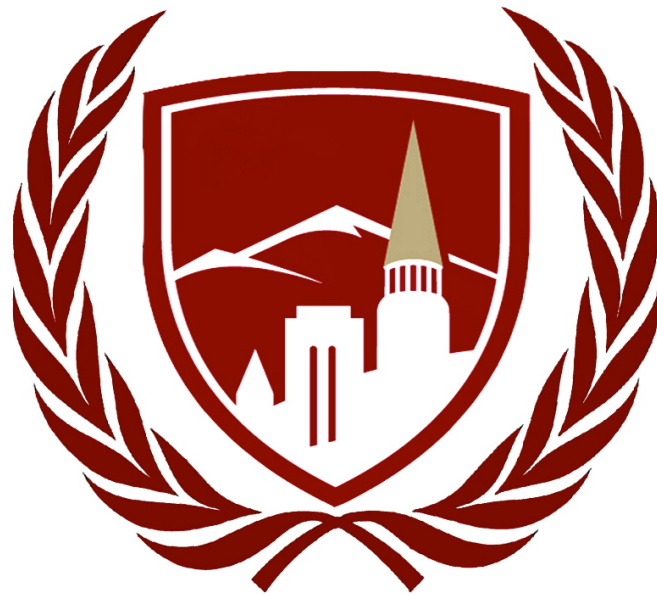


# UNIVERSITY OF DENVER



## BEGINNER SECURITY COUNCIL

The Situation in the Democratic  
Republic of the Congo



By Caleb Petry

## **Introduction**

The ethnic and political conflicts currently taking pace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are producing a large loss of human life and insecurity for the region. The large scale instability leads to opportunities for groups to abuse the power vacuum and participate in the trade of conflict minerals. In addition, there is increased spread of disease and other misfortunes among the population. Given the impact on the lives of individuals living in the region and the potential of a safe haven and funding for international criminal groups, a response is needed.

