established. It is within those surroundings that the process of peacebuilding begins. The method of implementing different characteristics of peace agreement develops the foundational process of peace recovery. The method or process of peacebuilding is ongoing and involves numerous interventions. These interventions comprise the transformation of state structures, socio-political progress, democratization, and regional integration.

#### **5.4 The limits of CCC in peacebuilding initiatives**

The Church of Christ in Congo is a big institution that carries different activities at different levels. The initiative and the effectiveness of peacebuilding require truthfulness and true forgiveness. The role of Church leaders and governmental officials is to grasp every opportunity to call individuals to acknowledge and speak the truth to one another.

True forgiveness will have to take place; hypocrisy should be dealt with at all levels in the country. There is a need to establish who is a true Congolese and who is a refugee from neighbouring countries. Although the church has been present in the DRC beginning with the slave trade, it has failed to critically challenge the industries and states that have taken advantage of the most marginalised Congolese and has even allowed itself to become complicit in this ill treatment at various times in Congolese history. It is clear, for example, that despite the fact that the church was given responsibility for the Congolese education system, the church, and its leadership have failed to deliver a kind of education that promotes the well-being of the Congolese.

The church sometimes appears also to have failed to get engaged positively in the most pressing issues that affect the DRC such as the formation of camps to harbour Rwandese refugees in the eastern part of the DRC, and the ill-treatments of the Congolese by various governments at different periods of their recent history. Some subdivisions of the church distracted corrupted relationships with different regimes in the DRC. In this regard, it has been eminent that the Catholic Church was used during both the slave trade and the colonial period. Further evidence of this includes the normal churches and Kimbanguists supporting the Mobutu government and more lately the mainstream churches and the AICs support the Kabila administration during the conflict period – support which is undergirded by the influence of regional, international and multinational corp. It cannot be overemphasised that the church in the DRC has been given different opportunities to serve the people of the DRC in order to promote durable peace at different periods of its history.

Three of these prospects are traced from (1) the colonial period and the church's role in education; (2) the nomination of a church leader as chairperson of the Sovereign National Conference during the Mobutu government; and (3) the position of the chairperson of "the independent electoral commission" for the democratic period was offered to a church leader under whose auspices the elections were conducted. As far as education was concerned, the church has failed to assist in generating what Green (2008:42) calls a "good quality education that is liberated, a pathway to remarkable freedom and choice, and opens the door to recover health, producing opportunities, and material well-beings". As it was observed historically, the colonial education system did not prepare Congolese for future responsibilities in their country. Alongside the lack of education, there is the fact that social organisations were basically transformed into political parties. The church and its management failed in their responsibility



to assist Congolese and train them on how to become self-reliant in order to succeed in their own enlargement. The outcome of the 2011 elections was supervised by a Protestant church leader and has been considered as controversial, thus positioning the country on a precarious democratic track. This compounded the issues identified during the democratic election in 2006, which also the result was uncertain and disputed. Considering the above abortive opportunities, this study agrees that the church has not done enough to address the crises in the DRC in general and in Kivu Provinces in particular hence the significance of this study. There are five aspects identified as basic to understand the failure of the church to accomplish its mission in the DRC: (1) the privatisation of the church, (2) the provision of social services as charities without any sense of investing practical knowledge in the recipients, (3) lack of a visionary dimension, (4) ignorance of socio-political concerns, and (5) absence of theological training. There is a need for community recognition of all crimes and sincere dialogue between fellow human beings which alone may result in a permanent solution to the Congolese crisis. For this move and initiative, the church is well positioned as a key role in terms of supervising the reconciliation process.

### **5.5. Strengthening CCC Peace-building capacity**

While there are positive initiatives within the Church of Christ in Congo, there are also inadequacies such as those emphasized in the earlier section. However, by considering the scope of the peacebuilding processes, it is possible to employ some techniques that can assist in overcoming them. The most useful approaches are listening skills, equipping peace actors with practical skills; enrich the relationship with other peacebuilding experts. People living in war regions face frequent circumstances of hardship that need quick intervention; widows, orphans, victims of disasters and sexual assaults are the most crucial ones. An urgent conflict resolution task force should be ready to intervene in advance by alerting the government prior to conflict escalation into violence.

Structural peacebuilding initiatives of the CCC involve mediations through varied platforms with strong objectives and inputs with expected results to guarantee the different interventions. At all stages of the Church of Christ in Congo management, non-violent apparatuses to contract with socio-economic discriminations and respect of the privileges of disadvantaged and other defenceless societies should be reconsidered by structures of verdict creation within the institution with a particular focus on projects supported by external organizations. The initiative of inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic dialogue assumed by the CCC should be improved and followed

in order to reconstruct the harmony of communal groups, in order for them to be able to operate mutually, thus challenging all short comings in different sectors. This way, the Church also will prophetically play its role in promoting social and economic justice.

In conclusion, the CCC has to improve its approaches in order to enrich the operation of principles of respectable governance especially in the areas of transparency, accountability, involvement, efficiency, competence, upright service and democracy. Among other approaches, the institution should retain and maintain training on governance, performance agreement, constant observation and assessment by preparing and informing Church adherents on their right to be knowledgeable about Church activities. Within the same logic, the Church should inform its members about the values of having a section of transformation and peacebuilding in order to deal and prevent conflict that may rise not only between Church members but also within the community and diverse relatives and organizations. The extended role of the department is to enhance cultural peacebuilding by organizing different campaigns, seminars or crusades aiming the promotion of the culture of scriptural peace and interconnected values such as love, reliability, forgiveness, tolerance, and confidence. The Church should be creative and encourage its youth to organize competitions through songs, sports, poetries, and tests within and without of Church of Christ in Congo denominations. Hochschule (2015) spotted Lederach's opinion related to the modern-day system that influences international relations, conflict dynamics, and peace solutions and claimed that religious activities of peacebuilding contribute most to faith-based diplomacy, advocacy, dialogue, and education.

This study is of the opinion that religious peacebuilding activities have a negligible influence on governmental peace processes and the potential to positively influence the grassroots level as envisioned by the Church of Christ in Congo. Nevertheless, a theological approach was adopted.

#### *5.5.1 Activating surplus cultural and ecclesial capacity*

Local church leaders have demonstrated a capacity to endure the work despite the many challenges they encounter, such as a shortage of funding, threats, and dangers to their lives and the lives of their families. The ECC leaders have proved to be the central leaders who keep moving regardless of many obstacles in order to obtain sustainable peace. This links with Lederach's (1997) theory of peacebuilding claiming that "it is central-range leaders who are eligible to an important role in peacebuilding. Grounded on the principles of Lederach, it is

logical to say that there is uniformity between the theory and findings regarding how the central-range leaders are influential in peace restoration. They endure hardship for extended periods of time. Bartoli (2004:158) provides four motives why Church leaders are key in peacebuilding as from the grassroots dimension, locally and countrywide: “1. familiarity of language and culture, 2. Access to first-hand information, 3. governmental proficiency and administrative structure, and 4. Its sustainable vision.” Bartoli (2004:158) also claims that local church leaders “function with extraordinary productivity even in unbalanced and unclear circumstances. This theory explains how these leaders have extended term-vision as they crave to see peace established in their own nation.

Most of the time these spiritual denominations and cultural performances are overlooked by the secular humanitarian groups and government players. They forget and ignore the fact that local communities have huge prospects that could be utilized for peace restoration. Church groups and meetings are basically found all over the whole country, especially in the countryside where organizations range from assemblies designed for worship and reflect onto those devoted to education, health, and communication. Pyana (2013) emphasizes that when the church and local culture are properly mobilized and equipped, religious communities and cultural leaders can assist as real opportunities and agencies for encouraging participatory governance and peace edification because they are well positioned to curb social vices for democratic values to be instituted between them.

This viewpoint provides a mutual ground for stimulating peace and justice by creating consensus concerning collective challenges. Pyana (2013) equally stresses that while clergy is one of the main factors that need to be considered earnestly in endorsing maintainable peace in the DRC, it is not sufficient just to distinguish them. This study is of the opinion that churches and their leaders should at the same time rise above their basic divisions and reinforce their moral authority by becoming people’s voices in favour of peace. This brings us to the next theological value that foster sustainable peace in a troubled area.

The Church and civil society initiated several negotiations and meetings in the late 1990s and early 2000s, trying to find solutions for peace thus engaging with other actors of peace even on the other side of the national boundary. The peace-building initiatives were also needed not to be contained by the DRC neighbouring countries in the East. Those are other Churches

desperate for a constructive and respectful dialogue with their counterparts in the Great Lakes countries.

The relatively modest dialogue attempts of bringing together Church leaders from DRc, Rwanda, and Burundi under the banner of “ecumenical dialogue” through the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA), to participate in advocacy, peace-building and diplomacy, as it was examined by van Leeuwen, (2008). The forum was constituted by National church councils that also comprised the Congolese CCC/ECC. All together were concerned by the impact of war and violence that affected the church members. Analytically, it seems clear that the situation in the DRC both social and political remains extremely rooted in a national outlook (van Leeuwen, 2008).

According to Action Relief (2014), a network for pastors and a compassion committee were elected to serve the prerequisites in the community. Gozdziaak (2001:136) connecting to the part of the church in the community states that: “*the church places a vital character by teaching and preaching the appropriate word of God to support in the settlement of those who were severely affected by the conflict throughout their time in the country of origin.*” This highlights the importance of religious institutions, especially for those women and men who were victims of rape and other forms of violence, because remembrance can still hurt the self, and interrupt the mind. In the democratization process, the church climbed three levels, which include the conditions that give the church the opportunity to mobilize people for sustainable peace, the contributions of the church in the struggle for democracy and the limitations of the church in carrying out these processes.

The Church’s opportunity to engage in the process of democratization in the DRC has been shaped by its organizational resources, because of the deteriorating socio-economic and the emergence of oppressive conditions of the people due to the aggression from the neighbouring countries that have affected the socio- economic structures in the eastern part. During this tough period, the church as a divine institution remained among the few that managed to keep a degree of communal autonomy from the state, despite critics’ originating from a dense network of corrupt political leaders as well as religious. The true church in nearly every social and economic scope and multi-ethnic environment differentiated itself through the propagation of its ethical dogmas and social political interpretations that enabled it to contribute to the social change of the DRC citizens through the prospects for democratic participation. Finally Philpot (2013) argues that in this context the Church educates, analyses matters for their ethical and

social scopes, measures strategies against the standards of the Gospel, contributes with other residents in the debate over community policies and speaks out with courage, skill, and concern on questions connecting human rights, social justice, and the life of the Church in society.

### *5.5.2 Peacebuilding from the grassroots (those affected by the conflict)*

Saunders' (1999) declaration that “envoys or Ambassadors and politicians possibly can decide on peace consensuses, at the end is it the populations who brand peace.” The statement is a clear indication that excluding residents from peacebuilding is a road to failure. This means that for an effective peace resolution to materialise, peace resolutions should involve residents at the grassroots because they are the local proprietors of the method of peacebuilding. In light of the above, it is possible for this study to maintain that whilst local participation is significant, it is key to involve local leaders at different levels. This reminds us of Lederach (1997) who advised that middle-range leaders should be given an advantageous position in peacebuilding procedures. It is important to stress here that the local leadership in this section speaks of local church leadership. The features of their leadership as resident proprietors in relation to local conflict resolution and structure are hereby offered.

This is a very important area in peacebuilding processes. It is an inclusive aspect that operates and involves local people from the grassroots level. Church leadership engages its structure with local people because they understand what is on the ground due to a significant level of ownership they carry. Local leaders are in contact with local fighters on a daily basis. They know the language to use in order to persuade the rebels to come back home. This study argues that, if peace is to be attained, “it has to come from within” (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2009:173). Local residents should be seen as the proprietors of the peace initiative and should be involved at the grassroots. They know the right procedures and who are the legislatures of the local figures within the community to associate in the process. These approaches are effective to enhance peace. This study agrees with Lederach (1997:42) that “vibrant commitment at the grassroots level should principally involve local leaders because they are the appropriators and part of the local people and live in similar circumstances with the identical day-to-day skirmishes.”

