

**Secessionism versus territorial unity: Centre-periphery relations in the
Democratic Republic of Congo (1960-2006)**

by

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SUMMARY

The focus in this dissertation is on the rise of secessionism and its curtailment in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Theories pertaining to centre-periphery relations, as well as right-sizing the state, are used for this purpose. Factors such as the DRC's vast territory and colonial policies affected the centre-periphery relations after independence. The weak ties between the centre and the peripheries were important factors in the attempts at secession that followed independence. In addition, the political and administrative centre (Kinshasa) was too weak to keep the restive peripheries in check. International military intervention, thus, played an important role in defeating attempts at secession. The strategies of President Mobutu in strengthening the centre, as well as the lack of secessionism in the DRC after the collapse of the centre towards the end of Mobutu's presidency, receive attention.

Key words: secession, territory, centre-periphery relations, right-sizing the state, internal colonialism, size of state, ethnicity, nation-building, foreign military intervention, Democratic Republic of Congo.

DECLARATION

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Secessionism versus territorial unity: Centre-periphery relations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (1960-2006)

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

February 29, 2016

SIGNATURE

DATE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAPSO	Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization
ABACOST	A bas le costume/ down with the suit
ABAKO	Alliance des Bakongo/Bakongo people Alliance
ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
ADP	Alliance Démocratique des Peuples /Democratic Alliance of Peoples
AFDL	Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo/Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo
AIC	Association Internationale du Congo/International Association of Congo
AMDC	Assistance aux Maternités et Dispensaires du Congo
ANC	Armée Nationale Congolaise/Congolese national Army
AND	Agence Nationale de Documentation/National Agency of Documentation
APL	Armée Populaire de Libération/People’s Liberation Army
AU	African Union
AZAP	Agence Zaïre Presse/Zaïrian News Agency
BALUBAKAT	Association Générale des Baluba du Katanga /General Association of the Baluba People of Katanga
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCK	Compagnie du Chemin de Fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga
BDK	Bundu dia Kongo/ Rally of Kongo people
BELTEXCO	Société Belge de Textile et de Commerce
CAN	Coupe d’Afrique des Nations/Africa Cup of Nations
CEEAC/ECCAS	Communauté Economique des Etats Afrique Centrale/Economic Community of Central African States
CEMUBAC	Centre Scientifique et Médical de l’Université Libre de Bruxelles en Afrique Centrale
CEPGL	Communauté Economic des Pays des Grands Lacs/Economic Community of Countries of the Great Lakes
CEREA	Centre de Regroupement Africain/African Grouping Centre
CFB	Caminho de Ferro de Benguela/ Benguela railway
CFKL	Compagnie du Chemin de Fer du Bas-Congo
CFL	Compagnie du Chemin de fer du Congo Supérieur aux Grands Lacs <i>Africains</i>
CFS	Congo Free State
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNDP	Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple/National Congress for the Defence of the People
CNL	Comité National de Libération/National liberation Committee
CNRD	Conseil National de la Resistance pour la Démocratie/National Council of Resistance for Democracy
CNS	Conférence Nationale Souveraine/Sovereign National Conference
COAKA	Coalition Kasaienne/ Kasaian coalition
COLTAN	Columbite–Tantalite
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CONACO	Convention Nationale Congolaise/Congolese National Convention

CONAKAT	Confédération des Associations Tribales du Katanga/Confederation of Tribal Associations of Katanga
CPP	Comités du Pouvoir Populaire/ Popular Power Committees
CSLC	Confédération des Syndicats Libres du Congo
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DSP	Division Spéciale Présidentielle/ Special Presidential Division
EU	European Union
FAC	Forces Armées Congolaises/Congolese Armed Forces
FC	Franc Congolais
FAR	Forces Armées Rwandaises/Rwandan Armed Forces
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo/Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo
FAZ	Forces Armées Zaïroises/Zaïrian Armed Forces
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda/Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda
FEC	Fédération des Entrepreneurs du Congo
Fédékaléo	Fédération des Kasaiens de Léopoldville/Federation of Kasaians of Leopoldville
FGTC	Fédération Générale du Travail du Congo
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association/International Federation of Association Football
FLNC	Front pour la Libération Nationale du Congo/Front for the National Liberation of Congo
FNLA	Frente Nacional para a Libertação de Angola/National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FOMULAC	Fondation Médicale de l'Université de Louvain au Congo
FOPERDA	Fondation Père Damien pour la lutte contre la Lèpre
FORMINIERE	Société Internationale Forestière et Minière du Congo
FPR	Front Patriotique Rwandais/Rwandan Patriotic Front
GB	Groupe Bemba
GECAMINES	Générale des carrières et des Mines
ICD	Inter-Congolese Dialogue
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JMPR	Jeunesse du Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution/Youth of the Popular Movement of the Revolution
M23	Mouvement du 23 Mars/Movement of March 23
MIBA	Société Minière de Bakwanga
MISTEBEL	Mission Technique Belge
MLC	Mouvement de Libération du Congo/Movement for the Liberation of Congo
MNC	Mouvement National Congolais/National Congolese Movement
MNC-K	Mouvement National Congolais – Kalonji/National Congolese Movement - Kalonji
MNC-L	Mouvement National Congolais – Lumumba/National Congolese Movement - Lumumba
MONUC	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo/United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MONUSCO	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo/United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MOPAP	Mobilisation, Propagande et Animation politique/Mobilization, Propaganda and political Animation
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola/Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MPR	Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution/Popular Movement of the Revolution

MRLZ	Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre/Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Zaïre
NALU	National Army for Liberation of Uganda
NCN	New Congo Net
NGOs	NonGovernmental Organizations
OCPT	Office Congolais des Postes et des Télécommunications
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OKIMO	Office des Mines d'or de Kilo-Moto
OTRACO	Offices des Transports au Congo
OUA/ OAU	Organisation de l'Unité Africaine/Organization of African unity
OZRT	Office Zaïrois de Radiodiffusion et de Télévision
PALU	Parti Lumumbiste Unifié/Unified Lumumbist Party
PNP	Parti National pour le Progrès/National Party for the Progress
PPRD	Parti du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et le Développement/People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy
PRP	Parti pour la Révolution Populaire/People's Revolutionary Party
PSA	Parti Solidaire Africain/African Solidarity Party
PUNA	Parti de l'Unité Nationale/Party of National Unity
RCD	Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie/ Congolese Rally for Democracy
RCD-ML	Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie - Mouvement de Libération/Congolese Rally for Democracy - Movement of Liberation
RCD-National	Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – National/Congolese Rally for Democracy - National
RDR	Rassemblement Démocratique pour la République/Democratic Rally for the Republic
RECO	Regroupement Congolais/Congolese grouping
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADR	Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
SAMI	Service Auxiliaire de l'Assistance Médicale aux indigènes
SARM	Service d'Actions et des Renseignements Militaires
SCIBE-Zaïre	Société Commerciale et Industrielle Bemba - Zaïre
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SOCIMEX	Société Commerciale d'Import-Export
SOMINKI	Société Minière du Kivu
UAR	United Arab Republic
UDPS	Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social/Union for Democracy and Social Progress
UFERI	Union des Fédéralistes et des Républicains Indépendants/Union of Federalists and Independent Republicans
UGEC	Union Générale des Etudiants Congolais
ULB	Université Libre de Bruxelles
UMHK	Union Minière du Haut Katanga
UN	United Nations
UNA	United Nations Assembly
UNC	Union for the Congolese nation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNIMO	Union des Mongos/Union of Mongos
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola/National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