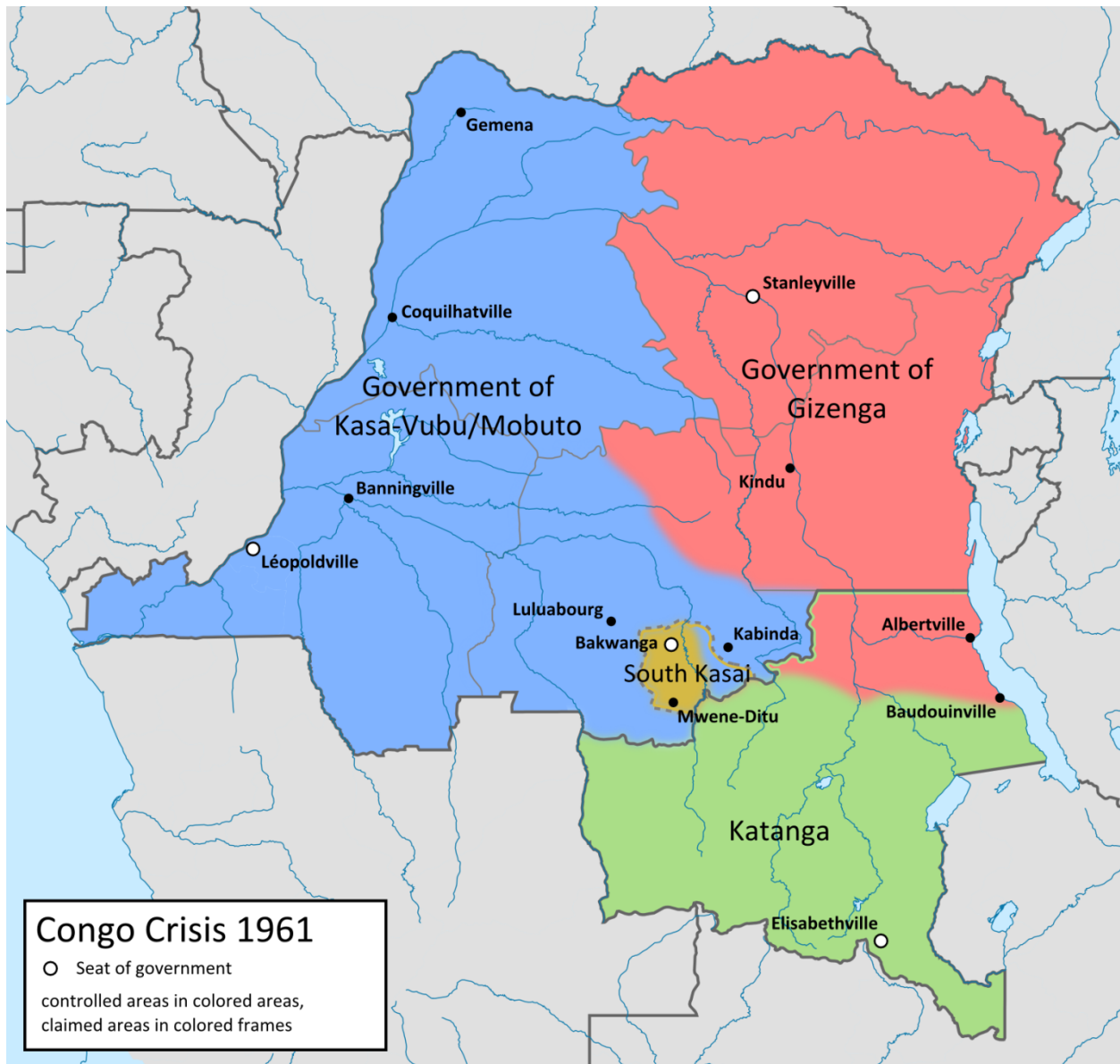
## **History**

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), as we know it today, gets its roots from the political structures, or lack of them, that the Belgians put in place as they abandoned their colonial territory in the early 1960's. In order to ease the transition on May 22, 1960, elections were held in order to begin independent rule on June 30, 1960. Following the removal of Belgian rule, a period of strife known as the Congo Crisis began.

The 6 year period, known as the Congo Crisis, began due to conflict between various political groups over the fate of the DRC, then known as Zaire (for continuity's sake in this guide it will be referred to as the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the rest of this guide). The situation was made more complex by ethnic tensions, a lack of military organization (due to a lack of leadership and a mutiny), and the attempted secession of the resource rich provinces of Katanga and South Kasai. In response to the lack of a coherent military force, Prime Minister Lumumba requested a United Nations intervention. The United Nations sent troops, created United Nations Operation in the Congo (UNUC), and demanded the removal of Belgian troops. The United Nations, however, refused to direct influence the conflict ruling it's forces could not "intervene in or influence the outcome of any internal conflict" according to Security Council Resolution 146.

Given the stance of the United Nations' leadership on military intervention Prime Minister Lumumba was forced to look for outside help. This help was found in the Soviet Union turning the United States against Lumumba's administration.

The outside interference, in addition to the ethnic tensions, led to a split of the country. On September 5, 1960, State President Kasa-Vubu and Prime Minister Lumumba publicly denounced and "removed" each other from power. Kasa-Vubu's attempted move was not approved of by the parliament and failed to create a new government. The United Nations responded by closing transportation networks, such as airports, and closing radio station in an attempt to control any potential violence. On September 14, the Army Chief of Staff Joseph Mobutu (later Sese Seko) seized control in a military coup with CIA support. He placed Lumumba under house arrest and removed all Soviet advisors. He, however, let Kasa-Vubu remain in office. Following the dismissal of Lumumba, Vice Prime Minister Antoine Gizenga set up a rival government in the eastern city of Stanleyville with the help of pro-Lumumba forces.



The situation led to the creation of a multi-factional conflict. Joseph Mobutu and Joseph Kasavubu in Leopoldville were supported by Western governments. Antoine Gizenga in Stanleyville was supported by the Soviet bloc, particularly China. Albert Kalonji, in South Kasai, and Moïse Tshombe, in Katanga, (supported by Belgium and western mining interests, and militarily assisted by South African and European mercenaries) were both seeking secession.

