

**REGIONAL SECURITY IN AFRICA:
WHY THE BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN
WEAPONS CONVENTION IS
RELEVANT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE
IC/GLR PROCESS**

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BACKGROUND

- PREAMBLE OF THE CONVENTION ON PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, STOCKPILING OF BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND THEIR DESTRUCTION STATES AS FOLLOWS: *Determined to act with a view to achieving effective progress towards general and complete disarmament, including the prohibition and elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction,.....*



ARTICLE 1

- EACH STATE PARTY TO THIS CONVENTION UNDERTAKES NEVER IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES TO DEVELOP, PRODUCE, STOCKPILE OR OTHERWISE ACQUIRE OR RETAIN:
 - (1) MICROBIAL OR OTHER BIOLOGICAL AGENTS, OR TOXINS
 - WEAPONS, EQUIPMENT OR MEANS OF DELIVERY DESIGNED TO USE SUCH AGENTS OR TOXINS FOR HOSTILE PURPOSES OR IN ARMED CONFLICT
 - ARTICLE II, III AND IV: ARE ON PROHIBITION AND PREVENTION OF BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS



ARTICLE V

- THE STATES PARTIES TO THIS CONVENTION UNDERTAKE TO CONSULT ONE ANOTHER AND TO COOPERATE IN SOLVING ANY PROBLEMS WHICH MAY ARISE IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVE OF, OR IN THE APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF, THE CONVENTION. CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION PURSUANT TO THIS ARTICLE MAY ALSO BE UNDERTAKEN THROUGH APPROPRIATE INTERNATIONAL PROCEDURES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS CHARTER



THE IC/GLR PROCESS

- ON DEC 16 2006, THE 11 IC/GLR MEMBER COUNTRIES SIGNED THE PACT ON PEACE, STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT, THE CULMINATION OF A PREPARATORY PROCESS DATING BACK TO THE LATE 1990S AND THE DAR DECLARATION OF 2004
- THIS PACT DOES NOT DIRECTLY ADDRESS ITSELF TO BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS PREVENTION. IT DOES HOWEVER UNDERLINE THE COMMITMENT OF MEMBER STATES TO CREATING A SECURE, STABLE, CONFLICT FREE AND DEVELOPED REGION



- IT CREATES DETAILED PROGRAMMES OF ACTION THAT TARGET FOUR THEMATIC AREAS OF CONCERN TO THE MEMBER STATES NAMELY: PEACE AND SECURITY, DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION, HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIAL ISSUES. IN ADDITION THERE IS A FIFTH CLUSTER FOCUSING ON CROSS CUTTING ISSUES NAMELY HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER, HIV/AIDS, ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS



- THE IC/GLR IS NOT A ONE OFF MEETING. IT IS NOT EVEN AN ORGANIZATION PROPERLY SO CALLED. IT IS A FOLLOW UP MECHANISM WITH STRUCTURES AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS. THE NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS ARE TASKED WITH IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS WITHIN EACH MEMBER STATE.



- THE REGIONAL LEVEL COMPRISES THE INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS, TWO EACH YEAR
- THE APEX IS THE SUMMIT, COMPRISING THE HEADS OF STATE OF THE 11 MEMBER COUNTRIES, WHICH ACTS AS THE DECISION MAKING ORGAN AND MEETS ONCE EVERY TWO YEARS, EXCEPT WHEN THERE IS URGENT NEED



- THE CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT, BASED IN BUJUMBURA ACTS AS THE TECHNICAL AND COORDINATING ARM OF THE CONFERENCE. IT FACILITATES THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE THROUGH MONITORING AND EVALUATION, INITIATION OF PROJECTS, FUND RAISING, PREPARATION OF RIMC AND SUMMIT MEETINGS



- THE TROIKA, COMPRISING OF THE PAST, PRESENT AND INCOMING CHAIR OF THE SUMMIT ACTS AS A CONFLICT RESOLUTION



RELEVANCE OF THE CONVENTION TO THE WORK OF THE IC/GLR

- 9 OF THE 11 CORE MEMBER STATES OF THE IC/GLR ARE SIGNATORY TO THE CONVENTION AGAINST BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS, REPRESENTING OVER 80% OF THE MEMBERSHIP. THIS SHOWS COMMITMENT TO THE IDEALS OF PEACE AND SECURITY AS CHAMPIONED BY THE CONVENTION



- THE CONVENTION SEEKS TO ERADICATE, AND TO PREVENT THE DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES OF ARMED CONFLICT AND WAR BY ELIMINATING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION



- THE GREAT LAKES REGION IS CHARACTERIZED BY BOTH INTRA AND INTER-STATE CONFLICTS.
- SOME OF THESE CONFLICTS ARE HIGH DENSITY, INTRACTABLE, VIOLENT AND DEADLY
- MOST OF THE CONFLICTS ARE UNDERPINNED BY COMPETING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL INTERESTS AROUND POLITICAL POWER AND NATURAL RESOURCES.