UNTZA	Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Zaïre
UPC	Union des Patriotes Congolais/Union of Congolese Patriots
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UTC	Union des Travailleurs Congolais

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LIST OF CHANGE TO OFFICIAL PLACE NAMES IN THE DRC

FORMER NAMES

CURRENT NAMES

Bakwanga	Mbuji-Mayi
Bas-Zaïre	Bas-Congo
Banningville	Bandundu
Baudouinville	Moba
Clinique Danoise	Clinique Kinoise
Clinique reine Astrid	Clinique Ngaliema
Coquilhatville	Mbandaka
Costermansville	Bukavu
Elisabethville	Lubumbashi
Haut-Zaïre	Province Orientale
Jadotville	Likasi
Léopoldville	Kinshasa
Luluabourg	Kananga
Port Francqui	Ilebo
Shaba	Katanga
Stanleyville	Kisangani
Université Lovanium	Université de Kinshasa
Université Libre du Congo	Université de Kisangani
Université Officielle du Congo	Université de Lubumbashi
Zaïre	Democratic Republic of Congo

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Secessionism affected nearly every part of the globe since the end of the Cold War with the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia as prominent examples. It became a topic of heated debate among political theorists, as well as scholars of international relations. Close to us, the African continent was affected by this phenomenon through the birth of secessionist movements in several countries. There are even two recent cases of successful secession, namely Eritrea on May 3, 1993 and South Sudan on July 9, 2011. Nevertheless, the Democratic Republic of Congo¹ (DRC)'s territorial unity has curiously been protected from this wave despite its experience with several secessionist movements in the past. There are three regions in particular where strong secessionist sentiments tried to disintegrate the country early in the 1960s and where the government used gigantic forces including the military and diplomacy in order to reunify the country. These are Katanga, South Kasai and Oriental Province, including Kivu.

Many factors are present in the DRC that encourage the territorial disintegration of the state, particularly its size and its more than 200 heterogeneous ethnic groups obliged to live in the same territorial entity. The DRC, with its 2.344.885² Km², is the second largest country on the African continent, strategically located in the heart of Africa and rich in natural resources. The Congo Free State's borders were established arbitrarily during 1885 to 1894, in accordance with the theory of the zones of influence drawn up by the participants at the Berlin Conference (1884-1885), dividing and grouping people with diverse traditions together. The DRC, however, survived these stresses on its national and territorial unity.

Against this background, the focus of this study is on the reasons why the DRC has been able to maintain its territorial unity in spite of various attempts at secession since independence. There

¹ Also Congo Free State during King Leopold II rule, later Belgian Congo as colony and Zaïre under Mobutu regime. Belgium's King Leopold II established the Congo Free State as a private property of exploitation. Finally, he sold it as colony to Belgium in 1908. The Belgian Congo gained its independence on June 30, 1960. The term DRC would be used as a generic term for the state under discussion unless otherwise specified – for example as Zaïre during the era of Mobutu.

² Microsoft Encarta 2007, Congo (DRC). See the card of the countries. Data for area comes from the statistical services of each country.

are various theories that focus on secessionism. One set of theories focus for example on the nature of the relations between the political centre and the periphery. A study of the achievement of national and territorial unity in the DRC after independence, with special attention to the era of Mobutu and the phase after the collapse of the Mobutu regime, could provide important information on the nature of centre-periphery relations during attempts at secession, as well as during periods of national unity.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Maintaining territorial unity and establishing national unity have been a challenge for the Central Government of the DRC in the fifty years since independence in 1960. In the light of the various failed attempts at secession after the 1960s and most notably the attempts by Katanga, South Kasai and Oriental Province, including Kivu, as well as the collapse of the centre after the fall of Mobutu, the question arises what was the nature of the relationship between the centre and the peripheries that: 1) gave rise to secessionism; 2) resulted in the failure of secessionist attempts; 3) prevented fragmentation of the DRC after the collapse of the centre in 1997.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the proposed study are:

1. To determine the nature of centre-periphery relations during the post-independence secessionist movements by comparing the secessionist attempts in Katanga, South Kasai and Oriental, including Kivu, in order to identify:
 - a) what motivated the post-independence secessionist sentiment and the subsequent revolts in Katanga, South Kasai and Kisangani, and
 - b) the strategy of the centre in dealing with the restive peripheries.
2. To identify the diverse strategies employed during the era of Mobutu to:
 - a) eliminate secessionism in general but in particular in these three regions, and
 - b) create feelings of national unity.
3. To investigate the reasons why the peripheries did not breakaway by analyzing their attachment to the country as a whole in spite of the collapse of the centre in the DRC (Zaire) on May 17, 1997.

1.4 KEY CONCEPTS

There are three key concepts that we need to define at this stage, namely secessionism, partition and centre-periphery relations.

For purposes of this research the concept of secessionism is defined as the actions following from a belief or state of mind of a group under the influence of leader/leaders to create a new sovereign state in a territory that is part of a larger sovereign state.

According to Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan (2012), secession involves a border transformation, that is, the conversion of the previous internal border into a sovereign demarcation. On the understanding advocated here, the breakup of an empire or state (of a confederation, or federation, or, union under a common crown) around its existing internal jurisdictions may involve more than one secession, but it does not constitute a partition, unless there is at least one fresh cut (Wilson and Donnan 2012:31).

On the other hand, political partition is, according to Brenda O'Leary (2006), a fresh border cut through at least one community's national homeland, creating at least two separate political units under different sovereigns or authorities. Its purpose is to regulate or resolve a national, ethnic or communal conflict (O'Leary 2006:4).

The ideas of Stefano Bianchini (2006) are similar in this regard and states that partition refers to:

- a) a violent or negotiated state fragmentation between two subjects (as in the cases of Sweden and Norway in 1905 or the Czech and Slovak republics in 1993) or
- b) a state dissolution imposed by two or more outer subjects (as in Poland in the eighteenth century) (Bianchini 2006:44).

The centre-periphery relations: – the centre, for purposes of this research, referring to the main seat of political power that is central government and its institutions. The periphery then looking in particular at geographic units that are subject to the central government, but that could have been states on their own.

Gordon Marshall's (1998) Dictionary of Sociology states that:

The centre-periphery (or core-periphery) model is a spatial metaphor which describes and attempts to explain the structural relationship between the advanced or metropolitan 'centre' and a less developed 'periphery', either within a particular country, or (more commonly) as applied to the relationship between capitalist and developing societies. The former usage is common in political geography, political sociology, and studies of labour-markets (Marshall 1998: no page).