Lumumba, while attempting to escape to Stanleyville, was recaptured and executed along with two of his allies. The combination of events led to increased United Nations intervention including the approval for the use of force. In addition on 24 November, UN Security Council Resolution 169 was adopted, "to take vigorous action, including the use of the requisite measure of force, if necessary," to remove foreign military and other personnel not under the U.N. Command. However, the United Nations decided to attempt a diplomatic settlement first.

Between January and May 1961, several conferences were held to resolve the constitutional crisis brought on by the dismissal of Lumumba by President Kasa-Vubu. The leaders agreed to form a federal state of Congolese provinces. Cyrille Adoula was elected as the new Prime Minister. This plan was opposed by Tshombe, who wanted more independence for Katanga. As he was leaving Coquilhatville, Tshombe was arrested on charges of criticizing President Kasa-Vubu. He was released after pledging to reunite Katanga with the rest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Tshombe, however, had no intention of giving up Katanga's independence. He was also supported by foreign mercenaries, prompting the United Nations to initiate military action against Katanga with the goal of removing the mercenaries and encouraging an honoring of the settlement plans. Operations Rumpunch and Morthor were launched. During the operations, a company of 155 UN troops from Ireland was attacked and trapped in Jadotville and concern was raised in the western world over civilian casualties at the hands of United Nations forces.

The United Nations Secretary-General decided to attempt to negotiate an end to the conflict personally. However, while on his way to negotiations the United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld was killed in a plane crash. With death of the Secretary-General, the fighting continued in Katanga. The next day the besieged Irish UN company at Jadotville surrendered to the Katangese forces, having run out of water and ammunition. After these reversals the UN agreed to a ceasefire on poor terms, giving back public buildings and military posts to Katangese control.

The death of Hammarskjöld, and his subsequent replacement by U Thant, led to a renewed consideration of a military option. Skirmishes involving UN forces continued in Katanga. On 22 November, a party of Irish soldiers were ambushed and killed by Baluba tribesmen in Niemba, Northern Katanga. The UN discovered that the Katangese forces were planning an offensive against them. The Katangese forces set up roadblocks to isolate UN units from one another. This prompted another major military operation called Unokat that was launched on 5 December, 1961. This operation ended with an agreement to hold talks, which continued for a year before failure.

Following Operation Unokat several military operations were commenced to unify the governance of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 30 December 1961, after a four-month military campaign, troops of the Congolese central government re-conquered South Kasai and arrested Kalonji, thus ending the South Kasai secession. Antoine Gizenga remained head of the breakaway Eastern province throughout most of 1961. Gizenga immediately agreed to join the central government in talks with Prime Minister Cyrille Adoula, but the talks disintegrated. On 14 January 1962, ANC (the DRC's army) forces defeated the Stanleyville forces and arrested Gizenga. The following Operation Grand Slam, in 1962, led to the complete removal of Tshombe's administration and the end of Katanga secession attempts, following the failure of the talks with him.

In early 1964, a new crisis appeared as Congolese rebels calling themselves "Simba" rebelled against the government. They were led by Pierre Mulele, Gaston Soumialot and Christophe Gbenye. All were former members of Gizenga's administration.

The rebellion affected Kivu and Eastern provinces. By August they had captured Stanleyville and set up a rebel government there. As the rebel movement spread, discipline became more difficult to maintain, and acts of violence and terror increased. Thousands of Congolese were executed, including government officials, political leaders of opposition parties, provincial and local police, school teachers, and others believed to have been Westernized.

In July 1964, Moise Tshombe replaced Cyrilla Adoula as Prime Minister of a new national government with a mandate to end the regional revolts. However, the majority of the government remained the same. Among his first moves, Tshombe recalled the exiled Katangese forces and recruited white mercenaries, integrating them with the ANC, and turned to Belgium and the United States for help. In response, the Belgian army sent a task force to Leopoldville, airlifted by the 322nd Air Division United States Air Force beginning Operation Dragon Rouge.