In the quest to discuss the sources of the persistent conflict in the Kivu provinces, local leaders initiated a special program involving local people who have been affected by the 1996 invasion. The CCC leaders introduced the platform aimed at preparing fighters to return home. This

study finds convincing local defence to return home was one of the paramount topics in the Congolese struggle. This is all about the theoretical understanding of peacebuilding procedures that necessitate altering structures that frequently lead to the re-occurrence of conflict. According to Darwish and Rank (2012:2), “change must be searched for in the public, economic and political scopes” because in modern civilization it is frequently multifaceted and multi-dimensional, to an extent that all-inclusive resolutions that challenge the structural reasons become inescapable for the sake of peace restoration.” According to Autesserre (2006), the condition in the DRC has worsened because there was no resident conflict resolution involved at the grassroots. This significant phase was ignored by the UN as it only concentrated on big manoeuvres thus avoiding associating with indigenous stakeholders in the peace efforts. It is imperative to know that peace recovery should be a resident conflict resolution determination for it to succeed.

According to Pyana (2013), national consultations should not be a waste of time and waste of resources while people are excluded from the peace struggles process. It, therefore, appears obligatory to practice the democratic inclusion of all at the grassroots and even with the diaspora, as new tactics leading to peace and safety in the country, in order to address the weaknesses and past mistakes in the ongoing peacebuilding process. There should be a consulting period to understand how both local and those Congolese living out of the country envision a peaceful nation. As far as its involvement in political peacebuilding, cultural diversity knows no territorial boundary. Instead, ethnic identities allow for a greater degree of liberty between national identity and social behaviours as defined by boundaries while sharing the same faith and ethnic background. At the state level, assimilating cultural diversity into national identity is perplexing, as wars in Africa have resulted in the disappointment of political institutions in structuring a national identity.

Established Churches protagonists in DRC deploy their networks efforts mobilising people for peace-building. It is obvious to wonder how this step was taken. Based Churches were to take an initial stage of dialogue between local leaders and other groups resulting in the establishment of an institutional structure. While building cohesion across the different constituencies in the Kivu region, this was a key step although much greater importance was put on establishing a cross-border dialogue among people thought of being antagonists.

### 5.5.3 *Mobilization and workshops*

Mobilization is another tool used by the CCC to propagate the work of peace. The program included sessions and workshops to try and bring back ethical imperatives in a war-ravaged country. As portrayed by Schreiter (1997). The message of the CCC emphasises standards of peace and change of culture of war while attacking the root of the conflict. The role of peace restoration should be embraced and taught by trained church and local community leaders who are transformed and possess the true vision of peace. The author continuously argues that an example of peace trainers should be taken from some significant individuals such as leaders who are resident. These are then able to direct the public in a social settlement procedure. This criterion is found in the CCC. Founded on their readiness to serve with those considered by the community as promoters of conflict in the DRC is an indication of a resolved approach. The CCC has recognized a structure of influencing rational behaviours to restore ethical demand and brand an even better input to rebuild the society. The Church of Christ in Congo's programme of sustainable peace known in French as "Paix Durable" is activated by protestant churches in the DRC under the coverage of "*Eglise du Christ au Congo* (ECC)" or CCC for this thesis. The programme consists of food distribution to the refugees, the repatriation of those Rwandans Hutu soldiers and refugees that fled from Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, now living mostly in the provinces of North and South Kivu – many living without any education or health care.

The repatriation programme is active through the involvement of the local churches residing in the provinces. This is done through mobilization to attend workshops and seminars, attended by local leaders and the residents who respond to the invitation. The aim of seminars and workshops is to educate the local leaders on how they can get involved and contribute to promoting the message of sustainable peace. The programme carries out different awareness-raising activities such as giving out flyers with the content of peace. The message of peace is also propagated through radio and television. The programme also to some extent is done through advocacy toward influential personalities within different combatant groups.

The various strategies used by the church to mobilize its members and get them involved in different socio-political activities have been acknowledged and stressed by most researchers. According to Verba et al. (1995), the church uses its potentiality to intensify people's levels of civic talents, political effectiveness, and political information. That is why Action Relief (2014)

claims that mobilization is the first step into peacebuilding activities. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993:87) claim that “the involvement in organizations promotes political participation by making people liable to mobilization.” Politically, the church in the DRC, as an institution stands between national and local political leaders and ordinary citizens, as Djupe & Grant (2001) argue, “to influence political participation and convince Church members into political processes.” Harris (1994) goes beyond the church as an institution and claims that: “African churches act in multifaceted ways such as mobilizing their members by motivating people’s perception and promoting theological clarifications favourable to political contribution.”

Calhoun-Brown (1996) similarly states that “African churches substitute a sense of perception by assembling the comforts of the smaller individual groups in an effort to pawn prejudice and discrimination from mainstream people.” In relation to mobilizing the church for transformation, Creff (2004) acknowledge the spiritual significance and the value of engaging the church for transformation. He supports his claim by illustrating the role played by the church in South Africa when it held its fourth prayer concert to lay a spiritual foundation of the African Renaissance, thus gathering an estimated of 30 million people in a stadium that could only hold 1200, to pray for the needs of the African continent. The mass mobilization of devoted Christians serves to demonstrate that the church is able to play and to support the transformation of people not only in the Kivu Provinces but the entire affected region for the welfare of people.

According to Ross (1997) “instituting pleasant relationships between the various cultures and cultural identities avoids the tendency to paralyse politics.” Balanced strategies will be needed to facilitate their functionality in legislation with a high dimension of traditional diversity in Africa. Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000) claim that “societies with diverse cultures are significantly less prone to violent conflicts than polarized countries.” High chances of negotiation are expected to reduce the occurrence of conflict, which results in refining political strength. Real peace in the DRC conflict should not be a perspective that is externally-driven instead; it should be driven by indigenous understanding, with social beliefs that permit a better role to be played by the church and traditional observations in the peacebuilding process. Pyana (2013) stresses that: “it was important for a country comprising more than 200 different ethnic tribes, where nearly 65 per cent of the people live in rural areas upholding traditional beliefs about self and the other, power and authority, land and belonging, etc. powerfully inspire how resident communities comprehend peace and conflict.” Pyana further ascertains that the DRC residents are generally very spiritual, with 50 percent Roman Catholic, 20 percent Protestant,



10 percent Kimbanguist, 10 percent Muslim, and 10 percent adhering to syncretic sects and native dogmas.

While there are many cornerstones that may be used to build sustainable peace in a community one keystone for stabilisation and peacebuilding strategy is “state building”. This approach is grounded on the notion that the Congolese state is fragile and needs to be supported with technical and financial support. Such an investigation underestimates the structural character of a state which, since its creation, has been patrimonial, transacted and considered by many of its citizens as greedy, serving the political and economic benefits of the elite, who consume resources that should be serving the country’s improvement. The other elements usually considered as a landmark in the state building process are elections that are held predominantly with a view to fortifying adequate legitimacy in the eyes of the outside world, rather than in an effort to provide accurately democratic governance nationally. This key element is mostly promoted by the country’s international partners. However, it has been suppressed by the Congolese authorities always very slow to apply it. The Church of Christ in Congo has continued to advocate for a strong and legitimate state while engaging with this discourse.

## **5.6 Trapped in Violence or is Sustainable Peace Possible?**

Is there hope? Most of its residents and those who have fled the country keep this same question: Does the world care? The world leaders seem to have turned their backs on the predicament of this nation; and those who pretend to be helping seem to be doing so for their own benefit. The problem of sustainable peace remains altogether elusive. A resolution for the DRC and the Great Lakes region requires that different methods be considered

.There are definitely several other approaches; however, this study focuses on how the CCC contributes to sustainable peace. Do its strategies include the database of changing the philosophy of violence to the one of peace? The answer to this characteristic is embedded in the principle of the non-violent strategy as employed by the Church of Christ in Congo to influence sustainable peace. This study observed that Church leaders have concluded that: “there is no way out through violence “except through sincere negotiation with the DRC opponents or invaders. Joining Mudida’s (2014) claim, the use of violent tactics to disentangle conflict is to be questioned. The tactic renders someone ignorant to the extent of not being certain of the essential mechanical changes which will transpire. Nevertheless, Galtung (1996) speaks of direct violence and indirect violence and other different schemes surrounded by the

society leading to violence to be changed and opt for the non-violent methodology to resolve conflict. It is not a secret that a military approach does a lot of damage. However, there are factors that need to be considered in non-violent resolution; meeting the needs of both the current and future generations (Lockie & Ransan-Cooper 2015), economic progress to expand the welfare of people's life in a maintainable way (Costanza et al. 2015:), avoid manipulation of natural resources. Instead, a setting of justice according to what Collin and Collin (2015) refer to should be considered in order to reduce effects on defenceless residents. Here, the idea is that for any change to be maintainable, it should affect both the present and the future. Sustainable peace has to likewise consider the social, political, economic, and environmental dimensions of people's life.

Peacebuilding takes place through numerous activities during and after conflict. Peacebuilding is rooted in principles, as it involves local Churches, religious and inter-faith institutions, organizations and other actors who engage in a mutual process of dialogue aimed at transforming a conflict situation. Smith (2012) claims that "peace in DRC is conceivable, but it will require a sustained determination and clear rational. "According to Powers (2010) "strategies to peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region needed a formulation of a strategic plan by Church leaders from the region who collectively addressed the inter-locking conflicts that have brought so much suffering to their countries." It can, therefore, be said that a strategic plan for peacebuilding in the region was designed by and for people whose mission and self-understanding is shaped by a specific set of dogmas, practices and institutions and whose effectiveness is derived in large measure from peace principles.

Shank and Schirch (2009) state that strategizing for peacebuilding involves limitless options as peacebuilding encompasses and requires a variety of tactics. For instance, pacifist activists push for human rights while peacekeepers opt for splitting groups in conflict and demobilizing fighters. Religious and church leaders encourage and emphasize making peace with neighbours, while aid labours chose to provide aid; public mediators and restorative justice specialists facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties, but business leaders give aid to victims, while government leaders initiate change through community policy. According to Shank and Lisa Schirch (2009), "these limitless approaches are strategically categorized into themes that focus on a specific task. These approaches are grouped into four categories that include waging conflict non-violently, decreasing direct violence, changing connections, and building capacity." Within each of the four sections, detailed peacebuilding activities are clarified. They contain the discussion on the what, then when, and the how questions, and

responses thereto. Ashworth and Ryan (2013) advocating for the Church's contribution throughout 22 years of civil war in South Sudan, state that: "the church was the sole organization that endured on the ground with the people. There was no operative government; the young 'comrades' with guns eroded no civil society, no United Nations, no secular NGOs, and even the authority of the local chiefs." In other words, they are saying that wherever people were, the church identified with them, caring and providing many of the services that one would expect from a government. Services such as health care, education, emergency relief, food, shelter, and even security and protection are the responsibilities of the government. Instead, populaces of all affected areas considered the church leadership to come to their rescue.

The clergy increased the level of reliability and moral authority, which places it in an exclusive position in the new nation under reconstruction. In a situation such as this, it is generally expected, that the church would have a leading public role, especially in peace and reconciliation. According to Ashworth (2013) "it was an opportunity for the church to illustrate "strategic peacebuilding." The church leveraged its possessions spiritually, morally, politically and ecclesiastically to shape capacity and generate seats for the thorough effort of peace. The improvement of peacebuilding is multidimensional, because of three unified stages of peacebuilding: The conflict avoidance and reduction phase, the crisis controlling and cessation of hostilities phase, and the alliance leading to a stable peaceful order phase. These stages are linked with other aspects such as trust and forgiveness, which meaningfully contribute to peacebuilding at all, levels.

Philpott (2013) states, that: "the Church plays the role of an agent of reconciliation since it is a member of civil society." The Church plays an integral role in peacebuilding in Africa, because of the enterprising efforts of religious actors. In the same context, Katunga (2008), elaborate Philpot's concept by claiming that the church in the Great Lakes region is better situated than any other single actor to unite the present peace improvements through a settlement process. While the present political plan has a consensus on the usage of power, it has not confronted the profound root causes of violent conflicts to an extent of identifying issues related to unhealed traumas, historical prejudices, etc. that generate harmful ethnicity. It should be understood that conflict and the consequent violence resulted in deep psychological injuries in most of the people in the affected area, especially among the thousands of women and children who were raped and considered as properties of war in eastern DRC.

According to Katunga (2008), “ethnic and civic pressures are still intense in most places regardless of the presence of legitimate administrations. That is the reason the Church is involved in a psycho-social supplement of wounded, by creating healing centres, planning settlement processes, particularly among residents to address the profound seated anger between members of various ethnic societies.” The church is acting in the capacity of an institutional ally. Taking the Great Lakes Region as an example, due to the level and degree of violence that faced the population, the church had no option but to increase its attentiveness and ability about the activities she authoritatively plays in peacebuilding. Through training institutions (60% of schools in DRC) and teaching centres, the church seems to be well placed to analyse the fundamental reasons for war as well as their dynamics. In planning strategic responses, the church prevented and alleviated conflicts while supporting peace efforts in the affected area. In order to deal with similar situations, the church continuously structured the capacity of its followers and society to thwart violent conflicts and sustain peaceful communications.