1.5 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Although often neglected before the breakup of the Soviet Union, the topic of secession is currently theoretically significant because it receives much more attention among scholars who have in recent years produced a significant body of literature in this field.

From a political perspective, the phenomenon of secession is important for a number of reasons. First, it challenges the territorial unity, legitimacy, sovereignty and interventions of a state confronted with secessionism. Second, it is very important from humanitarian perspectives, since secessionist conflicts account for the suffering of millions of people throughout the world. Third, it affects the policy of states, particularly powerful states, on the issue of how to deal with secessionist movements and whether to recognize new states that are the products of secessionism - the United Nations and the regional organizations even international law increasingly try to regulate secession.

For the DRC, its territorial unity is paramount in the light of the different constitutions that have been in effect in the course of its history and it was indeed a creed during Mobutu's rule. Accordingly, an assessment of internal efforts to prevent any dismemberment of a territory, particularly the territory of the DRC, is timely. An understanding of the events that led to secessionism, as well as those that prevented the break-up of the DRC could provide important information on how to deal with secessionism and the humanitarian risks involved.

The present investigation involves three main periods of the DRC's life - First Republic, Second Republic and post Mobutu era - by discussing exclusively the problem of its unity. Therefore, this dissertation refreshes the collective memory and could also be a precious manual of the political history of this country.

Thus, in this research, the intention is to contribute to the body of knowledge on the political literature about the DRC. Focusing specifically on the theory of secessionism by using the theory of centre-periphery relations with the DRC as a case study, the present research will enable us to explain the causes of attempts at secession and the reasons for their failure. This is an important contribution, because it provides substantial information on the nature of that relationship during the First Republic in particular. In addition, this study looks at a variety of strategies employed for the purpose of national integration.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section works of scholars that are relevant to a study of secessionism in the DRC are briefly reviewed. The following focus areas in the literature are important in this regard: definitions of the concept of secessionism and secessionist movement; the terms self-determination and autonomy; right of secession; centre-periphery relations; causes of secessionist movements, namely heterogeneity, size of the state, right-sizing the state and internal colonialism; nature of secession, for example violent or peaceful secessionism; factors that keep the state together such as nationalism and nation-building; and studies on the history, politics, economics and society of the DRC.

1.6.1 Definitions of the concepts of secessionism and secessionist movement

For a better understanding of this study, it is crucial that the concepts secessionism and secessionist movement be clearly understood by the readers. Thus, the sub-section below focuses on the literature by some known scholars of secession.

1.6.1.1 Definitions of the concept of secessionism

The concept of secessionism in the literature is important. Here we refer to the explanation provided by some scholars because of their conceptual consistency.

Allen Buchanan (2007) is of the opinion that it is necessary to distinguish between secession and other ways in which 'separation' or 'state breaking' can occur. In the classic sense, secession entails an attempt, by a group in a portion of the territory of a state, to create a new state. Furthermore, secessionists attempt to exit the original state thereby reducing its territory (Buchanan 2007: no page). In their relevant book, Aleksandar Pavkovic and Peter Radan (2007) comment on the Latin roots of the verb 'secede' - 'se' meaning 'apart' and 'cedere' meaning 'to go' - suggest that to secede is to leave or to withdraw from some place. This meaning – 'an act of going away from one's accustomed neighbourhood. Finally, for both, secession is the creation of a new state by the withdrawal of a territory and its population from an existing state of which it is a part (Pavkovic and Radan 2007:5). For Brendan O'Leary, Ian S. Lustick and Thomas M. Callaghy (2001) secession is something that states permit or accept. It is not something that states do: secession is an action of regions or provinces. Secession is generally down-sizing without the voluntary consent of the centre (O'Leary *et al.* 2001:57). Furthermore, in Lustick's (2011) article on secession of the centre, secession is defined 'as the separation of an ethnically and geographically coherent region from the larger state of which it had been a part. Secessionism refers to efforts by supporters of such a separation to move toward that objective' (Lustick 2011: no page).

The above discussion has informed the operational definition for the concept of secessionism as mentioned in section 1.4 – Key concepts. We will apply this definition to the empirical case of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

1.6.1.2 Definition of the concept of secessionist movement

In the literature a secessionist movement tries to establish a separate sovereign state. For example, according to Anne Noronha Dos Santos (2007), secessionist movements usually begin as demands for regional autonomy but often escalate into full-fledged attempts to form separate internationally recognized states out of existing sovereign states. But she warns that the term secession does not apply to independence movements from colonial powers (Dos

Santos 2007:2). Referring to Abi-Saab and G. Marcelo, Kohen (2006) reminds that at first sight, territorial integrity cannot be invoked as a legal argument to oppose secessionist movements, since secessionist movements do not constitute subjects of international law (Kohen 2006:7).

However, some authors use the terms self-determination, autonomy and secessionism including the movements as synonyms. The term of secessionism is used in this study as mentioned in the topic. To avoid misunderstanding, elucidating the terms self-determination and autonomy is done in the next sub-section.

1.6.1.3 The terms self-determination and autonomy

Dylan Lino (2010) explains that 'self-determination has at its core the idea that peoples should collectively have control over, and be able to make decisions about, their own lives. Consequently, it has truck with a number of related concepts: group autonomy, self-government, independence, democracy and non-interference' (Lino 2010:845).

According to Joshua Castellino (2000), the origins of the norm of self-determination go back to the American Declaration of Independence of 1789 which was echoed in the French Revolution a few years later in which the French National Assembly declared on 17th November 1792, that:

In the name of French people, the National Assembly declares that it will give help and support to all people wanting to recall their freedom. Therefore, the Assembly considers the French authorities responsible to give orders to grant all means of assistance to those peoples, to protect and compensate the citizens who might be injured during their fight for cause of liberty.

The essence of both these revolutions from that point hence hinges on the consent of the governed to make a government legitimate. In fact, the American Declaration of Independence sought to manifest two radical propositions. First, as mentioned, 'That government, instituted to secure the "unalienable right" of their citizens, derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.' Second, 'that by this decision to make the government answerable to the people, the newly defined entity of the state, earns "separate and equal station" of states by demonstrating "a decent respect to the opinion of mankind" (Castellino 2000:11). Thus we see that the right to self-determination as enunciated by American Declaration had both an internal (in the form of legitimate government) as well as external element (legitimacy in the society of sovereign states) (Castellino 2000:11).