Operation Dragon Rouge was planned to rescue hostages held by the Simba rebels. The operation coincided with the arrival of ANC and other mercenary units at Stanleyville, which was quickly captured. It took until the end of the year to completely put down the remaining areas of the Simba rebellion.

Despite the success of the raid, Tshombe's prestige was damaged by the joint Belgian-US operation which saw white mercenaries and western forces intervene once again in the Congo. This was due to the stigma against westerner generated by colonial rule. In particular, Tshombe had lost the support of President Joseph Kasa Vubu and Chief of the Army Mobutu Sese Seko. As a result Tshombe was dismissed from his post as prime minister in October 1965.

The crisis was brought to a close after Mobutu Sese Seko seized power. On 25 November 1965, Joseph Mobutu seized power from President Kasa-Vubu. Mobutu had the political and military support of Western countries, who saw him as an ally against communism in Africa. He established a one-party state, banning all other political organizations except his own. Mobutu established a system of patronage, known for its exceptional corruption. Despite the country's natural resources, including copper, gold and diamonds, much of the DRC's population sank further into poverty. Mobutu allegedly amassed a personal fortune estimated to be as much as US\$5 billion, while what infrastructure the country had was left to decay. However, as the Cold War waned in the early 1990s, so did Western support for Mobutu. Belgium, France, and the United States all suspended military and financial assistance to Mobutu's regime.

After coming to power in 1965, Mobutu gave the Banyamulenge (Rwandan Tutsi immigrants) political power in the East in hopes that they, as a minority, would keep a tight grip on power and prevent the more populous ethnicities from forming an opposition. This greatly increased tension between the Rwanda based Hutus and Tutsis and the native Hunde, Nande, and Nyanga. Several wars and conflicts were fought culminating in the removal of citizenship from foreigners (both Rwandan and Burundian) and attempts to repatriate them in 1981 and 1995, respectively.

The start of the First Congo War was driven in large part by the Rwanda Genocide and the existing ethnic tensions. At first many Tutsis fled in order to escape the genocide, however they were followed by many Hutus; who also fled Rwanda, into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, following the takeover by the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front. The addition of these refugees increased ethnic tensions. This increase in tension led to the Banyamulenge Rebellion which marked the beginning of the conflict.

In 1996, the Rwandan administration fearing the buildup of the militia group *Rassemblement Démocratique pour le Rwanda* (which included former participants in the genocide) created the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL). The AFDL was a coalition of Congolese dissidents, disgruntled minority groups and nations (including Rwanda and Uganda) seeking to topple President Mobutu Sese Seko and bring Laurent Kabila to power.

Following the First Congo War, Laurent Kabila expelled the foreign forces and consolidated his power. However, Kabila failed to address the issues which led to the first Congo War. There was still extensive ethnic tension and a lack of governance. In addition, Rwanda failed to address its security concerns, actually creating additional ones including an insurgency along the shared border with the DRC. This failure to address concerns led directly to the Second Congo War a short time later.

The Second Congo War started due to a failure to address the issues causing instability in the region. Within several weeks of Kabila taking power, the Banyamulenge (alarmed by the removal of foreign forces) began to rebel and were supported by Rwanda. They formed the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) and immediately gained legitimacy by securing support from Uganda. The Tutsi-led Rwandan government allied with Uganda, while Burundi also retaliated, occupying a portion of northeastern Congo. To help remove the occupying Rwandans, President Kabila enlisted the aid of refugee Hutus in eastern Congo and began to agitate public opinion against the Tutsis.

Eventually, several nations responded to Kabila's call for aid with Zimbabwe, Chad, Sudan, Angola, and Namibia joining forces on the government side. Nations outside of Africa refrained from choosing sides and instead pushed for peace.

In November 1998 a new Ugandan-backed rebel group, the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC), was reported in the north of the country. On 6 November Rwandan President Paul Kagame admitted that Rwandan forces were assisting the RCD rebels for security reasons. On 18 January 1999 the MLC, Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe agreed on a ceasefire (Lusaka Ceasefire) at a summit at Windhoek, Namibia but the RCD was not invited. The fighting was not stopped by this ceasefire.