- EXAMPLES INCLUDE THE DRC CONFLICT IN WHICH AT ONE TIME MORE THAN 5 STATES WERE INVOLVED, INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN SOUTHERN SUDAN, UGANDA, ANGOLA, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, BURUNDI, RWANDA, AND EVEN KENYA
- USE OF BIG AND SMALL ARMS HAVE COMBINED TO ENSURE THOUSANDS OF DEATHS, DISPLACEMENT OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AND A HEAVY TOLL ON DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.



- THERE IS A CHANCE THAT OWING TO THE INTENSITY OF THESE CONFLICTS, BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS, IF AVAILABLE CAN BE USED WITH DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES, HENCE THE NEED FOR PREVENTION. SEVERAL REASONS CAN EXPLAIN THIS:
- A) THE FACT THAT WE HAVE NEIGHBOURS LIKE SOUTH AFRICA WITH CAPABILITY TO PRODUCE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS HENCE THEY MAY BE EASILY ACCESSED



- B) THE REGION HAS A HISTORY OF PROXY WARS IN WHICH SOME BIG POWERS HAVE FOUGHT OR FINANCED SOME OF THE REGION' S DEADLIEST CONFLICTS IN THE PAST. THIS DATES BACK TO THE COLD WAR ERA. EXAMPLES INCLUDE ANGOLA, DRC AND SOMALIA
- C) SOME GOVERNMENTS HAVE IN THE PAST SUPPORTED NEGATIVE FORCES FIGHTING NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES, THEREBY EXERCABATING CONFLICT.



- D) IN THE PAST, SOME GOVERNMENTS IN THE REGION HAVE ADOPTED EXCLUSIONARY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE POLICIES THAT HAVE HELPED TO BREED DEEP ROOTED DISCONTENT AMONG SECTIONS OF THEIR POPULATIONS, LEADING TO UPSHOOT OF REBEL GROUPS. GIVEN A CHANCE THESE GROUPS CAN USE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS WITH DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES.



- ROGUE STATES AND TERRORIST GROUPS WITH DIVERSE GRIEVANCES CAN ACCESS BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS, THEREBY COMPLICATING EFFORTS THAT ARE BEING MADE TO FIND LASTING PEACE IN THE REGION. THIS CALLS FOR PREVENTIVE MEASURES



- BY COMING TOGETHER AND COLLECTIVELY STRENGTHENING COOPERATION AMONGST THEMSELVES, IC/GLR STATES ARE BETTER PLACED TO ENSURE THAT NO MEMBER STATE CAN BECOME A ROGUE STATE, NOR BE USED BY A ROGUE STATE TO SNEAK IN BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS OR TECHNOLOGY INTO THE REGION

IC/GLR INITIATIVES

- TO ENSURE ENHANCED COOPERATION, AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE PACT MEMBER STATES SIGNED SEVERAL PROTOCOLS INCLUDING THE PROTOCOL FOR NON-AGRESSION AND MUTUAL DEFENCE, PROTOCOL AGAINST ILLEGAL EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL REOURCES, AND THE PROTOCOL ON JUDICIAL COOPERATION AMONG OTHERS



- THEY HAVE ALSO ENSURED THE FULL PARTICIPATION OF VARIOUS CRITICAL GROUPS INCLUDING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS, WOMEN, YOUTH, PRIVATE SECTOR AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS. THESE GROUPS ARE FULLY REPRESENTATED WITHIN THE NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS



- THE INCLUSION OF THESE GROUPS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT GIVES THE PROCESS LEGITIMACY. IT ENSURES ACTIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE SOCIETY AT LARGE AND ENTRENCHES OWNERSHIP OF THE PROCESS BY THE PEOPLE OF THE REGION.



- THE CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT IS CURRENTLY WORKING TO ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS WITH A BROAD SPECTRUM OF BILATERAL, MULTILATERAL AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND DONORS TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS. IT IS DOING SO THROUGH SIGNING MOUs



- THROUGH THESE PARTNERSHIPS, IT IS HOPED THAT RESOURCE, TECHNICAL AND HUMAN CAPACITIES WILL BE HARNESSSED FOR THE GOOD OF THE REGION AND ITS PEOPLE



- TRUST AND BUILDING CONFIDENCE IS SEEN AS CRUCIAL FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE IC/GLR PROCESS. THE COMMITMENT TO INFORMATION SHARING, ENHANCING REGIONAL INTEGRATION, THE REGIONAL APPROACH TO FINDING SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS IN THE REGION, THE CREATION OF INSTITUTIONS TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY AND RULE OF LAW, ARE ALL POINTERS TO THE RESOLVE AND SERIOUSNESS OF THE MEMBER STATES. THEY STRESS DIALOGUE AND PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS.



- THE CONFERENCE PROCESS IS FUNDED BY MANDATORY ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE MEMBER STATES FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE SECRETARIAT AND A SPECIAL FUND FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT (SFRD), WHICH IS OPEN TO CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBER STATES AND DONORS



CONCLUSION

- THE IC/GLR WELCOMES PARTNERSHIP WITH ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS THAT ARE WORKING FOR PEACE THROUGH PREVENTIVE ACTION AND PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT. MEMBER STATES ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO CREATING A PEACEFULL, SECURE SPACE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND STABILITY FOR THE REGIONS' POPULATION