Margaret Moore (1998) explains that in the system of international law that emerged after World War II, self-determination was constructed as a right of all peoples, which had not been the case during the era of the League of Nations. However, the ambiguity of its benefits and the strong sentiment against secession that emerged in international practice neutralized the potential of self-determination, making it largely an ideal that would be difficult to attain. 'The

right to external self-determination was granted solely to 'people' under colonial rule, who could not be defined in ethnic or national terms, but, rather in political and territorial ones, as the political majorities formed the multiethnic people under colonial rule' (Moore 1998: no page, quoted by Rosenfeld and Sajó 2012:490). Michel Rosenfeld and Andrés Sajó (2012) comment that the latter were regarded and treated as a unity together with the territories of which the boundaries were delimited by the colonial powers. This was in conflict with the individual dimension of self-determination, in terms of which each individual may decide to which polity he or she wishes to belong to. The nationalistic dimension of self-determination was also neglected because the de-colonization process did not take into account the desires of ethnic or national groups. Many boundaries were changed under the auspices of the UN, without consulting individuals and/or collectivities directly affected by such changes. Rwanda, Burundi, British Cameroon, the federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Palestine are examples in this regard (Rosenfeld and Sajó 2012: 489-490).

For non-colonial 'people', the right of 'all people' to self-determination was conceived in 'domestic' terms, emphasizing its 'democratic' rather than its 'nationalistic' dimension. Thus, conservative international principles prevailed over the right to secede. The internal right to self-determination was, in turn, negatively affected by the international principles that barred intervention in the internal affairs of states, with its obvious corollary, the inviolability of boundaries; and the threat or use of force against their territorial integrity and political independence (Rosenfeld and Sajó 2012: 489-490).

Omar Dahbour (2003) argues that when self-determination is applied not to individuals but to nations, it leads to the conclusion that nations ought to have their own states - it is this idea that informs most nationalist political programs (Dahbour 2003:4).

Regarding the concept of autonomy, in a political sense, the Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia (2012) states that autonomy refers to 'limited self-government, short of independence, of a political state or, more frequently, of a subdivision.' Furthermore, the recognition that particular group may make rules governing its internal affairs, is a test for autonomy. Political autonomy is frequently based on cultural and ethnic differences and within empires it has frequently been a prelude to independence. An example is the evolution of independent states in the British Empire. In the former Soviet 'autonomous' republics and regions in Russia, autonomy provided local control over cultural and economic affairs. Nationalists, however, often regard autonomy as inadequate, thus giving rise to secessionist movements and even associated terrorism – for example the secession of Slovakia, and terrorism by Basque, Corsican, and Welsh extremists (Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia 2012: no page). This is similar to Markku Suksi's (1998) view that, in principle, autonomy is regarded as the granting of internal self-government to a region or a group of persons. It thus constitutes a partial

independence from the control by the national or central government. This independence can be determined primarily by the degree of actual as well as formal independence enjoyed by the autonomous entity in its political decision-making process. Suksi also mentions that sometimes the term 'self-government' is used instead of autonomy. These two are related concepts and in legal-political vocabulary, autonomy denotes self-government (Suksi 1998:8).

In her extensive study on autonomy, Ruth Lapidot (1997) draws a clear distinction between territorial political autonomy and personal autonomy. She regards territorial autonomy as:

An arrangement aimed at granting a certain degree of self-identification to a group that differs from the majority of the population in the state and yet constitutes the majority in a specific region. Autonomy involves a division of powers between the central authorities and the autonomous entity'. In contrast to a territorial conception, 'Personal autonomy applies to all members of a certain group within the state, irrespective of their place of residence. It is the right to preserve and promote the religious, linguistic, and cultural character of the group through institution established by itself (Lapidot 1997:174-175, quoted by Weller and Nobbs 2010:20).

Marc Weller and Katherine Nobbs (2010) comment that regardless of the scope and detail of the above definitions, their one common feature, direct or indirect, is the transfer of certain powers from a central government to that of the (thereby created) autonomous entity. Farhad Daftary (2000) asserts that autonomy means that 'powers are not merely delegated but transferred; they may thus not be revoked without consulting with the autonomous entity ... [T]he central government may only interfere with the acts of the autonomous entity in extreme cases (for example when national security is threatened or its powers have been exceeded' (Daftary 2000:5, quoted by Weller and Nobbs 2010:20). In similar terms, Wolff and Weller (2005) define autonomy as 'the legally entrenched power of ethnic or territorial communities to exercise public policy functions (legislative, executive and adjudicative) independently of other sources of authority in the state, but subject to overall legal order of the state' (Wolff and Weller 2005:13, quoted by Weller and Nobbs 2010:20).

To conclude, let us notice that relative self-determination and autonomy can be granted to regions (periphery) within the state. Secession implies both self-determination and autonomy in a separate state. The latter two are often granted in order to appease secessionist sentiments.

1.6.2 Right of secession

The right to secede from a recognized state is a debate which is relevant to the DRC in particular. The legality of secessionist acts in the DRC, the subsequent violent governmental repression and the UN interventions make it necessary to look at the literature in this regard.

1.6.2.1 International legal instruments for secession

The scholars interested in the right of secession pay in particular attention to the Charter of the United Nations. In their comments, they refer mostly to points 2 and 3 of the section below:

CHAPTER I: PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES

Article 1

The Purposes of the United Nations are:

1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;
2. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;
3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and
4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends (Charter of the United Nations: Chapter I: Purposes and Principles).

Peter Roethke (2011) asserts, for example, that the legal source for a right to secede derive primarily from the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions, although earlier sources from the inter-war period exist also. In the case of the Aaland Island dispute, the Commission of Rapporteurs in the League of Nations found that 'separation of a minority from the state of which it forms part ... may only be considered as an altogether exceptional solution, a last resort when the state lacks either the will or the power to enact and apply just and effective guarantees'. Although discouraging secession, the Commission nevertheless provided legal space for a group to secede under extraordinary circumstances – that is when the state lacks the will or the power to protect the group at issue (Roethke 2011: 39-40).

Similarly, Pavkovic and Radan (2007) make it clear that the most authoritative and expansive international law document on self-determination is the UNGA's Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the United Nations (Declaration on Friendly Relations – A/RES/25/2625). As its title indicates, the Declaration on Friendly Relations expounds a number of principles relating to friendly relations and co-operation among States. One such principle is the 'principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples' (principle 5) enshrined in the UN Charter. The Key parts of principle 5 reads as follows:

(1) By virtue of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, all peoples have the right freely to determine, without external interference, their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter³ (Pavkovic and Radan 2007:237).

1.6.2.2 International law and the interpretation of the right of secession

Political philosopher Buchanan (2013) argues that there are deficiencies in current international law regarding secession and that there is a need for reform. He states that at present international law recognizes only a very narrow set of circumstances under which the unilateral right to secede exists as an international legal right, namely, when a group is subject to colonial domination (Buchanan 2013: no page).

Pavkovic and Radan's (2007) interpretation of international law is that if a particular state denies equal access to government for all its peoples, it is not conducting itself 'in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples', and thus, its territorial integrity is not absolutely protected by Article 1, thereby allowing secession by such a secessionist group (Pavkovic and Radan 2007:237). Antonello Tancredi (2006), in turn, argues that three procedural criteria must be met in order for international law to legitimate secession. 'First, the secession must occur without military aid from foreign states. Second, the population of the seceding territory must democratically approve of the secession. Third, secession must respect the principle of *uti possidetis*'⁴ (Tancredi 2006:189).