Philpott (2013) illustrates the role of clergy as it was observed in some African countries that were swept by conflicts. The question of knowing when the church can be or is a force for peace rather than conflict rises. While some evoke questions about whether the church is suited for political practices, others refer to the West, where many consider the church as isolated, a problem of soul craft, not the government, and best kept out of the public debate. Although the task of the church is mainly spiritual and not political; for motives that are both theological and permissible, its participation in community life does not extend to approving candidates for election to civic office or calling for their downfall.

Historically, the Church of Christ in Congo of Congo was created by Protestant churches as a response to the challenge of hard work that was imposed on them by the Belgian colonial government under a Catholic label. After independence in 1970, Protestant churches under the leadership of their Council decided to integrate within one-structure different communities that agreed to join and work together. The aim of these denominations was to form a synod that would deliberate on issues related to evangelical developments and represent them as one united and organized body vis-à-vis the government to face opposing conditions.

Tshilenga (2005) argues that “the Church of Christ in Congo is an institution and visible evidence of unity at work.” The activities of the Church of Christ in Congo include; evangelism, health, community improvement, and educational institutions like schools and universities. As a result of this initiative, in the area of education, three universities were created

namely “Université Protestante au Congo, Université Chrétienne de Kinshasa, and Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs” as theological institutions and training centres to respond to various intellectual needs.

## **5.7. Conclusion**

This chapter presented the Church of Christ in Congo as advocates of peace in the DRC, particularly in Kivu Provinces. Notwithstanding the persistent conflict in the Eastern area, the church has broken its silence and stood up as an institution to claim the restoration of sustainable peace in the region.

Through its position in society, the Church pledges the element of enquiry to a just peace for all. The chapter analyzed the Church peacebuilding in terms of the framework that reinforces the debate related to the country’s challenges of increasing insecurity gaps, high unemployment, and a culture of violence that has far-reaching negative consequences. The chapter has found that the Church of Christ in Congo has advocated these concerns making them a priority in its efforts to forge innovative sustainable peace. The chapter has also dealt with grassroots education for just peace at all levels of people in the community in order to succeed in finding sustainable peace in troubled areas.

The chapter claimed also the church’s approach to both inadequacies and the way to overcoming inadequacies, by networking with other peace players and acknowledging their capacity. The role of the church as an active stakeholder was also seen in its mobilization and workshops offered to residents. The programme as was said earlier included peacebuilding from the grassroots. The chapter found that sustainable peace process was a platform managed by central-range leaders working under the CCC initiative in order to find a solution to the persistent conflict in the region. Regardless of some limitations for the Church of Christ in Congo in its peacebuilding determination, the inter-faith dialogue strategy also looked well-structured to an extent that it stimulated the combatant people to work together towards conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The concept leads us to the next chapter towards a theology of peacebuilding in the DRC.

## CHAPTER 6:

### TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF PEACEBUILDING IN THE DRC

#### 6.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out a theological framework for the Church of Christ in Congo peacebuilding effort. While it does not aim to offer a particular theological position nor a once-size-fits-all method to situations of persecution, violence, conflict, and injustice, relatively it seeks to outline some of the key theological problems, locations and approaches that are significant in the pursuit of sustainable peace, to which we can refer and seek to apply in our work. This debate is embedded in our practical theology that in the understanding of our call to participate in the divine task of re-establishing relationships between people. The Church of Christ in Congo understands that the divine assignment is fundamentally about conveying sustainable peace. This will require that theology of peacebuilding be defined to facilitate the reader's understanding of what it is all about.

#### 6.2. Defining theology of peacebuilding

Dear's (1994:15) definition of a theology of peace describes well the connotation in a context of conflict from the perspective of the ecosphere's violence. For Dear (1994), theology refers to God's connection and intention to transform violence into nonviolence. While the Church may be considered as a negative force due to its internal problems; basically, "it is to this extent considered as a good phenomenon and inevitably a supply for harmony and common interconnection with influence in the foundations, vibrant and management of skirmish" (Abu-Nimer, 2001:685). In the search for the kind of theology that suits the church in handling the issues of socio-political and influence restoration and encourage peaceful coexistence in the DRC; the Church of Christ in Congo has opted for dialogue as an instrument of peacebuilding in Eastern region. Dealing with theology inevitably implies engaging God's perception of matters related to spiritual doctrines and debates. One of the aims of this project was to find an applicable theology of peace to confront the predominant condition of war in the provinces of Kivu. This concept was used in relation to the Church of Christ in Congo's call for sustainable peace and its interventions of peacebuilding in the DRC; this is debated in the following section. Besides discussing a theology of peacebuilding, the chapter will also map discourses and resources from which such a theology may be constructed.

The peacebuilding procedure by the government partially succeeded in ending the Kivu war but failed to build an enduring peace. The church positioned itself as unifying different ethnic groups that were victimised by the war. The approach concentrated on finishing ongoing issues including bringing various groups together. The Church tackled issues that instigated, fuelled, and sustained the fight. This was done through its technique of involving the local people from the ground up. The Church was able to visit even remote areas. Although the Identity factor has not been completely addressed due to the renewal and intention of attacks by the previous invaders, identity remains a factor that is sustaining oppression and structural ferocity in the eastern DRC. These aspects are tied up with pressure and instability which continue to devastate the current dynamics in the area. Rivalry due to limited incomes carries on in fuelling pressure. Exploitation and impunity characterise the activities of the regime. People have not completely settled, for fear of another possible invasion.

With respect to the universal Church mission in peace-building, the Church was mostly concentrated in addressing the issues of poverty and social justice among nations. According to Malelo (2015), the Peace and Justice assignment was initiated in the DRC in 1978 with the objective to work toward studies, research, training, and action for social justice, peace, respect of human rights, democracy, and good governance according to the church social doctrine. On the same note, Wiley (1982) argues that Kimbanguism emphasises its duty on living a spiritual life, thus focusing on teaching the Word of God and on the social life of people. La Prosperité (2015) explains that there was also the 'Revival Church in Congo' with its twofold mission: To promote peace between God and human beings and to uphold reconciliation between human beings, which conveys national unity.

This section analyzed the CCC peacebuilding strategies in bringing sustainable peace in the Kivu provinces. The CCC has well-developed programmes that are committed to the betterment of the DRC people by claiming a level of transparency in the peace process. Theologically the CCC evocated social responsibility as modern practical theology to movingly reflect on the Journey which suggests that the Church should engage a holistic perspective and find interactions that will contribute effectively to the transformation of its people.

The chapter indicated the church position as unifying different ethnic groups that were victimised by the war. The Church tackled issues that prompted and sustained the struggle. This chapter indicated that technically, the Church of Christ in Congo involved the local people

from the ground up by visiting even remote areas. Although the identity factor has not been completely addressed due to the renewal and intention of attacks by the previous invaders, identity remains a factor that is sustaining oppression and structural ferocity in the eastern DRC. These aspects are tied up with pressure and instability which continue to devastate the current dynamics in the area. This chapter further indicated that exploitation and impunity characterise the activities of the regime. People have not completely settled for fear of another possible invasion. This chapter has drawn attention to a new approach that is suitable for social stability and is ethically responsible for standards and guidelines. The overall academics consulted have agreed that the Church has an impact across all society; meaning the Church is highly significant. The approach concentrated on finishing ongoing issues including bringing various groups together.

In the interest of the innocent men, women, and children of the DRC who continue to die daily and those who are seeking asylum elsewhere, there is a need for a lasting solution to the DRC ultimate war. The question is how to intervene in this unending Congo war? The persistence of the conflict in eastern DRC is a direct result of the Congolese government's peacebuilding failures. The fact that the government ignored placing importance on local dialogue, but rather concentrated on national and regional dialogues, resulted in the failure to preserve peace. Regional dialogues resulted in the failure to preserve peace within its boundaries. The study of the Kivu conflict demonstrates the way local conflicts may spread to a nationwide safety risk. The chapter has indicated that the state did not want to acknowledge the fact that considerable insecurity in the Kivu provinces is a consequence of the neighbouring countries invasions assisted by rebellious resident forces. From physical violence to exploitation, the development of the struggle in this region has been shaped by various dynamics. These aspects resulted in local conflict between two ethnic groups that caused escalation to the extent of requiring the intervention of an armed force to quash the conflict. The next chapter deals with the full aspect of the Church intervention and its activities of peacebuilding.

### **6.3 Key theological concepts related to sustainable peace**

This chapter strives to understand the theological perspective on peace by discussing various dogmatic discourses on peace in order to form a theology of peace that may applicably address



the prevailing situation of conflict in the Kivu provinces. The purpose of theology is to deal with timeless matters by means of language, concepts, and other methods that create contextual meaning of the current period. Gutierrez (1971) defines theology as a “precarious image on praxis in the grace of God’s word.” It is crucial to stress here that in the context of this thesis, the focus is on a theology of peace in relation to the conflict that has persisted in the Kivu Provinces. In this perspective, a theology of peace refers to God’s sensitivity to the need for stability in a crisis situation. Dear (1994), defines a theology of peace as “a revelation of God’s affiliation and intention to transform violence through non-violent means.” In this situation, the role of theology is to identify God’s way out of violence. In this context, it is also understood as a theological method to help peace-builders stop violence and restore sustainable peace.

For the Church to facilitate the peacebuilding process, its techniques must be conceptualized clearly. Theology of peacebuilding is God’s way of nonviolence. Although the word ‘theology’ has been historically debated, it has also been rejected. Due to its epistemological attachment to the sacred divinity, this thesis employs it in full recognition of the disputes and diversities associated with its history. While during the Cold War the concept of peacebuilding stressed the protection of trust between conflicting countries through fostering the cessation of hostilities, treaties, building safeguard regions, and intermediation, to name just few, the concept has expanded in international usage, to a focus that reinforces peace so that violence will not be repeated (Boutros Boutros-Ghali, 1992: 104).

There was also a need to identify important components to achieving sustainable peace, such as; responsible leadership, honouring and respecting human rights, the rule of law, transparency and accountability in community management. He mentioned activities such as organizing elections and drafting constitutions to tackle electoral malpractices in African countries in order to avoid issues that instigate wars.

Within the same context, the writer considers those aspects as a new method to safeguard populations not simply from internal conflict, but also prevent both the symptoms of violent conflicts and their sources. That is why peacebuilding has been characterized as events designed at tackling the fundamental reasons of the conflict, and not simply terminating explicit conflict. Regardless of the development of the theory of peacebuilding in these contexts, it is possible to summarize the concept of peacebuilding as that of consolidating the regulation of act, improving growth, endorsing impartiality, structuring social equality, stopping explicit

violence, resolution, and immovability, to name just a few. As mentioned throughout in this study, the CCC approach to peacebuilding emerged as a priority area of choice in its endeavour to strategically contribute to the peacebuilding process. Regardless of the fact that substantial work has been written about the theology of just war; there are relatively few writings on the theology of peace. Relative to the context of this study, positive theology should consider meeting the challenge of the international church, with its numerous problems and perspectives.

While sustainable in the context of this study has been considered as a natural outworking of the CCC vision, it was then compulsory for it to reflect theological interconnections with the topic. The chapter explores the work of peacebuilding as a part of the divine mission grounding its involvement and process of peace-building on solid theological principles of peace for an outcome that will be effective in its engagement. The chapter is exclusively a compilation of data collected from existing written resources. As the chapter focuses on the theological concept of peace, one may question what the responsibilities of humanity and those of the church towards the divine creation are? In the chronology of ideas, what then should be the role of the church's leadership in achieving sustainable peace?

### *6.3.1. A Theological concept of peace*

Peace integrates good and harmonious interactions with the divine, accurate and pleasant relationships with other human beings and the human community. Peace also seems to be needed by nature and our environments. The concept has been substantiated by Gushee (2012:65) after claiming that with peace God continues to challenge and bear with human beings. In other words, Wolterstorff (2011:109-111) explains the idea that there is peace when human beings dwell in harmony during their interactions with God, with the selves, with their companion human beings, and with nature.