The Six Day War occurred as a result of tensions between Uganda and Rwanda over their support of rival factions and supposed violations of the ceasefire by both sides. During the Six Day War, which occurred from June 5 to 10 in 2000, Rwandan army units and supporting militias drove Ugandan army units from the town. As a result of the conflict the Ugandan army units lost over 2,000 men. (the Rwandan army has not disclosed their losses). In addition, 1,000

residents of Kisangani were killed with at least 3,000 more injured, of which the majority was civilians.

In 24 February 2000, the UN authorized a force of 5,537 troops, known as the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (known by the French acronym, MONUC), to monitor the cease-fire. However, fighting continued between rebels and government forces and between Rwandan and Ugandan forces. Military operations and diplomatic efforts made by the UN, African Union and Southern African Development Community failed to make any headway.

2002 was filled with numerous treaties and agreements such as The Sun City Agreement, Pretoria Accord, and the Luanda Agreement. On 17 December the Congolese parties of the Inter Congolese Dialogue, namely: the national government, the MLC, the RCD, the RCD-ML, the RCD-N, the domestic political opposition, representatives of civil society and the Mai Mai, signed the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement, the most significant in ending the conflict. The Agreement described a plan for transitional governance that would result in legislative and presidential elections within two years of its signing and marked the formal end of the Second Congo War.

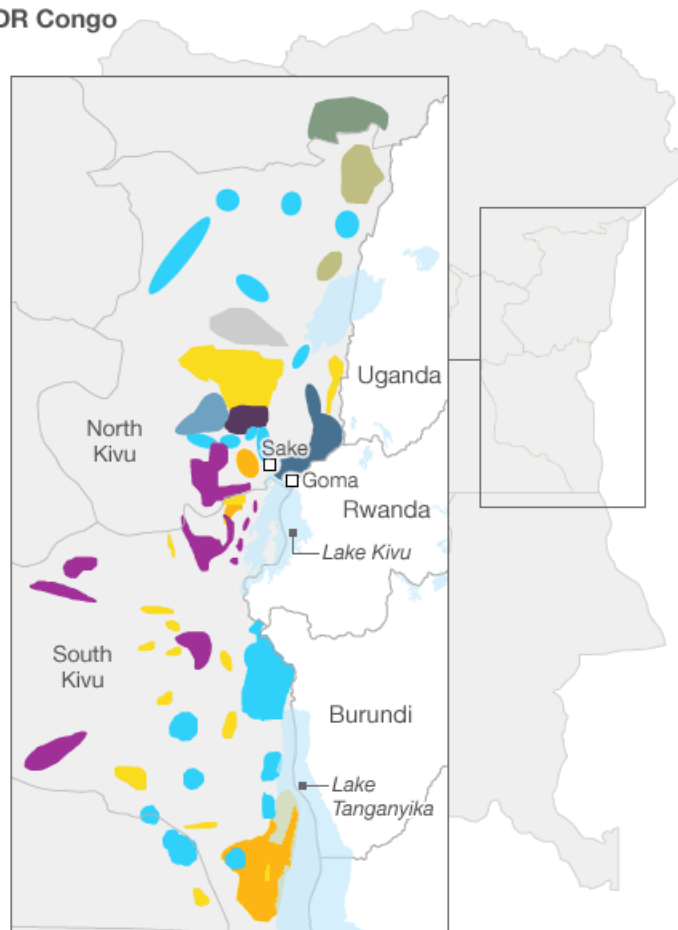
On 18 July 2003, the Transitional Government came into being as specified in the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement out of the warring parties. The Agreement obliges the parties to carry out a plan to reunify the country, disarm and integrate the warring parties and hold elections. There were numerous problems, resulting in continued instability in much of the country and a delay in the scheduled national elections from June 2005 to July 2006. The Ituri, Kivu, Dongo, and Katanga conflicts were several regional conflicts that followed the end of the Second Congo War or were fought alongside it due to a failure to address the concerns of all ethnic groups.