1.6.2.3 Constitutions and the right of secession

Cass Robert Sustein (1991) is of the opinion that the right of secession may create problems for every form of constitution and not only for federal constitutions; even if secession might be justified as a matter of politics or of morality. By not including it in a constitution could prevent many problems (Sustein 1991:635, quoted by Harbo 2008:134).

Buchanan (2007) has rightly concluded that there is much work to be done on the question of when and if so how the right to secede might be constitutionalized. 'It will require both an account of the principles of constitutionalism and of the morality of secession and empirically-based knowledge of the conditions under which various constitutional arrangements can be

³ This is the comment on the principle of equal right and self-determination of peoples. This principle is the 5th. There are in whole 7 principles. See the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly in twenty-fifth session, on 24 Oct.1970.

⁴*Uti possidetis* is the principle of international law according to which colonial boundaries, however arbitrarily drawn by imperial powers, are to be respected. This principle, which has its origins in Latin America and has been endorsed by the 'African Union', is designed to prevent the chaos that inevitably would result from attempts to redraw boundaries to coincide with ethnic groupings (Dugard 2005:130-131).

reasonably expected to realize the principles of constitutionalism in a manner that is consistent with the morality of secession' (Buchanan 2007: no page).

Other scholars, such as Florentina Harbo (2008) mentions that only a few 'federal states' make provision for the right of secession in their constitutions, namely the former USSR (1922, Art.17 and Art.72 in the revised Constitution from October 7, 1977 to 1991); the former Yugoslavia (1945-1946, 1963-1991); the Constitution of the Malaysian Federation (1957-1965); St. Kitts-Nevis (until 1983) and Ethiopia (1962-1993 and 1994 – present) (Harbo 2008:135). Many states deny this right in their constitutions – e.g. the USA and also France.

1.6.2.4 Political theorists' analyses

For Anthony Gilliland (2010), the normative discussion on justifying secession has been more commonly studied from an international perspective. In general, theories have addressed two questions. The first is who has the right and under what conditions – that is the more practical and legal aspects pertaining to secession. The second is why – that is the underlying moral justification from which a right to secede arises (Gilliland 2010:6). Harbo (2008) recognizes that most of the scholars on federalism argue that federalism do not go hand in hand with the right to secede. It is argued that once the secession right is established one can no longer talk of a federal constitution. A federal unit does not have the same right to exit from a union, as is the case with a confederation (though not in this case unilaterally) (Harbo 2008:133).

Regarding the economics of secession, Amitai Etzioni (1993) argues that, objectively assessed, the economic disadvantages of fragmentation are prominent because states that fragment into smaller economic units often pay a heavy economic price. The example that he cites is that of pre-independence Slovakia (Etzioni 1993: no page). However, the peaceful and relative success of Slovakia after independence also suggests that the economic pessimism regarding secession is not always warranted.

1.6.3 Centre-periphery relations

Tomasz Zarycki (2007) identifies research concerning the emergence of modern nation-states and the development of their political systems as an area of importance regarding the study of centre-periphery relations. He regards Stein Rokkan as a classic researcher in this field and who is known for many theoretical papers on centre-periphery cleavages perceived in terms of political and cultural dimensions (see Lipset, Rokkan 1967). The centre, in this approach, is understood 'as the centre of political dominance which uses the state machinery to subordinate the entire territory of the country to itself. Provinces resisting these activities are the peripheries proper' (Zarycky 2007:111).

In Iain McLean and Alistair McMillan's (2009) The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics, it is also stated that the centre-periphery framework has been employed by some analysts as an approach to central-local relations that is as an alternative to the intergovernmentalist bias of the traditional literature. The emphasis is on the variety of mechanisms by which the political centre seeks to control and manage (or avoid dealing with) the rest of the national territory that is the periphery or peripheries. This certainly opens up the study of central-local relations and inserts a much-needed concern with the centre. But there is some uncertainty regarding the precise principal actor focus in the periphery (McLean and McMillan 2009: no page).

1.6.4 Causes of secessionist movements

This sub-section deals with the literature on the causes of secessionist movements, particularly heterogeneity, size of the state, right-sizing the state and internal colonialism. Indeed, the DRC fulfils those criteria because of the immensity of its territory, its heterogeneous population in terms of ethnicity and its broad underdevelopment.

1.6.4.1 Heterogeneity

Donald L. Horowitz (1985) explains that the vast majority of secessionist regions are ethnically heterogeneous. He also asserts that ethnic identity is not static, but that it changes with the environment including with territorial boundaries (Horowitz 1985:589). In their study on South Asia, David Malone and Rohan Mukherjee (2010) remind that due to its vast size and heterogeneous society and policy, India has been the subject of various conflicts between sub national regions and the central government (Malone and Mukherjee 2010:154).

1.6.4.2 Size of the state

When it comes to ideas about the 'right size of the state, John A. C. Conybeare (2009) explains there may be no optimal size. But the history of a state's territorial formation may identify causes in this regard. We may not be able to predict the size of a nation (optimal or otherwise), but we can examine the causes of its past sizes. Instead of asking, 'Is the EU too big?' or 'Is Moldova too small to be a country?' one might assume that both are 'neither too big nor too small, but there are discernible causal factors that have affected their sizes' (Conybeare 2009:150). He furthermore argues that decisions to expand or contract the size of a state may have little to do with the optimal size criteria cited in the conventional prescriptive theories. Even if a particular state is of suboptimal territorial size, that judgment may be irrelevant in explaining its birth as a nation (Conybeare 2009:150).

In their discussion on economic integration and political disintegration, Alberto Alesina, Enrico Spolaore and Romain Wacziarg (2000) argue that trade liberalization and the average size of the

territory of the state are inversely related. Thus, the 'globalization' of markets provides opportunities to political separatists. While they emphasize the link between trade regime and the size of a state's territory, one may argue that the opposite is also a possibility that is a world of small states has to adopt a relatively free-trade regime, because this is in the interest of small states. Suppose that a certain region (for example Québec, Catalonia, Ukraine) considers demanding independence. Each of each of them will take the trade regime in the world, at the moment of their declaration of independence, as given. However, if the process of political separatism continues, and the average size of states declines, more and more 'players' in the international arena will have an interest in preserving free trade. This, in turn, may reinforce the movement toward trade liberalization that may have influenced their decision to secede in the first place (Alesina et al. 2000:1293-1294).

Conybeare (2009) concludes that the literature on the optimal size of a state's territory is diverse because there are many ways to specify the theory, measuring the variables, and of choosing methods to test the hypotheses. The political economy approach is based on the theory of public finance. By empirically modelling 'size as a reduced form function of exogenous variables such as democracy and globalization, it assumes that there exists an optimally efficient size and that actual size closely tracks that optimum, either because leaders choose to manipulate country size in response to such factors, or because global political markets drive them, willingly or otherwise, in that direction'. It is assumed that sizes that are not optimal will be unsustainable (Conybeare 2009:151).