This has led Brueggemann (1982:16) to consider peace as “the dream of God for a redeemed world and an end to our division, hostility, fear, graveness, and misery”. According to Brueggemann (1982:18, 50), the absence of peace and lack of harmony are expressed in social and economic inequality, judicial perversion, and political oppression and exclusive. Therefore peace is the end of pressure and intimidation. When talking about peace, this study understands it as the end of break-up and disintegration.

In that way, peace becomes not only a subject of freedom to rejoice but also the audacity to live a cohesive life in a community of rationality. Cohesiveness and unity can only be expressed by sharing it all together in an act of celebrating what is in common. Faith Based Organizations and institutions have also, just as most researchers, observed that there is no fixed definition of the word 'peace' and stated that its understanding should be taken from the perspective of theology. Supporting political theology and its achievement, Downey (1999:1) asserts that: "Political theology influences and demands the rest of all spiritual doctrines to engage in politics and relate to the perceptible social world with its cultural justifications and economic setting without mitigating the status quo." This relationship is what Assmann (1976:29-34) terms "principle and actions of change" as ways of transforming the living conditions of society.

This research explored the determination of the church to subsidize peacebuilding, and different theological and socio-political issues such as economy, politics, cultural and spiritual obligations. Taking into account the countless socio-political issues that are challenging people in relation to poverty, corruption and political unrest thus preventing the positive transformation of people in the DRC, the Church decided to break its silence with determination to lift the living standard of communities. In the section that follows, this research explores the participation of the church in peacebuilding in one of the most affected provinces in the eastern of the DRC, the province of Kivu. While peacebuilding develops through practice and proliferation of interests, there are challenging aspects that need to be confronted. The role and tasks of external players in peacebuilding operations have been raising numerous questions in relation to who defines or has substantial input on the ultimate outcome of the peacebuilding process. The same critical approach questions the performance of facilitators of peacebuilding processes and looks at their actions as interfering if their intervention does not result in lasting peace but instead ends in explicit violence.

According to Newman (2009a): "some scholars stress on restrained peacebuilding approaches to end explicit violence while others maintain that best approaches that target at tackling root grounds of conflict and structural violence such as social injustice and poverty should be highly considered." But Call (2008a) argues that: "the adequate approach is security- oriented because it highlights the prevention of a reoccurrence of vehement conflict while endorsing constancy and order thus subordinating other principles such as justice, improvement, liberation, and empowerment to the preservation of internal security, while the other considered as best approach is social-oriented stressing on tackling fundamental causes of conflict. "The debate

that no theology is essential within the field of peacebuilding has been confronted through the various activities carried by the church (Weaver, 2013).

How will dialogue, at the grassroots, become an instrument for peace- restoration in the DRC? To be more specific, what kind of strategies could assist the Church of Christ in Congo in bringing transformation into Kivu Provinces? To answer these questions, this section debates key theological aspects about peacebuilding, the theology of forgiveness and reconciliation. Before going into these debates, let us understand the theological meaning of peace. The debate on theology and peacebuilding which is not new to this extent; it has received the attention of most international researchers. It consists of characters and faith-based organizations from a diversity of spiritual backgrounds, all active in efforts to resolve and end conflicts in order to implement post-conflict reconciliation between conflicting parties in different areas of the world (Bouta et al., 2005; Smock, 2006). For Newman (2009a), these scholars and practitioners argue that “the approach is more accurate and quite practicable. Nevertheless, Gaye (2012) identifies four suitable keys for Church realism that deeply grasp the significance in the current context of the Church of Christ in Congo engagement to re-build the DRC; these are theological, rational, experience and traditional. They are supported by five other elements considered as theological values with the concept of re-building a divided country by political, social, and economic disasters. These elements include assistance, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation and the common good. While these elements remain practically relevant, this section does not intent to explain all of them. However, it will be of importance to detail some of them such as love, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

### *6.3.2. Love as a tool for Peacebuilding*

Gaye (2012) argues that love is one of the three scriptural qualities described by the Apostle Paul. These are faith, hope, and love (charity). Love as a virtue was stressed by the Lord Jesus in Matthew (22:36-40) when he inquired what the paramount instruction of the commandment is. He then answered, “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your emotion and with your entire mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is “love your neighbour as yourself.”* The word ‘love’ actually has encountered several meanings, including eros (romantic) love, or philia (friendship). Historically, researchers with different influences have ventured on what real love is.

The love of God for the entire world is embedded in Jesus and his work for all: to cover this fact by failing to clarify it while preaching Christ would be a disappointment not only of bravery but of love. It is very reasonable to argue that the way of Jesus has shaped western culture, from the abolition of slavery to the spread of hospitals and social care for the poor, things that have been taken for granted as simply being there in effect stem from Christology.

By referring to Jesus, Lorenzen (2006) is claiming that *“believers avoid the threat of using the name “God”, to legalize political, cultural, economic and ecclesiastical interests in their favour. We are often unwilling to admit that our manifold attempts to detour around the “foolishness” and the “stumbling block “of the cross (Corinthians 1:18-2:5) have led to the taming of the cross and spiritualisation of the resurrection.”* For Niebuhr (1987) *“getting involved in nation-building, especially during the ending of regimes of tyrants such as Hitler, Fascism, and Nazism would require the decisive and collective participation of Christians.”* Niebuhr (1987) further adds: *“it is not possible to defeat a foe without causing innocent people to suffer from the guilty. It is not possible to engage in any act of collective opposition to collective evil without involving the innocent with the guilty. It is not possible to move in history without becoming tainted with guilt.”*

Niebuhr (1987), Lewis (1960/1988) more or less discussed types of love proposing four main diversities including Affection, based on familiarity and strong attachment between parents and children. However, in this research I only refer to the final love type which is Charity, an unselfish and “Divine Gift-love” that has no anticipation of recompense, desiring only what is “simply best or the beloved.”

As far as the Christian setting is concerned, agape, is the love of God that requires us to love one and all, even our enemies. This opinion was also expressed by Nygren (1982:4-4) claiming that *“agape is the centre of Christianity, the Christian fundamental motif par excellence.”* This implies that Agape is not predominantly a feeling, even though frequently it encompasses the feelings, and is maintained by them. It is mainly an obligation or responsibility to upkeep somebody. Agape is rationally the heavenly, total, self-denying, dynamic, and volitional love initially to Christianity.

Apparently, this kind of love has its characteristics. They are depicted in Paul’s epistle to Corinthians: “Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all

things” (1 Corinthians 13: 14). However, Nygren, (1982) argues that “*love should not be misinterpreted to interpret remorseless expressive sentiment for one’s country, religion, race, ethnicity, and career.*” Such boundaries will result in “*excessive corruptions and carnages applied in the name of love as it was found during Hitler’s Nazism, White supremacists, Hutu and Tutsi genocide, Islamic Fundamentalism, Christian exclusionism, United States exceptionalism, and several other forms of extremisms that use such distorted notions of love.*” Niebuhr’s (1987)’s implication is that; although there are many necessary things that we can do for each other, the command to love one another” appears sixteen times to underline the value of love. It is an ethical and theological driving force to embrace unconditionally for nation-building purposes.

This force is ethically considered as relevant by the Church of Christ in Congo and is communicated in a significant way to the parties when resolving different issues as an important element for the contemporary society while espousing pacifism. As the Church longs to apply the concept of love, it leads us to the next virtue, which is forgiveness.

### *6.3.3. Forgiveness as a contested feature of reconciliation*

While the general understanding of forgiveness within the theory of resolution remains contested as observed by Clegg (2008:83-85) forgiveness is fundamentally considered by the Church of Christ in Congo as critical in a resolution process at the individual level, even in a social settlement. For Schreiber (1998:124), forgiveness is: “a resolution to no longer be controlled by the effects of past deeds done, and to choose freely for a different kind of future”. Arguably, this is only applied by individuals, although people are also able to use forgiveness or amnesty in order to move on (Schreier 1998:124). Lederach (1997:29-30) also uses the term mercy, when he discusses forgiveness. He stresses that forgiveness is required in order to be able to let go and move on. The above leads to arguing that forgiveness in any way is a significant part of the peace process because as the theory implies, people must lay the past behind them and move on. Nevertheless, forgiveness does not suggest that one legitimizes the crime; instead, forgiveness becomes a crucial step to move on. In fact, this study will argue that forgiveness leads to reconciliation, while the theory of reconciliation also establishes a holistic approach, which is about instituting truth and practicing forgiveness.

Reconciliation is understood within the thesis as a process that occurs at both a personal and a societal dimension. This is an element within the process that contributes to establishing sustainable peace in society. Reconciliation once effected restores the society and empowers relations to be cured and be able to co-exist and go on living together after conflict. De Gruchy (2002:45, 67) defines reconciliation as “the reunifying of God and humankind through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross”, meaning reconciliation introduced the world into a process of ethical transformation. The implication here is that reconciliation covers all members of disagreeing parties involved in a destructive struggle. According to Du Toit (2003:300) reconciliation is the preliminary point in the battle against personal, social or political hostility that comprises damaging characters while actually “it is a process, and not an event. Tutu in Dixon (2009:123) looks at it as something that’s going to be taking place over decades. Lightsey (2012:172) speaks of sincere reconciliation that should be constantly taken into consideration when thinking of the interaction of the individual, the world, and God the Creator.

This should be aiming at eradicating the origins of conflicts through a process that leads both offenders and victims to institute productive relationships. Joeng (1999:28) argues that this process is frequently characterized by feelings of guilt from the offenders and acceptance of apology by the offended. Lightsey (2012:172-73) underlines that through reconciliation the lost peace is holistically reinstated.

#### **6.4. Towards building a theology of sustainable peace**

Peacebuilding has advanced along with terminologies such as just war and pacifism, reacting to the worldwide occurrence and intransigence of ongoing conflicts, particularly those involving non-state actors. The term came into pervasive use in 1992 through Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1995) United Nations Secretary General, celebrated the U.N.’s fiftieth anniversary with an Agenda for Peace, to stimulate national and international governments to deploy their efforts on building state infrastructures. Peacebuilding has a broad focus including methods of cooperative social existence that diminish violence and allow reconciliation and social cooperation to be promoted in constant violent situations. Should we generally describe peacebuilding as what it means to require and build durable peace? The description above leads to define peacebuilding is a long-term practice that takes place after a conflict has stopped and

is characterized by a cease fire or peace agreement. Generally, it is frequently also considered as the last stage in the conflict sequence; meaning protagonists have free opportunity to create an atmosphere that will eradicate causes that made them opt against violence. The question that may follow is whether the cease fire will generate an effective peacebuilding environment, conducive to a sustainable peace? McAskie (2006:18) suggests that for peacebuilding to be effective there is a necessity for sensitivity to local prerequisites and cultural needs to avoid the imposition of an external model. That is why peacebuilding becomes a multifaceted system that consists of multiple intermediate and long-term programmes to address both the cause and consequences of a conflict. This is what the thesis sees as the focal point of the CCC intervention in the DRC.

In view of the outlined above, this thesis considers peacebuilding as actions intended at stopping a reoccurrence of conflict, although it also embraces social justice, settlement, justice and humanistic notions of peace. This description of peacebuilding is advantageous in dealing with the challenges that disregard or discriminate against people in Africa. In this study, I focus on the persistent conflict in eastern DRC and on peacebuilding activities that address the roots of the conflict, to explore processes that will contribute to preventing future violent conflicts. To accomplish sustainable peace as its assignment, the Church has employed practical theology. Nevertheless, it is of great importance to understand the theological perspective of the word peace in the biblical context. There are historical examples that show the efficacy of nonviolence as a means of resolving issues that have the potential to elicit violence. It is commonly agreed that most socio-political problems such as the conflict in eastern DRC cannot be solved through violence, hence the need for dialogue. Most scholars have argued that the use of violence often results in loss of lives and destruction of property.

For example, Mudida (2014) advises against the use of violence as a conflict resolution strategy because it is unsustainable. This research considers the fact that although military approaches may work to some extent; they mostly result in more damage to local communities. For this reason, non-violent means remain. The Church of Christ in Congo has emphatically used non-violent means in line with its doctrinal imperative. As it is commonly known, a great number of residents in Kivu Province are professed Christians. Within the Christian context, a non-violent approach enables opponents to confront each other and start a dialogue. According to Jegen (2004), “this process allows those who have been wounded to be relieved and get healed.” This strategy falls in line with the call to transform structural violence.