## Current Status:

### Rebel groups in eastern DR Congo

UN forces and the Congolese army are present in large towns

- ADF-NALU**  
Ugandan-led Islamists
- APCLS**  
Mai Mai group
- FDLR**  
Mostly Hutu Rwandan rebels
- FRPI**  
Based in gold-rich Ituri region
- M23**  
Mostly Tutsi, said to be Rwandan-backed
- Rai Mutomboki**  
Anti-FDLR group
- Sheka**  
Mai Mai group
- UPCP**  
Loose coalition of smaller nationalist groups
- Mai Mai groups**  
Local forces claiming to act in self-defence
- Other armed groups**



Source: Oxfam

Currently in the DRC there are over two dozen active rebel groups representing various political, ethnic, and foreign interests. A short list of the more prominent ones includes M23, ADF-NALU, Mai Mai groups, FDLR, FRPI, Rai Mutomboki, Sheka, LRA, and UPCP. The United Nations command in the region decided to target the violence by engaging in combat operations against M23, and following their surrender, and recently the FDLR.

The United Nations' Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the Democratic Republic of Congo is unlike any other UN operation in history. With its unusual mandate (as given through United Nations Security Council Resolution 2098), it is allowed to go on the attack against armed groups (with or without FARDC forces) it deems to be a threat to peace in the region, regardless of whether there is any immediate danger to civilians. This exception to the norm was deemed necessary due to the continued unrest and the unravelling of the framework agreements.

The operation started with combat operations against the M23 rebel movement starting in November 2012; when the group seized control of Goma. The M23 was formed on 4 April 2012 when nearly 300 soldiers, the majority of them were former members of the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP), turned against the DRC government. Their reasons for rebelling included including poor conditions in the army and the government's unwillingness to implement the 23 March 2009 peace deal. The UN FIB and Congolese Army drove the M23



rebels out of Goma and reached a surrender agreement in December 2013 after leader Sultani Makenga and 1,500 fighters surrendered in November.

The FDLR (The Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda), who have recently been targeted by the UN FIB, are made up mainly of Rwandans. Most of the current FDLR soldiers have been recruited from refugee camps in eastern Congo. These refugees include those responsible for the Rwandan Genocide. Approximately 1,000 to 2,000 FDLR rank-and-file fighters are said to be currently operating in eastern Congo.

Mai Mai groups are often formed by combatants who refuse to participate in FARDC reintegration processes, and ascribe to autochthonous beliefs, meaning they believe the land should belong to its original inhabitants. Mai Mai groups feel threatened by Rwandophone communities, the Hutu and Tutsi, which they see as foreigners trying to take over their land and power. They are not unified under any political or racial affiliation, but all actively target civilians and U.N. peacekeeping forces in eastern Congo.

The Allied Democratic Forces is a Ugandan Muslim rebel group with limited activities in Uganda and the DRC. In 2010 ADF forces were active in the Beni district near the Ugandan border until an FARDC operation dislodged ADF forces. According to U.N. officials, the operation also displaced an estimated 100,000 Congolese civilians.

### **Bloc Positions:**

Rwanda, AU, SDAC, Burundi, and Uganda – Wish to see the removal of insurgent groups acting along their borders with the DRC. Rwanda in particular wishes the removal of the FDLR.

United States, China, Russia, France, United Kingdom, Australia, Luxembourg, and the Republic of Korea – Want access to the minerals contained within the DRC and increased security. Favor limited involvement both monetarily and with troops.

Argentina, Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan, and Togo- Want increased security and access to minerals. Favor involvement due to their role in peacekeepers.

### **Preparation Questions:**

What should the peace-keeping forces continuing goals be or is their presence necessary?

What are the impacts and interests of international actors on the conflicts?

What is the impact of conflict minerals, both locally and internationally?

To what extent is the conflict driven by ethnic tensions and what can be done to alleviate them?

What are the main motivations for foreign governments directly involved in the conflict?

Is a catch all solution appropriate or should each region be treated differently, why or why not?

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