1.6.4.3 Right-sizing the State

By referring to O'Leary's (2004:2) work, particularly to the definition of right-sizing, Zoran Ćirjaković (2011) stresses that the globalization of democracy, human rights and 'transitional justice' has influenced the 'right-sizing' of the state, which is defined as the 'politics of moving borders' and primarily understood in terms of 'the preferences of political agents at the centre of existing regimes to have what they regard as appropriate external and internal territorial borders'(Ćirjaković 2011:108).

In their book, O'Leary, Lustick and Callaghy (2001) state that 'right-sizing' and 'right-peopling' may be the two most important imperatives of successful state-builders and state-managers. They make a distinction between the concepts of 'right-sizing' and 'right-shaping' by explaining that 'right-sizing' emphasizes external state borders and majority-centered rationales, and hegemony. 'Right-shaping', in turn, denotes the 'combined spatial, political, and institutional content of governance and the more subtle issue of intrastate borders, identities and uneven institutionalization' (O'Leary et al. 2001:359,363). In other words, 'sizing' primarily refers to the

demarcation of state boundaries by the political centre; whereas 'shaping' is concerned with 'the nature of majority-minority relations within these borders' (O'Leary et al. 2001:359,363).

1.6.4.4 Internal colonialism

The term, internal colonialism, refers to a 'notion of structural, political and economic inequalities between regions within a nation-state. It is used to describe the uneven effects of economic development on a regional basis, otherwise known as "uneven development" and the exploitation of minority groups within a wider society' (Nbeta 2012:53). The theoretical origin of the concept of internal colonialism is somewhat uncertain. According to Alubabari Desmond Nbeta (2012), one reason for this uncertainty is because the early history of this phenomenon triggered a spontaneous reaction from many a writer and rights crusaders across the world (Nbeta 2012:53).

According to McLean and McMillan (2009), internal colonialism is about 'patterns of domestic territorial inequality and with the various ways (not just economic) a core, or centre region, controls and exploits a peripheral region or regions' (McLean and McMillan 2009: no page).

Some scholars such as Robert J. Hind and Janet Sorensen analyzed the concept of internal colonialism used by Michael Hechter in particular and which has garnered increased attention. On the one hand, Hind (1984) comments that according to Hechter the 'uneven pattern of development termed internal colonialism ...developed in the first industrial society,' and survived the 'rise and fall of the most extensive overseas colonial empire' (Hind 1984:550). On the other hand, Sorensen (2002) explains that when Hechter initially applied the concept to Britain's 'Celtic periphery,' he demonstrated the systematic economic underdevelopment of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland by the Anglo-British core or centre. 'Often referred to as the "training ground" for the repressive practices of its overseas empire, Britain's internal colonies were subject to similar methods of political control and manoeuvres of cultural suppression and appropriation' (Sorensen 2002:53).

Tom Nairn (2003) argues that internal colonialism in the United Kingdom (UK) was the result of English society becoming thoroughly habituated to the conservative re-exploitation of good fortune over a long period of time. For most of the period the leaner, marginal countries around England received something of the impressive but curious England class system. They were deeply affected by the traditions of patrician liberalism and were for long integrated into its peculiar success-story, in a way quite different from most other minor nationalities and only possible in these singular developmental conditions. 'This freer, less painful, less regimented form of assimilation is simply a function of the unique imperialism England established in the wider world, and of the state-form which corresponded to it internally' (Nairn 2003:53).

Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan (2008) assert that in terms of Tom Nairn's analysis the very idea of the 'nation-state' came under threat, as it began to be claimed that the term 'nation' implied ethnic homogeneity. Since almost all modern states were in fact ethnically heterogeneous, their claims to be engaged in 'nation-building' were now exposed (Herb and Kaplan 2008:933).

Walker Connor's (1972) went as far as to claim that nation-building is nation-destroying. Thus it could be argued that nation-building could be regarded as a form of internal colonialism when a more dominant section imposes a national identity on other sectors. Another scholar, Koos Malan (2012) makes it clear by reminding that Walker Connor thus correctly summarizes the somber reality when he asserts:

Since most of the less developed states contain a number of nations and since the transfer of primary allegiance from these nations to the state is generally considered the sine qua non of successful integration, the true goal is not 'nation-building' but 'nation-destroying' (Connor 1972:354, quoted by Malan 2012:147).

The nation builders are therefore nation destroyers and the intellectual authority developed to support it, pursue a destructive ideal (Malan 2012:147).

1.6.5 Nature of secessionism

Secessionism may be achieved in several ways. One way of achieving secessionism is when the periphery has sufficient power to breakaway, which if it has, is then usually forceful and often violent or accompanied with the threat of violence – South Sudan is an example in this regard. Another way is secession by mutual agreement like in the former Czechoslovakia that became the Czech Republic and Slovakia. However the centre could also break-away – some regard the breakup of the former USSR as an example because the Russian Federation simply decided to let go of costly peripheries. For example: the breakaway of all the 'stans' from the USSR that left Russia as the centre. But it is often indicated that Kazakhstan for example seceded. Secession can also be achieved when the centre collapses and is unable to hold the peripheries together. The peripheries are therefore in a position to breakaway and establish their own states - The collapse of Yugoslavia and the creation of many breakaway states is an example.

1.6.5.1 Peaceful secessionism

Donald W. Livingston (1996) found that from 1790 until 1990 there were only a few cases of successful peaceful secession. The examples that he sites are: Belgium which seceded from the Netherlands in 1830; Norway that seceded from Sweden in 1905; and Singapore from the Malaysian Federation in 1965. All these secessions were negotiated peacefully. After 1990, the number of successful peaceful secessions surged suddenly. Fifteen republics seceded from the

Soviet Union. A Czech and a Slovak republic were created out of Czechoslovakia through secession. All these were peaceful successes in secession since 1990. Livingston even regards this as true of some of the secessions in the former Yugoslavia. In his opinion there was only half-hearted resistance to the secession of Slovenia and Croatia from the central government, then dominated by Serbia (Livingston 1996:1). Others do regard it as having been violent - but this could be a source of criticism because there is not agreement on what is an acceptable level instability for a peaceful secession.

1.6.5.2 Violent secessionism

As alluded to in the previous section many secessions involve some form of instability or conflict. In his thesis on secession, David S. Siroky (2009) concludes that most secession generate some form of conflict; more than half experienced nasty forms of violence such as recursive secessionist violence or militarized interstate disputes; and some secessions settle on lesser forms of violence, such as ethnic riots. What transpired from the data he collected is that secessionists seldom get away scot-free. Violence (of any kind) after secession is all too common for about 87% of secessions (Siroky 2009:276). Moreover, according to Pavkovic and Radan (2007), the sources of violent conflict and of the use of force in attempts at secession are various and in many cases not known prior to the outbreak of the conflict. As a consequence, one cannot always predict or identify in advance ways of avoiding potential or incipient violence or the use of force in advance. This obviously restricts the usefulness of the data provided by past peaceful secessions for the peaceful management of secessionist conflict in the future. Therefore, knowledge of the factors which have contributed to the outbreak of violence in past secessions does not provide us with the necessary information to predict or to identify the strategies to be used in particular cases of secession for the purpose of avoiding violence (Pavkovic and Radan 2007:66).