Based on my experience as a member of the CCC for more than thirty years, the CCC doctrinal package represents the belief that violence can be eradicated through non-violent means, including dialogue. According to Colleta, Cullen, and Forman (1998), “the global scheme has constantly abort to rebuild the “social fabric” of devastated humanities, just because the players in this regard assumed that political manoeuvrings can automatically substitute sustainable peace.” Matters related to culture and personality, interethnic dialogue, social empowerment, and combined intentionality are all settings or factors conducive for the achievement of human security. There is still a great level of uncertainty between regular people, police, soldiers, ex-civil defences force members, and government officials. High levels of social alienation and reconciliatory tools are recognised as important in terms of ideas, norms, and identities, but have generally been excluded by peacebuilding actors.

In laying out a theological framework for the CCC’s peacebuilding work, this chapter does not present a solitary theological position or a once-size-fits-all approach to situations of oppression, violence, conflict, and injustice as it is observed in the DRC today. Rather it seeks to frame some of the significant theological issues, positions, and approaches that are important in the pursuit of sustainable peace, to which the study can denote and pursue to apply in our work. This discussion is rooted in the CCC theology of mission and understanding of its call to contribute to the goal of restoring the well-being of people. This chapter shares the opinion of the CCC and believes that the task of the church is essentially about bringing peace between God and humans, humans and each other, and humans and the broader creation.

Because this framework is theologically oriented, it focuses on the Christian perspective that reveals the mission of the church as holistic contributing to the restoration of all areas of human life so that creation can flourish once again. Peacebuilding is a part of this mission, and Christian peace builders are well well-appointed, through this understanding, to engage with the psychological and spiritual effects of injustice and conflict, as well as its social and economic legacies, to assist people to heal and to develop original behaviours that can lead them away from conflicts in future. Peace, theologically, recovers strength from divine righteousness and justice.

The biblical account of justice is different from the western judicial tradition in the fact that theologically justice centres on a reinstated relationship with God which inspires people towards both repairing justice and righteousness and live rightly in ways that will eventually incorporate retribution as exposed in Paul’s letter to the Romans (3:23-35). Theologically

thinking, the establishment of peace and justice often involves *cost* on the part of the one who has been wronged, as they forgive in order to re-establish relationships. This leads to the concept of living right. Rights are normally understood to be secured by justice and peace and theologically rights are entrenched in the fact that all humans bear the image of God, and all are equal before God (Gen. 1.27; Gal. 3:28-29).

Williams (2000: 280-282), on Christian theology, claims that rights are tangled responsibilities towards others who also have the same rights that we all seek. That is why there is a need to balance the rights and well-being of the individual with those of the community and to guarantee that the quest for equal rights does not lead to the destruction of distinctive differences between individuals and societies. This implies a consideration of diversity and inclusion because peace requires diversity and engagement with a difference while bringing them together within a community. But Desjardins (1997:110) sees violence-promoting stances being present throughout the New Testament. In his analysis, he observed four forms in which violence manifests itself in the New Testament.

The first is the recognition of soldiers and war; the second concerns the dangerous violence that is expected to occur at the very end of this age; the third is the male dominion over women; and the fourth is the tendency to crowd humanity into camps of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (1997:62). It is a dual nature which according to Desjardins (1997:121) both Christians and non-Christians alike should contribute to our society's movement toward a more peaceful world, particularly given the freedom we now, fortunately, have, to arrive at our own views on these matters. In other words, the author is claiming that it is imperative to integrate both peace and violence when dealing with theological peace in order to frame a balanced theology that can address a world torn by conflicts. It is not sufficient to define peace. When reading between the lines the meaning of the seventh beatitude in Matthew 5:9, the role of peacemaker can be interpreted as the one whom: 1) pleads for peace, 2) intercedes between the persecutor and the persecuted and 3) facilitates between conflicting political authorities to eradicate armed hostilities.

The question, therefore, rises: Can the church simply implore for peace, or should she likewise facilitate between opponents, whether they may be members of a church or associates of state party? Is it the role of the Church to endorse peace alternatives as an issue of standard, or does she adjust her philosophy to the appropriate situation? Throughout the time of conflict, must the Church approve state leaders who claim to mediate in the support of the weak, if that equals

leading to war? Those are the most relevant questions which surround a theology of peace in the context of this section. God's way of non-violence as considered in this context of conflict relates to the perspective of the concept of violence that has also affected the DRC. Although the word 'theology' has been historically debated and adopted by some, it has also been rejected by others. Due to its epistemological attachment to the sacred divinity, this thesis employs it in full recognition of the disputes associated with its usage. Nonviolence as a method to build sustainable peace has been used by many peace-players in a violent culture, as an active and important feature that leads towards a voluntary move to restore broken relationships. It has been commonly agreed that most socio-political problems cannot be solved through violence, hence the need for dialogue. Mudida (2014) claims that: "*the use of violence is to be questioned because its approach cannot produce the necessary structural changes needed.*" This research considers the fact that although military approaches may work to some extent; they mostly result in more damage to local communities.

For this reason, non-violent means remain ideal even to the Christian worldview. The Church of Christ in Congo has emphatically used non-violent means in line with its doctrinal beliefs and teachings. As it is commonly known, a great percentage of dwellers and residents in Kivu Province are professed to be Christians. Within the Christian context, the non-violent approach enables opponents to confront each other and start a dialogue. Jegen (2004) sees this process allowing those who have been wounded to be relieved and healed. This strategy also falls in line with Galtung's (1996) concept called for the need to transform the structure of violence. Based on experience as a member of the ECC for more than thirty years, the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC) translated from French '*Eglise du Christ au Congo*' (ECC) doctrinal package represents the belief that violence can be eradicated through non-violent means, including dialogue. Therefore, this segment searches the scriptural requirements for social rights commitment and then inspects contemporary Christian places on human privileges.

It analyses how conflicts and exceptional violence have affected and interrupted the life of many Congolese, complexity which has led many organizations to articulate or introduce different systems that intended to facilitate the refurbishment of sustainable peace in the country. The Church of Christ in Congo as one of civil society's institutions has also applied some general imperatives such as education and its elements in its quest to eradicate violence in communities. That is why this section adopts a number of theological values as imperatives of peace- building and conflict resolutions in the DRC. They include love, forgiveness, justice, reconciliation and the common good. These imageries support the Church of Christ in Congo

as it focuses on what can help make a positive contribution to modelling an open-minded society. First of all, let us examine the role of education in peacebuilding. A superficial look at the DRCs condition demonstrates certain parallels to the instances of war in the Old Testament. The doctrine of war and nationwide safety in the ancient evidence is applicable to the present predicament of uncertainty in the DRC. Undeniably, in ancient biblical time, there were considerable conflict and violence authorized by the Deity. The well-illustrated is the warring activities of the Antique Israelite period. The situation was caused by what can be termed as ‘the spirit of provincial dominion together with patriotic terminologies.’

The dreadful circumstances of uncertainty in the DRC, particularly in the eastern area, serves as an example to prompt any peace lover to mirror in what way somebody may reply to such dangerous activities of conflict, violence, and uncertainty. Most people trusted armed conflict, but later find themselves ambushed on all sides. The objective stands ‘in what way Christians should respond to this atrocious condition? The horrible situation is at hand, the Church is challenged with thinking, not merely during the conflict, but also when the situation requires perhaps the use of potency and violence generally. The Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC desired peace. This leads us to understand conflict and the necessity of safety by reflecting on what the Hebrew Scripture offers. The Old Testament defines God as a compacted commander in chief fighter, who still executes integrity by war, to an extent that the Old Testament glorified the God of encounters instead of the father of Jesus Christ.

The incidences of war in the Old Testament are common; the Hebrew Bible refers to the topic of battle and deals with it in detail. Within the spirit of local dominion and patriotism, the nation of Israel was worried about the lives of her people, and this repeatedly led to battle, in quest of domestic peace and safety. Following the above interpretation, this section explores the significance of the Old Testament perception of war and in what way the circumstances of it were resolved, to the predicament of the DRC turbulence. Sowel and Cahill (2013) stipulate that “biblical values and imageries constitute a theology and dynamics that will contribute to the process that leads towards a theology of peacebuilding.” Additionally, this study is of the view that engaging with the crisis of such a disastrous level as the DRC requires theological and ethical provisions. In this context, the biblical legacy that is built on core Christian ethical principles is of great importance. These are love, forgiveness, justice, reconciliation, and acceptance of one another for common good.

These theological values imply relationships not only with humanity but also with God in order for life to be balanced. In order to contextualize these theological values into the structure of peacebuilding, there are two important elements to be examined: the definition of the theology of peacebuilding and the use of a non-violent approach as elements of peacebuilding.

## **6.5. Conclusion**

This chapter surveyed theological dialogues on peace as one of the theoretical frameworks that guide this study. Theological peace constitutes the foundation upon which the Church of Christ in Congo places its arrangements in order to avert violence and promote a culture of sustainable peace in Kivu provinces. The chapter has indicated that peace, by definition, goes yonder the cessation of war because it comprises wholeness and the well-being of the entire creation. The challenges of the church's mission exemplified above can serve as a starting point for understanding the socio-political challenges in the DRC. The same challenges can also be used for spiritual transformation. Poverty, corruption, social injustice, violate of human rights, lack of democracy, ignorance, bad governance, wars, diseases, and gender discrimination surround all the church and stand as challenges which it should overcome in the DRC particularly in the Kivu provinces. The Chapter has indicated that these challenges serve as a logical tool for a holistic task of the church mission in the Kivu provinces considering the socio-political challenges that need to be freshly described for the people's liberation. This is done through the promotion of both spiritual and moral transformation.

The work of a theology of peace is to guide and light the way for Congolese people to attain that transformation so they can also be able to develop their country. A theology of peacebuilding helps people to escape from poverty, corruption, unemployment, and conflict at the same time to be involved in the community's struggle against all forms of challenges. A theology of peacebuilding fulfils its task by tracking social justice and facilitates positive transformation by initiating a new direction and instils strong morality in people's lives. That is why the church promotes leadership ethics in order to make a difference during this twenty-first century. As part of its developmental strategies, theology of peacebuilding requires self-interest of the DRC people so together they can fight poverty and poor governance. Additionally, healing and forgiveness should take place to facilitate other changes to transpire. The one-dimensional focus of the CCC's task is to challenge the government to meet the immediate and pressing needs of the DRC people, particularly the survivors in the Kivu provinces for the transformation of their social attitude, as well as their mind.

## CHAPTER 7:

### CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CONGO ADVOCATING FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

#### 7.1 Introduction

Having discussed the findings of this study in chapters five and six, I now wish to discuss themes that have come out of the study. One of the key findings of this study was that the church's response to the conflict in the DRC was holistic involving both the local grassroots communities and the top leadership of the church. Second, the church also worked with other bodies such as the state and other international communities forming church–state relationship. Historically, over centuries three forms of Church-State relationships have evolved. The Constantine form, according to which, the government and the Church are distinct in belief, but together they constitute one nation. It is also historically known that the Augustinian form, which was later refined by Luther into the principle of the 'Two Kingdoms' embraces the concept that the government is capable to handle governmental and justice issues, while the Church is competent in spiritual problems. The doctrine further holds that these roles should be kept distinct with neither Church nor government meddling in the other area. The above debate of Church-State presents the modern reader with a tension between communities of faith that focus on God and eternity and a community of unbelief that focus on the expediency of the present hour, which sees Christianity as only one of many factors with which it has to deal. This study also argues that rebuilding the misplaced dignity of the nation at such a time as this should be the primordial task of being the ethical protector of both the spiritual and political powers. This way, the church demonstrates its commitment as a performer in the nation's sociopolitical existence. In the sections that follow I hope to discuss the themes that have emerged from the findings.

#### 7.2 State Politics and CCC in the DRC

As stated above one of the issues that came out of this study is the relationship between politics and religion. Generally, a close relationship has constantly existed between politics and religions including the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC. However, this relationship was comparatively respectable and even excellent during colonisation, particularly with Christianity. The church generally endured on good terms with the colonial administration that favoured them, while undermining Islam and traditional beliefs. The relationship between the

state and the church became stressed when the clergy started disapproving of the abuse of the rights of indigenous people by the colonial administration.

Around 1950, Catholic intellectuals such as Father Joseph Malula, Mr. Joseph Ileo, and Mr. Joseph Ngalula, formed a group for reflection known as African Consciousness (*Conscience africaine*). In 1956, they published a manifesto endorsing the independence of the Belgian Congo. However, this manifesto did not cause any break up between the colonial administration and Christianity in general and even the Catholic Church in particular. As the colonial rule was drawing to an end, the colonial management co-opted many Christian scholars to become their successors. The church-state relations in the DRC have met some challenges due to the socio-political tests the country is currently undergoing. These tests are related to sin, poverty, corruption, social injustice, fissure of human rights, lack of democracy, ignorance, bad governance, wars, diseases and gender discrimination among the many challenges which fall under the church jurisdiction and mandate. These challenges face the church and stand to serve as a spiritual thermometer and a logical tool for a holistic mission. Today's church mission in the DRC with regard to the socio-political challenges needed to be redefined as a people liberation mission to promote both spiritual and moral transformation in the country. The church involvement in the community's struggle against all forms of challenges exposed the weaknesses of the state in failing to pursue social justice and facilitate positive transformation in the DRC. The church intervention was initiated to prophetically give new direction and promote political leadership ethics in order to make a difference during this socio-political crisis in the DRC. The absence of political oversight in the Kivu Provinces resulted in the church to re-involve itself in strategies that would restore sustainable peace in the country.

As stated before, the dialectical relationship has always existed between the church and law in the DRC, as elsewhere. Despite some harmony, there is a prospective for conflict between the state and the church. The church is a channel for the exercise of the right to freedom in every area, which is rooted in a number of international and domestic instruments. From the time the DRC attained its independence from Belgium on 30 June 1960, the country has always been a secular state protecting the right to freedom of religion. This has not prevented the disregarding of some religions to the benefit of others. Generally, the Church is honoured. As demonstrated by the present study, there has been a gigantic impact of the church on the state in the DRC and also a reciprocal interference between them. Debatably, the DRC is one of the most

religious states on the continent as far as the number of their organizations and leadership are concerned.

The right to freedom of thought, conscience, and worship entrenched in the Constitution and a number of other international human rights tools binding on the country is a reality. The right to freedom of religion has occasioned several denominations to run primary, high schools, and institutions of higher education such as universities. It is much easier to establish a church or a religious organisation than a political party. The state is church-friendly in the registration of religious organisations and in the enforcement of the law on religion.

### **7.3. CCC advocacy and collaboration with the State**

In examining the relation between the state and the church in the DRC, the Right Reverend R. A. Reeves (ND) Bishop of Johannesburg, quoted the verdict of the authors of the ‘Report of the Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu areas’ within the Union of South Africa, by indicating that “The State and the Church do not form an antithesis in South Africa. On the contrary, one is the team mate of the other.” From a global point of view, the relation between church and state is that there has been a failure of the division between the two. Bentele, Soule, and Adler (2013) see an explosion of substantial, yet frequently ignored restricted character for the regime in the enabling of Church that sought permission to defend better spiritual expression in community institutions. Church-state interactions are imperative demonstrations of the degree to which social partitions are distinguished from religion. The discussion about the suitable relation between church and state has extensively been unpleasant, for a long time in the mid-1990s. Nevertheless, Bishop Reeves (ND) opined that the church was not dealing with the generous state of the nineteenth century entrenched in religion or even with the rootless liberal state at the beginning of the twentieth century, but with the state that is set upon scheduling and hacking the life of its citizens by its poor governance.

#### *7.3.1. Focus on Poor Governance*

The general understanding of poor governance is to consider it as an outcome of ineffective public management. In other words, a dysfunction in public administration, which is damaged with corruption and misuse of political power, interprets into violations of elementary human rights. The state document known as *Poverty, Insecurity and Exclusion in the DRC*, (2006: 17) claims that the above behaviour weakens and reverses efforts to promote economic and social



development. According to the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2002: 23), missing to meet the basic needs of people is the most commonly referred to as cause of poverty, because it encompasses the lack of human competences in health, education, the environment, nutrition, governance management, culture, human and financial resource management, and social and road infrastructure. It is well-known that the Congolese public administration is awfully negative. The state of basic public services not only fails to meet quality standards and deadlines, but it is almost non-existing. All over the country, there is no assurance of access to public services. Civil servants and state employees for several decades have been abandoned and are at the foundation of the existing situation with regard to public administration.

Generally, the challenges of good governance remain dominant not only in the DRC but on the whole continent. While corruption and exploitation of all kinds have become the order of the day, people are invaded with the institutionalisation of corruption, as a malicious, nation-destroying factor, thus becoming a cause for significant global concern. The use of public power for personal gain has been a main issue on the international political agenda, as it confirms the facility to harm economies, undermine public and private morality, ruin ecologies and corrode intellectual integrity (Ziegler, 2001: 71). This has become even worse in Sub-Saharan Africa, where leadership continues to impose itself through questionable elections or military interventions, as it was observed in the latest DRC elections.

Poor governance is also characterized by the inefficiency of the judicial system, which has been captured from the level of an officer of the court, being pocketed by the state authority in terms of court decisions not being enforced. This has resulted in the mistrust of the judicial system. There are many other factors characterized by substantial violations of the value of equality of all before the law. The absence of reinforcing abilities and public awareness campaigns on the operation of the judicial system remains the defects that challenge the justice sector (IMF, 2007: 30-31). Poor governance not only applies to an undesirable impact on administrative governance but also spreads to all other sectors such as social, political and economic, to mention just a few. The above has been the main cause of disaccord between church and state in the DRC. As noted in the second chapter, the late president Mobutu used the resources of the country for his own profit (Wrong, 2002: 10). Koyame and Clark (2002: 203) declare: "The widespread corruption, economic controls, and the diversion of public resources for personal gain during the Mobutu era thwarted economic growth". According to the FAO, (2000: 1-2) article, the living standards in the DRC have been deteriorating since the 1970s, fundamentally due to poor economic management and civil conflict.

The situation has been aggravated by the war that was imposed on Congolese since 1996, which resulted in connected considerable population displacements from areas affected by the war. Access to basic needs such as food in the DRC is currently problematic and has become a day-to-day challenge faced by the Congolese. The situation is rendered worst with political and stumpy purchasing power and cannot be reduced to a single factor (Tollens, 2003: 33). Therefore, justice almost not existing except to those with financial possibilities and is somehow for certain people the answer to deficiency eradication. This is why the Church stems its obligation to advocate for people and intervene as an imperative of its commission.

#### **7.4. The Church in partnership with other civil societies**

According to Kobia, (2003: 161) Church institutions need to shape partnerships with other civil society clusters, social movements and political parties with regard to instant constitutional and legal reform processes. This will assist the church to be successful in its obligation of fighting for justice and restoring human dignity. The fact is that the Church cannot function alone. It should link with other civil society members and hold the government accountable to the people. The AACC (2005: 20) claims that: Churches and church organizations should form an alliance to hold governments accountable for their contribution to the root cause of displacement, uprooting, warehousing, and detention of relocated people. The Church, at either the national or the international level, should form alliances with other civil society members to uncover and challenge economic policies, which are always to the detriment of poor people while promoting impartial transformations. Their role is to further attempt to solve and advice the state in issues related to trade, governance, sustainability, and delivery of wealth while creating new opportunities. This in line with Taylor's (2003: 73) claims that if churches are correctly mobilised, they will be known as one of the largest "Non-Governmental Organisations" in the world, with great potential in the struggle for justice.

As far as partnerships between the Church and the state is concerned, Kahiga's (2004: 227) opinion is that the Church and the state should consider the crucial need and act on policy issues related to hunger, impulsive mortality and illiteracy, and economic growth. The Church in the DRC has been in partnership with the state in the areas of health and education, especially after independence. Most of the Church-affiliated schools were sponsored by the state, and many Church-affiliated hospitals were built by missionaries and turned to be reference hospitals. It was the role of the state to provide these hospitals with medicines, but when the state

management start failing the care of most remarkable hospitals remained under the responsibility of the church. According to Martinez (2001:217), “political theology, freedom, and open theologies are inseparably amalgamated with social, cultural, and past circumstances to define the ultimate part of the Church in relation to social transformation of people as divine motivation.” As part of its mission, the Church longs to react to people's needs by contributing and giving hope of a better life not only after death but also in terms of demonstrating heaven as certainty here on earth. This study argues that the link between church and state has been one of the most debated topics in history, and it remains a reason for strong disputes. Nevertheless, Carpenter (1953: 3-4) points out that church and state today in Africa are a challenge to Christian statesmanship because while both are essentially present and important in society, their relationship is now a matter of concern.

According to the author, the church, community, and state are to be considered as the agents of God’s restorative work in which the state stands as the sponsor of the mandate, justice and people’s freedom with diverse roles towards society. The author is of the opinion that the church is to observe the actualities which last longer than change since they are established on the motivation of God. It is, therefore, the obligation of the state, to deliver justice and preserve order and safety while accepting the restrictions of the practicable. Church and state are to be separated reasonably. Whereas conditions in different parts of the world differ; the position of the church can be placed in a historical and theological authority. Eaton (1995:36) argues that:” *in prehistoric religion and state were absolutely recognized and got along well; the state had its own religious conviction and could enforce others to be subjected to it*”. The example is illustrated in the book of Daniel (3:1-6) whereby Nebuchadnezzar tried to impose his faith on others including Daniel and his friends. The Church of Christ in Congo wanted an all-inclusive search for peacebuilding in the affected areas of the eastern region of the DRC. The opinion is repeated in an Oxfam (2011) article by a traditional proverb uttered by someone in North Kivu saying: “What you do for me, but without me, is against me.”

This study acknowledges attempts to stabilize the DRC made by the state peace players in relation to the above situation; however, their efforts appear to be motionless and not operational. It is important to grasp one of the main reasons for this ineffectiveness: the exclusion of Congolese people from roots during the process of resolutions that affect their lives. The grassroots efforts to pressures national and regional dynamics such as the micro-level trade, create political and social problems frequently motivated local coalition between

Congolese soldiers or civilians and unknown rebel groups. The degree to which the Church and the state in the DRC stand together actually is not as positive as it may be the case in most African countries. During and from the time of the ousted regime in 1996 the church has been struggling to keep its relationship with the state, playing a key role in protecting human rights against corrupt and tyrannical governments. This position created tension between different faiths, particularly the Protestant Church and the Roman Catholic. Some spiritual organizations appeared to remain silent looking as if they were being loyal to the regime, while other denominations such as the Roman Catholic were considered as the most tenacious and effective antagonists of these corrupt regimes. As it is generally believed, dictatorial regimes in the DRC are ambitious with no interest in people's well-being. This, of course, denotes conflict with structured religion such as the Roman Catholic Church.

Historically arguing, the role of the church is inescapable, while its ethical authority serves as a conscience for competing regimes in the allegiances that they pursue. Relating the situation to the special adviser to the Norwegian Red Cross in Oslo, Egeland, (1999:1) expounded the problematic role of the Church during tough times and opined that the church is living now all the way through a time of ambiguous tendency. There is less instant intimidation, but a great deal of uncertainty than ever before. People are no longer panicking before a superpower-driven Third World War; instead, they are more and more concerned with rising social tension and conflict, not to speak of the ecological disasters which are impending on the prospect. The inconsistencies and divergences of our time can be explained differently: There are less international conflicts, but more internal frictions than before; more claims of equalities and egalitarianisms, at the same time there are a more fragile States with power vacuums spawning anti-democratic activities; additional international collaboration, at the same time more violent patriotism and xenophobia; a deteriorating number of global refugees, but more displaced people than ever before; and extra rich and wealthy people than ever before, but living in miserable poverty with not as much of international assistance available for the increasing number of helpless societies in need of support. Nevertheless, the United States Institute of Peace (ND) has also indicated that "the DRC needed assistance that would help in shaping parliamentary ability, sustainable constitutional institutions, and human rights in specific." According to Ernest (2008) "most Congolese view the country as existing without a government." One legislator in Haut- Katanga was referred to by Harsh (2008) saying that although the DRC state existed officially, in reality, it needed to be revitalized. According to

the IRFR (2010), “*the DRC constitution provides the freedom of religion, with regulations and strategies causative to the commonly free application of the same.*” However, the church insists on transformation and societal change. The church claims sensitivity grounded on biblical principles.

The role of the World Council of Churches (2015) in this regards, is to promote collaboration among churches and allow the Church in DRC to contribute and engage in the preparations of different political activities such as the 2016 elections, whereby it was expected to play its role in building sustainable peace and promote justice and human dignity in the country. In order to succeed towards the establishment of sustainable peace, justice, freedom, equity, and safety, Brueggemann (1987: 74-75) calls for the entire creation to fully acknowledge inscrutably, irresistibly the role of divinity and honour Him while protecting His creatures.