1.6.6 Factors that keep the state together

The present sub-section deals with the literature that focuses on two main factors, which usually contribute towards keeping the state together, namely nationalism and nation-building – that is despite the problems of nationalism and internal colonialism. Nation-building has experienced an extraordinary resurgence since the early 1990s and it is used to allow or legitimize foreign powers' intervention in areas of conflict.

1.6.6.1 Nationalism

Most definitions present nationalism as a desire for political independence and excessive devotion to the nation. Numerous studies have been conducted on nationalism. Lyman Tower Sargent (1996) explains that as an ideology, nationalism is unusual because it affects all other

ideologies, and, as a result, nationalism may be the most important ideology (Sargent 1996:22). The term of 'nationalism', continues Nedad Miscevic, is generally used to describe two phenomena: first, the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity, and second, the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to achieve, or sustain, self-determination (Miscevic 2010: no page). Nationalism is a precondition for the emergence of secessionist movements. Metta Spencer (1998) adds that one of the essential preconditions for nationalism – the system of nation states – is omnipresent. Without a nation there can be no nationalism (Spencer 1998:9).

1.6.6.2 Nation-building

Many scholars have discussed the concept of nation-building, such as Cynthia A. Watson (2004) and Dr Jochen Hippler (2005) to name a few. According to Cynthia A. Watson (2004), the purpose of nation-building is generally seen as stopping violence against the population of a country and then constructing a society supported by institutions based upon the rule of law and various other norms that will make it function autonomously and to the benefit of its population. Nation-building may involve outside intervention for a variety of reasons, such as peacekeeping, pre-emption, humanitarian relief, institution-building, conflict avoidance, liberation, or revenge (Watson 2004:10). Jochen Hippler (2005) mentions that 'nation-building' is an old term that has already flourished and declined. 'Nation-building was a key concept of foreign, security and development policy in the 1950s and 1960s, in particular. At that time, it was closely related to the modernisation theories fashionable during those years, which viewed the development process in the Third World in terms of catching up with Western models' (Hippler 2005:4).

1.6.7 Studies about the DRC

Several scholars have specialized in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their studies cover various fields such as history, politics, economics and sociology. Examples of contributions in this regard are discussed in this section.

1.6.7.1 History

Didier Charles Gondola (2002) mentions that the pre-colonial history of Congo includes a diversity of social entities. These include segmentary, small-scale groups of hunters and gatherers in the northeast of the country, centralized chiefdoms of the savannas, a powerful Luba Empire on the Kasai plateau, and the Kongo Kingdom on the Atlantic coast (Gondola 2002:14). There was even some form of political organization among the so-called stateless societies, but not all groups organized highly complex polities; some were based upon a single family, but they all indicate the development of political hierarchies in order to solve the

problems that communities in general encounter. Archaeological evidence suggests the development of political organization as early as the beginning of the ninth century A.D. Based on copper and wooden artefacts found in northern Katanga, archaeologists have conjectured that several groups in ancient Kongo developed centralized political units around the end of the first millennium A.D (Gondola 2002:14). Moreover, L. Osumaka (2009) mentions that when Congolese people encountered Europeans in the nineteenth century, they adapted their preexisting naming conventions to the new contexts in order to identify individual Europeans and groups of Europeans (Osumaka 2009:31). Later, in his efforts to create a national identity, President Mobutu initiated the ideology of authenticity. One of its applications consisted of renaming place names and rejecting Christian names to the benefit of the African names. This topic will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Belgium had applied in the Belgian Congo an over centralized administrative system. Artificial boundaries imposed by colonization gathered various tribes in the territory of a colony. In this centralised system, the administration made all decisions from Leopoldville (Kinshasa), stifling the sense of responsibility of local authorities in provinces and subduing the populations of regions economically and culturally.

Congolese leaders were divided over the best mode of administration to govern the country. The unitarists opposed the federalists. The latter have become, for the most part, leaders of secessionist provinces. This issue will be discussed in the Chapter 4.

1.6.7.2 Politics

Much has been written about the politics of the DRC since the advent of colonialism in the DRC. Most of the literature that was discussed up to this point is relevant to the politics of the DRC. It is however also important to look at the more recent political history in this regard.

In his comment on the rejection of political pluralism by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, Herbert Weis (2000) wrote that while Kabila did not share power with political parties or NGOs, he did coopt individuals from diverse political and ethnic backgrounds. His closest allies and his cabinet ministers were generally people without their own political base. Many of them were returned exiles. This made them totally dependent on Kabila. However, this approach did not sit well with the general public (Weis 2000:6).

In concluding the evaluation of democracy and participation in political life after the first multiparty elections, political scientists such as Phambu Ngoma-Binda, Jean Otemikongo Mandefu Yahisule and Lesile Moswa Mombo (2010) note that the DRC has a limited number of years of experience in democracy and institutions under political participation mechanisms established by the 2006 Constitution. Although relatively short, this is more than enough time

to assess the viability of democratic institutions of the Third Republic and to test the effectiveness of the mechanisms of political participation practiced within these institutions. This new democratic dispensation had implications for centre-periphery relations (my translation) (Ngoma-Binda et al. 2010:17).

1.6.7.3 Economics

There have been various studies on the economy of the DRC but of particular importance are those that look at the mineral wealth of the DRC. Analyzing the economic dimension of the war in the DRC, Saragen Naido (2003) confirms that specialists estimate that when the rich copper and cobalt mines in the south-east of Katanga are depleted, the eastern provinces will be the motor of the economy and constitute that which is already being designated 'the useful Congo' (Naido 2003:5). Economists such as Jay Heale and Jui Lin Yong (2009) assert that the economy of the DRC has declined drastically since the mid-1980s. The First and Second Congo Wars greatly reduced national output and government revenue, and increased external debt. Due to the political instability, foreign businesses pulled out. The lack of infrastructure, and the difficult operating environment added to the challenges the economy faced. Since the departure of President Mobutu, a number of international Monetary Fund and World Bank missions have met with the government to help it to develop a coherent economic plan, and President Joseph Kabila has begun implementing reforms. However, much economic activity lies outside the gross domestic product (GDP) (Heale and Yong 2009:135).

1.6.7.4 Sociology

Social relations have also been an area of study in the DRC. In their study on conflict and social change in eastern DRC, Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers (2004) argue that a first element of the social transformation in eastern DRC has been an intensified struggle for the access to land and natural resources. The competition over land has been particularly visible in Masisi, where the 1993 conflict erupted over the unequal access to arable and grazing land between local Banyarwanda, Banyanga and Bahunde communities. In other regions of eastern DRC, access to economic assets also dominated local armed competition, which is progressively defined in ethnic terms. In their opinion land has progressively evolved from a 'source' to a 'resource' of conflict (Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2004:20). This motive of conflict is important to the present study especially as regards the wave of uprisings threatening the territorial integrity which will be referred to in the Chapter 6.