Supporting the idea of sustainable peace in the DRC a peaceful and legitimate electoral process should be a prerequisite for ensuring political stability and human rights in the DRC. It is, therefore, the Church and faith-based community’s obligation to work toward the theology of peacebuilding that will help end violence by all means. From the time the DRC was invaded by its neighbouring countries, most non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), both local and International, joined the church to find sustainable solutions to the complex conflict by putting pressure on the state and organizations involved to take steps and end the conflict. Various sessions were organized to deliberate on the propagation and trading of light weapons and small armaments. In the quest to collaborate with the state, the Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC rehabilitates the victims of war and encourages them to attend peace programs to endorse local peace structure. Local NGOs work meticulously with the Human Rights Commission (UHRC) to support ex-combatants that are grasping the opportunity of the Amnesty Act (1999) by collaborating with affected communities.

This study, therefore, contends that the advocacy of the Church of Christ in Congo in relation to peacebuilding in eastern of the DRC was and stills the consolidation and restoration of the state authority in all affected areas in the region. Around 1950, Catholic intellectuals such as Father Joseph Malula, Mr. Joseph Ileo, and Mr. Joseph Ngalula, formed a group for reflection known as African Consciousness (*Conscience africaine*). In 1956, they published a manifesto endorsing the independence of the Belgian Congo.

### **7.5. Effect of spirituality in peacebuilding**

The study focuses on the contribution of the Church of Christ in Congo to sustainable peace in the Kivu Province. This simply is to find out how a spiritual entity is able to create a programme that in a part of the world where peace has been seen as impossible and therefore play a decisive role without compromising with its spiritual life. Instead, the church uses spirituality to definitively influence opponents to opt for sustainable peace. The research also emphasised that common reverence for a divine power existed at the grassroots level, between the leaders of the programme and between the defence fighters who made the values of peacebuilding relatively to the Holy Scripture legitimized and acknowledged. By the means of a common consideration of the scripture as the normative structure used as a moral scope within a culture that has experienced such malpractice, the church practically plays as previously explained, an incredible and evident role that comes in the form of prayer and the exposition of the word of God to demonstrate how the spiritual power of the church is able to transform the thinking of many to another dimension. This study also understands that this is the reason that the Church of Christ in Congo can be trusted and relatively accredited and acknowledged as belonging to God. Therefore, this study understands that the spiritual influence the church owns is a contributory factor in peacebuilding and restoration. While the persistent conflict in Kivu appears to be extremely complex and deeply rooted, due to many obstacles and challenges, the CCC needed another aspect that spirituality seemed to subsidize as a stirring factor in the process of finding a solution for sustainable peace; that is the Christian message conveyed through the word of God. During the training in the quest for peace, the word preached to people became motivated to an extent that many who attended the seminar expressed their enthusiasm to sacrifice their life for the cause of peace in the DRC and in Kivu particularly. Consequently, it can be said that devoutness is obviously an intensely motivational element in the peacebuilding process.

All the above explanations provide an approach to respond to the focal research question, which is: How does the Church of Christ in Congo consider the effect of the Peacebuilding programme, in its quest for sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces in the Democratic Republic of Congo? This study indicates that the CCC/ECC considers the effect of the programme as significant. This is apparent among all the academics and scholarly materials consulted and the personal experience of the researcher as learned at the grassroots level. The impact of the programme has motivated even the organization itself to continue functioning for peace in the

region. There are tangible outcomes that are seen from the research; the number of deported refugees and the return of many children fighters in the society specify the measurable impact, at the same time as the training of the local residents through seminars and workshops proves some of the qualitative effects. In assessing the programme, it does generally appear to have a constructive influence on the peacebuilding process that the country is so greatly in need of fundamental of the effect of the programme is the engagement of the CCC leaders at different levels. Even though it is middle-range leaders who lead the programme's work it is predominantly operated carried out at the grassroots level. The research demonstrates how constructive this approach is considering the influence and ability that the middle-range leaders possess in embracing the instruction at the grassroots and be engaged to have local ownership of the programme's activities. Due to being targeted and victimized, most women at the grassroots are absent. The effect of the agenda in bringing about sustainable peace can be assumed in two different ways through the findings. Although the wound caused by the Tutsi from Rwanda is so huge, most people seem to have a transformed attitude towards the Rwandese which allows them to still talk to them.

The Christian values of loving ones' neighbour and forgiveness seem to have an impact and play a significant role. These principles are embedded through the agenda of sensitization activities and workshops. Christian values are biblical values lived out by the Christians as a lifestyle of loving their neighbour and practicing forgiveness. This study considers the agenda of the CCC as contributing in bringing about sustainable peace, not only because of the approaches engaged but also due to the fact that they are applying such a programme and agenda, to achieve its objective non-violently by stretching out a hand from the grassroots level to the national level. The CCC advocacy contributes to rebuilding relations across boundaries, in a very politically and ethnically tense conflict that has frequently shaped the war.

The objective for the agenda is the rebel groups that have imposed considerable destruction on the local people and yet the approaches the church is using against them are nonviolent. This study shows that the widespread use of the church is an essential feature of the curriculum. The CCC has publicized its competence in reaching into remote areas and has built trust where the government and the UN have failed. The Church of Christ in Congo in the DRC has proved to be very strong even though there has been pain and destruction. This study argues that there seem to be unrestricted resources in the church for doing this sort of work. The credibility gained locally and nationally as such basis in the society it is undeniable that the church is also

able to function as an important element in peacebuilding. From the efforts of its mission, the CCC has many denominations founded in the Kivu Provinces. This study has observed that these churches played such a significant role in their contribution to bring sustainable peace into the region, a responsibility initially considered by many as outside of the normal church field. This study argues that the church seems to be a motivation and a symbol of hope in a dark and chaotic situation. My finding appears that the Church of Christ in Congo succeeds to a large degree to stay neutral in the stressed conflict. It has succeeded in standing firm during the chaos of maladministration and war for decades. The quest for sustainable peace in the DRC is not achieved, nevertheless through this kind of programme, the potential to establish perceptible progress, and do even more for sustainable peace. By using a locally rooted curriculum, the church makes a commendable contribution to the pacification not only in the Kivu Provinces but also of the Great Lakes region.

## **7.6. Conclusion**

The Church generally is part of the community in which it functions. Its relationship with the state acknowledges attempts to stabilize the DRC made by the state peace players in relation to the above situation; however, their efforts appear to be motionless and not operational. It is important to grasp one of the main reasons for this ineffectiveness: the exclusion of Congolese people from roots during the process of resolutions that affect their lives. The grassroots reasons for pressures constantly intermingled with national and regional dynamics such as the micro-level trade, political and social problems frequently motivated local coalition between Congolese soldiers or civilians and unknown rebel groups. The degree to which the Church and the state in the DRC stand together actually is not as positive as it may be the case in most African countries. During and from the time of the ousted regime in 1996 the church has been struggling to keep its relationship with the state, playing a key role in protecting human rights against corrupt and tyrannical governments.

This position created tension between different faiths, particularly the Protestant Church and the Roman Catholic. Some spiritual organizations appeared to remain silent looking as if they were being loyal to the regime, while other denominations such as the Roman Catholic were considered as the most tenacious and effective antagonists of these corrupt regimes. As it is generally believed, dictatorial regimes in the DRC are ambitious with no interest in people's well-being. This, of course, denotes conflict with structured religion such as the Roman



Catholic Church. The Church in the DRC should be encouraged to continue systematizing itself into inclusive structures and networks with other members of civil societies in order to serve as regulators over the government. The church should stress the government, through different possible approaches and continue to advocate for positive change that will profit Congolese people who have undergone hardship for a long time. The Church should consider this moment as an opportune time to stand up and speak out against corrupt governments, which has been incompetent concerning social matters as far as the common practice of extensive corruption and maladministration.

## CHAPTER 8:

### CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

#### 8.1 Introduction

This study researched the interpretations, perceptions, and assertiveness of scholars and academics towards the Church of Christ in Congo's peacebuilding interventions in the DRC. The pivotal point of analysis of this study is the role of the Church of Christ in Congo in its participation in promoting sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces. Its exploration is from the researcher's views that emerged from the materials collected from sources in the DRC and the Congolese diaspora as well as humanitarian and relief organizations including the United Nations. This study considered some of the motivations, challenges and religious resources that propel the society towards peacebuilding interventions in the DRC. In terms of methodology, the nature of this study necessitated a mixed research method, which included a very embedded researcher with his own memories and accounts of what happened during the conflict as well as the accounts circulating among survivors. Therefore, it adopted historical and qualitative approaches in expounding the subject matter of the research.

#### 8.2. Description of findings

The first chapter introduced the study's background and unfilled the research objectives and analogous research questions. The study also outlined the study's scope and limitations. It highlighted the implication of the research methodology and research design. The chapter noted that an empirical study of this nature is bound to grapple with certain methodological and practical limitations as acknowledged in this study. A section of this chapter explained the key concepts that underpinned the study's thematic concerns. The chapter concluded with an account of the structure of the study.

The second chapter was a review of relevant literature on the topic of this study. The chapter was subdivided into different sections: the first one dealt with literature mapping the origins and tension around the persistent conflict in the regions. The second part of chapter two dealt with literature detailing the role of the church in the socio-political transformation of the DRC as understood by the Church of Christ in Congo in its contribution to sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces. The closing section of the chapter emphasized the efforts of non-state actors

and humanitarian organizations- that also served as primary data sources for constructing a social reality during the conflict.

As a new approach to the DRC's conflict in the Kivu provinces, this chapter maintained that the insights and the views of the Church of Christ in Congo are an enormous contribution and effective peacebuilding intervention in the DRC. The literature also underlined different issues including the roots of the conflict especially, the role of the colonial era as the engine behind the ethnic and political disorder in the DRC. The Mobutu dictatorial regime has been labelled as one of the legacies inherited from colonial rule. The broader goal to overthrow Mobutu resulted in turning liberation into a second period of oppression of the people of the DRC. Most scholars highlighted the socio-economic and the wrong political intention of Rwanda and Uganda as the main reason for invading the DRC. The literature also underlined the impact of the invasions on the population notably political intention to balkanize the DRC, economic exploitation and lack of leadership transparency.

Other factors were identified as the politics of belly and the inherited poor condition of the state. This chapter also examined the historical involvement of the Church of Christ in Congo in relation to peace-building Congo, before and after 1996. It was also noted that the Church of Christ in Congo (ECC) acts as a directing body that has been predominantly proactive on social issues of peace-building, women's rights, and democracy. As mentioned before, two churches, namely "Communaute' des Eglises de Pentecote en Afrique Centrale (CEPAC) and Communaute' des Eglises Libres de Pentecont en Afrique (CELPA), are the driving services in the CCC network. These Pentecostal churches, with their base in Kivu Provinces, can be traced back to Swedish and Norwegian missionaries, correspondingly. The chapter presented the complexity of the conflict as a result of the involvement of neighbouring countries and foreign interests.

The third chapter presented theoretical perspectives and research methods that guided this study. It also detailed some of the challenges that I faced as a researcher, in terms of being an exile and a survivor of the violence, as well as difficulties in gaining access to a volatile and militarised region. Due to its relevance in peacebuilding interventions, the chapter noted that practical theology promotes the inclusion of the Church to the conflict dialogue in any peacebuilding processes. Practical theology is often connected to other theological disciplines while each division of theology reliantly draws on and services the work of the other. What differentiates the practical theology perspective from other peacebuilding theories is the notion

that it stresses a need for methodical resolution of any conflict. It advocates the extra of structures and conditions that breed violence/war with those that build sustainable peace. By engaging the use of the qualitative approach, this chapter was able to explore amongst other things the different components of the DRC in terms of different political and ideological manners of views on the Church of Christ in Congo's peacebuilding interventions in the Kivu provinces.

The fourth chapter was historical in nature. It presented factors behind the invasion of the DRC such as foreign influence considered as historical background and factors that continue to trigger the DRC's conflict in Kivu provinces. Foreign interference stands as the foundation of colonialism, land issues, greed and weak systems of governance that fights over the DRC resources, nepotism, favouritism, poverty and ethnicity. Other external factors were the influence and the presence of foreign African troops and rebels from neighbouring countries like Rwanda and Uganda. To date, rebel and militia groups continue to prolong instability and civil strife in different parts of the Kivu and the Great Lakes region. In relation to the study, the chapter established that the CCC became dynamically involved in the DRC conflict from 1996 to date.

Chapter five established and outlined the various peace-building strategies and activities of the CCC and how it has positively used its peacebuilding intervention to generate an unquestioning patriotic and nationalism relationship that is promising for sustainable peace. Also, the role of SADC and that of the African Union was critiqued for their role in the DRC conflict which started decades ago. Their weak negligible interventions have had vast negative impacts on not only the nation but the entire sub-region. According to Dzinesa and Laker (2010), "SADC's authority to perform was basically more sensitive, rather than preventive.

Chapter six presented theological views and insights claiming God's perception of matters related to spiritual doctrines and debates, and it proposed an analysis of the Church towards a theology of peacebuilding. Formulating a Theology of Peacebuilding, the chapter picked some of the theological values such as forgiveness and reconciliation. The chapter also isolated specific themes such as forgiveness, love, and reconciliation as a theological foundation for constructing a theology of sustainable peace.

The seventh chapter offered a strategy for advocacy that is rooted in theological values to enable the church to confront the predominant condition of war in the provinces of Kivu. The chapter noted that the mechanisms of successful intervention are embedded in social structures

(institutional church, local people, and well as the local culture) that consider peace which integrates good and harmonious interactions with the divinity. The chapter explains that real peace should be accurate with pleasant relationships with other human beings and the human community. The chapter concluded that one way of having an effective peacebuilding intervention in the DRC is to draw from the views and insights of the marginalised non-state actors such as the CCC.

The other significant element revealed during this study is the fact that the Church of Christ in Congo can be found almost everywhere in the countryside. In a society where the infrastructure and the governmental structure has collapsed, the church has remained firm throughout the wars and attended to people's needs.

The availability of the church in these conditions has proved how strong it is and how it worth of sustainable trust. Another imperative role of the church played according to this study, is the way the church promotes the theological values to an extent that the Bible becomes a source of influence to be respected as a divine voice. These values include peace, love, forgiveness, and reconciliation to mention just a few.

### **8.3. Contributions in the CCC Quest for sustainable peace in DRC**

The study underlined several areas in which the CCC programme creates a perceptible contribution to the quest for sustainable peace. The noticeable contributions are firstly connected to the mobilization of local churches and other grassroots peace players with the objective of launching the process of sustainable peace. When conducting a seminar, the teaching of sensitization approaches and spreading important knowledge are evoked as part of the programme. Key values are identified during the programme in order to empower and equip the local leaders with peacebuilding skills. Eventually, it is those at the grassroots level who then take ownership of the peacebuilding process. Trained leaders then potentially work to implement the acquired knowledge in a more compressive approach. It is important to stress here that the programme positively targets one of the crucial motives for the region's instability: the different armed rebel groups. The study demonstrates that by reaching out to this arms group and reduces their presence through bringing the children soldiers home and repatriate those who are foreigners operating in Kivu forest; advancement will be made in establishing sustainable peace in the province. Lastly, the study exposes the significance of employing non-violent means instead of a military method. Within a worldview where violence

seems to have taken over, the CCC strength when was observed in a programme that opts to convince and influence armed fighters to choose peace in a non-violent manner. The outcome of this approach essentially contributes to transforming the whole culture from violence to peace.

This research is a significant discovery, which enhances current theory and can be of relevance in further peacebuilding platforms. Furthermore, the research argues that the Church of Christ in Congo's influence of its spirituality is an essential feature of its curriculum. It is a rare aspect stressed through studies as a fundamental element in peacebuilding. Additionally, this research is a contribution to the existing theory of applying non-violent approaches to transform violent cultures into cultures of peace. It can, therefore, be supplemented to research contributions which argue that to fight 'the violence' through a non-violent approach is often the paramount approach. Finally, this study enhances the existing research on the dimensions of church nationwide and particularly in the Great Lakes Region in peacebuilding subjects. The study has exposed some new opinions in connection with spirituality and scriptural values that have not probably been stated by many researchers in previous studies.

This study makes the following specific conclusions and suggestions with reference to the relevant aspects of the DRC's peacebuilding. There is no simple way of incorporating the aspired roles of the CCC within the DRC's peacebuilding intervention. However, according to this study's findings, drawing from its different views of peacebuilding from grass roots intervention, emerge as another way of implementing conflict transformation that will build sustainable peace. This role and contribution of local churches and its members undermined by different peace players including the local government, as they fail to steer clear of identified conflict dynamics on their own part. Substantial potential for peacebuilding in the complex conflict setting of the Kivu Provinces seems to lie in actors' ability to mobilise across faith communities and state borders. This, however, seems to involve a strong inter-faith cohesion, not only of the same church denomination but as a whole. The Church of Christ in Congo has managed to exert its influence on political peace processes, due to its spiritual influence and political neutrality of the high-ranking capacity for political engagement and popular support to bring the war-parties to the negotiation table. The CCC involvement in the search for sustainable peace initiatives has resulted in different advantages as it will be summarized here bellow.

The local church in the Kivu-provinces adopted the peacebuilding programme because the church could not remain indifferent to the exactions that were being committed in the region. The church, therefore, provided a concrete solution to a concrete problem that is faced in local communities. The damage that has been imposed on women and children in the villages due to the presence of the armed rebels such as the FDLR from Rwanda and those from Uganda motivated the CCC to take action and initiate specific work towards addressing this issue. The CCC has also managed to mobilize the local churches to be involved and take advantage of playing a major role in the Peace and Reconciliation Programme for sustainable peace to effectively succeed. Building on this point, the research demonstrates that engagement and ownership of the programme at the grassroots level remain significant. Local leaders are considerably involved, and it is through these leaders that the objectives of the programme are carried out notably sensitization work that can lead to the recuperation of children soldiers and combatants who are still hiding in various places in the Provinces. This local and grass root responsibility is of great significance because the local population is the ones who will establish sustainable peace. Nevertheless, the research showed that this level of engagement and ownership was not so noticeable and should be amplified to be known by peace players.

#### **8.4. Suggestions for further research**

During the working on this thesis, I have acknowledged quite a lot of areas that would be of excessive importance for further search. They principally comprise the deployment of non-violent methods in areas where there are repetitive armed and violent conflicts and assess how non-violent resources are advantageous to contribute to the transformation of the cultures of violence into cultures of peace.

Also, I established during this study that that the Church of Christ in Congo uses its holiness as an important element to support its power and influence in contributing to a positive approach to peacebuilding. It will be therefore interesting that further exploration of this topic is carried out within different disciplines, especially in sustainable peace research and practical theology.

In conclusion, I furthermore find the role of forgiveness within this programme motivating. I would recommend that this be an additional area of study to show how forgiveness can be locally initiated by the Church to contribute in bringing about sustainable peace when engaged initially from the grassroots as an element in the peacebuilding process.

## **8.5. General conclusion**

This study has been carried out in the area of sustainable peace under the title “Peacebuilding Initiatives of the Church of Christ in Congo in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The study exploration has been prepared into eleven chapters. After an inclusive introduction, the second chapter considered the existing related literature for expounding key concepts of the study and conceptualizing theological perception-based peacebuilding. The third chapter dealt with methodological approaches while the fourth one was about the Historical background of the Conflict. The study focused on the concept of peacebuilding by referring to various initiatives undertaken by various actors for the peacebuilding process in the DRC and in Kivu Provinces in particular. To conduct out this study, the researcher embraced an explorative research paradigm employing a descriptive research design. Mixed methods combining both qualitative and Practical theology approaches were used to assess the contribution of peacebuilding initiatives of the CCC in the Kivu Provinces by attempting to respond to six research questions related to six objectives of this research. The researcher found that peacebuilding initiatives of the CCC are biblically established, specifically rooted in the theology of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding initiatives of the CCC include campaigning and advocating for peace and tolerance, training workshops and different spiritual activities comprising prayer, songs, Bible study and meditation, capacity building, promotion of biblical peace related values and various other social and economic projects under pastoral care and counselling. These initiatives are done in collaboration with other inter-religious groups through a guided dialogue and the process of institutional transformation. In short, peacebuilding initiatives of the CCC refer to the inner application and institutional transformation that aim to avoid and prevent or deal with internal conflicts as well as various interventions within the Kivu communities as the Church contribution to national efforts in the process of sustainable peace.

The study also revealed three dimensions of the peacebuilding process without going into their details. These include intrapersonal relationship peacebuilding, cultural peacebuilding, and structural peacebuilding. The study indicated some failures of the government and some strengths of the CCC in the process of contributing to sustainable peace in the DRC. On the aspect of intra-personal and interpersonal relationship peacebuilding, the following CCC peacebuilding creativities have been established as strengths: Caring for raped women at the Pentecostal Church based at Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, South Kivu; Arrangement to bring back home children soldiers from their hiding; Social assistance to the most needy, dialogue with



local leaders from the grass root for the peacebuilding process and counselling sessions for the crimes victims in different areas and other programmes related to the process of contributing to sustainable peace in Kivu Provinces. Regarding structural peacebuilding, the CCC proved to be strong in advocating for good relationships with the DRC neighbourhood by extending its collaboration with other churches in Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda. This was done through inter-religious dialogue for the prevention of the reoccurring of conflict in the Great Lakes region (GLR). On the aspect of cultural peacebuilding, initiatives such as eradication of the beliefs of sexual based discrimination, the democratic leadership culture, the contribution to the process of peacebuilding through skills like songs, drama, dance, poem, composed and executed by choirs, peace, unity and reconciliation groups, Protestant Ethics of labour and the promotion of church peace related values, have been considered as church strength.

As far as shortcomings, it has been noted that Church ministers who are available needed to be trained for the skill of mediation, peace, and reconciliation. Most preachers needed to contextualize the content of the Word preached to the relevancy with the actual circumstances such as conflict, peace, integrity, truth, social and economic justice. The administration of projects sponsored by International bodies has been blamed by local residents through different Medias as a potential source of conflict due to their method of peacebuilding process that aimed at their own economic interests. Women and children suffered the most in their presence without any help. The violation of women's rights could not be defended only when they wanted to do it at their own time or when pressed by residents.

On the view of the above, this study is of the opinion that in order to move forward, other agents of peace within the Church of Christ in Congo organization need to be equipped with both theoretical and practical skills in the discipline related to pastoral care, counselling and peacebuilding in order to improve the teamwork with secular practitioners. This will be helpful in terms of eluding the accumulation of responsibilities around a certain group of people only. Specific programmes and of peacebuilding should be recommended, initiated, re-defined and strengthened in various denominations to avoid vagueness when dealing with certain complicated issues. In general, peacebuilding creativities of the CCC have made a valuable contribution to the process of peacebuilding in their quest to sustainable peace in the Kivu Provinces.

Its contribution to the process of unity, reconciliation and other programmes despite some inadequacies highlighted in this research, do not rule out the work done by the CCC instead,

assist the Organization to determine the way forward to sustain and improve current performances. Undeniably, in the peacebuilding process, the focus should not be the festivity of successes, but the return to the action that will guarantee the sustainability of best practices that will deal with prevailing potentials of violence and prevent its deterioration into intense conflicts.

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APPENDIX: GATE KEEPER LETTER

CULTE PROTESTANT  
EGLISE DU CHRIST AU CONGO  
PRESIDENCE PROVINCIALE DU SUD-KIVU  
CABINET DU PRESIDENT

- EVANGILISATION ET VIE DE L'EGLISE
- COORDINATION MEDICALE
- ENSEIGNEMENT
- EDUCATION CHRETIENNE



- FINANCES ET GESTION
- DIACONIE
- FEMME ET FAMILLE
- COMMUNICATION

Bukavu, le 21/11/2014

No/Réf: DC21/ECC/SK/PP/2014

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This is to certify that the Church of Christ in Congo South Kivu (ECC S-K) has granted permission to Rev. Assan Biruli who is currently doing his studies in South Africa to conduct his research in our mission field wherever our churches may be found in the Democratic Republic of Congo. For any enquiry or any problem he may encounter, he should not hesitate to approach our offices all over the country for help.

For the Church of Christ in Congo South Kivu

Mgr Dr Jean-Luc Kuye-Ndondo wa Mulemera

*Handwritten signature of Mgr Dr Jean-Luc Kuye-Ndondo wa Mulemera*  
Evêque Président Provincial de l'ECC S-K



ASSOCIATION SANS BUT LUCRATIF  
Ord. B. 23-4-41-R.A. N°3 du 10-5-41.F.597 :  
Loi N° 71-0-2 du 31-12-71  
Loi N° 71-0-2 du 31-12-71  
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