In recent years, Filip De Boeck (2004) commented on the social phenomenon in the DRC called 'shege', street children who transcend class and ethnic divisions (De Boeck 2004:159-160).

1.7 METHODOLOGY

In this section the method for accomplishing this study is discussed. Since the major phases of this research are based on a comparative study of the attempts at secession, comparative historical analysis is used as a way to research the problem.

1.7.1 Comparative historical analysis

With regard to comparison as method, scholars such as Anthony Carpi and Anne E. Egger (2008), in their article on Research Methods: Comparison, make clear that comparison includes both *retrospective* studies that look at events that have already occurred, and *prospective* studies, that examine variables from the present forward (Carpi and Egger 2008: no page).

For a number of reasons, this view reinforces the choice of comparative historical analysis for this study. According to James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (2003), comparative-historical analysis is characterized by the use of systematic comparison and the analysis of processes over time to explain large-scale outcomes such as revolutions, political regimes, and welfare states. 'It can be distinguished from other approaches within historical sociology, such as rational choice analysis and interpretive analysis' (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003:1).

The historical dimension of this study is important and the fact that the study integrates various challenges to the DRC's unity. Therefore, pertinent historical events that provide context to the various threats to territorial unity, particularly the phenomenon of secession, are addressed in each chapter.

James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (2003) note that comparative historical analysis has a long and distinguished history in the social sciences. Various prominent scholars in the social sciences, such as Adam Smith, Alexis de Tocqueville, Karl Marx, Otto Hintze, Max Weber, and Marc Bloch, all pursued comparative historical analysis as a central mode of investigation. They continued a tradition of research that had dominated social thought for centuries. After some period of neglect, there is currently a dramatic re-emergence of the comparative historical tradition. Although important problems of analytic procedure and methodology remain, this mode of investigation has reasserted itself at the centre of today's social science (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003:3).

In his seminal article on comparative-historical methodology, James Mahoney (2004) introduces the discussion by reminding that recent years have seen a surge of publications concerning the methods used in comparative-historical analysis (Mahoney 2004:81). Comparative historical analysis is appropriate for the study of secessionism. For example, Dos Santos (2007), used the comparative historical analysis to answer the research question in her

study on secessionist movements in South Asia and mentioned in the research design that the researcher 'looks for similarities among the pattern of course; but he also looks for significant differences'. Dos Santos wrote: 'I examine similar aspects of each secessionist movement in order to "come up with variables and relationships that are similar enough to permit realistic comparisons"' (Dos Santos 2007:5). Another scholar, Mathew Lange (2013) wrote: 'thus, comparative-historical method has produced some of the best work in the social sciences; many of the best social scientists use them to analyze vitally important issues' (Lange 2013:2).

Theda Skocpol (1979) argued that another set of problems stems from the fact that comparative historical analysis necessarily assumes (like any multivariate logic) that the units being compared are independent of one another. But actually, this assumption is rarely if ever fully valid for macro-phenomena such as revolutions (Skocpol 1979:39).

For the proposed study, the units of analysis are mainly the restive peripheries where the attempted secessions were staged in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a case study. These are Katanga Province, South Kasai region and Oriental Province, including Kivu. From this perspective, the comparison covers the entire study. The following variables or crucial characteristic will be discussed regarding the attempted secessions: Geography of the restive regions, cause of revolt, external support, ethnicity, leader, secessionist movement and failure of attempt at secession. This study illustrates the contrast between threats of territorial unity intervened throughout the post-independence period, during the era of Mobutu and after the collapse of the centre.

1.7.2 Source and treatment of data

Nearly all available data collected have been obtained from documentary sources in libraries and on the Internet. Drawing on original data and qualitative methods such as archival research, the study offers a full, comparative and fitting treatment of secessionism in the DRC on a point by point basis. Most of the information comes from the abundant literature generated by scholars in the time of political turmoil early in the 1960s and along the thirty two years of Mobutu's rule as well as the period after his fall. The results of different individual studies have been combined and analyzed with purpose to establish the harmony and possible relationships of the findings of these studies. The combined results of several research studies enabled the identification of a relationship that was not otherwise apparent. Finally, the information gathered has been presented in chronological order.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present research takes place only within the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. With regard to the time frame, the proposed study is located between 1960 and 2006. This research covers the period from Independence Day of the ex-Belgian Congo, on June 30, 1960 till the adoption of the Constitution of February 14, 2006. However, this time frame has included in the discussion some events prior to 1960 and post-2006 Constitution. The *raison d'être* of the discussion of facts that fall outside of the time frame is merely the concern of a better understanding of the roots of secessionism in the DRC on the one hand and the subsequent reactions of the restive peripheries of the 1960s on the other hand.

Theoretically speaking, the focus is on secessionism and centre-periphery relations - rather than on territorial unity although being the basis of our object of the study - in order to examine the attempts at secession and to give answers to the questions raised in this study.

This is not the rewriting of the history of the dramatic events that occurred in the DRC, but rather an effort to review and to analyze a set of major challenges - particularly the episode of attempted secessions - that marked the political life of this country with regard to the unity of its vast territory and nation-building because of the ethnic heterogeneity of its inhabitants. Consequently, previous works on the subject are important materials for the construction of the arguments in support of this study.

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. After the introduction in this chapter an elaboration of the theoretical framework is provided in Chapter 2. The focus is on theories of centre-periphery relations and right-sizing the state. Other related theories of interest for this study such as ethnicity, nation-building and right of secession, also receives attention. The historical context, that would influence the relations between the centre and the peripheries in the early post-colonial history of the DRC, is discussed in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 the focus is on an analysis of the relations between the centre and the periphery in the DRC at the time of independence and the attempts at secession in the newly independent DRC. The nature of the centre-periphery relations during the Second Republic is analyzed in Chapter 5. The focus in this chapter is on President Mobutu's leadership and the strategies he employed in order to discourage secessionism and to prevent the secession of any part of the DRC. Chapter 6 focuses on the events in the DRC that followed the collapse of the centre on May 17, 1997 and the end of the reign of President Mobutu. The analysis takes into account the relations between the centre and periphery, as well as the lack of secession during this phase in the DRC's history. The

Chapter 7, the conclusion and recommendations, provides a retrospective of the broad lines and significant stages of this research. It summarizes the findings and makes suggestion for further research.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The main focus in this chapter is on the theoretical framework that will be used in this study. Among the theories in political science that can be applied to a study of secessionism, are centre-periphery relations and right-sizing the State. These theories constitute the backbone of the theoretical framework for this study.

This dissertation provides an analysis instead of a simple descriptive account of what happened in the past in the DRC. Thus, for purposes of this study it is necessary to include some of the important theories regarding centre-periphery relations and right-sizing the State, together with other related theories in a single framework. Other related theories are those about state, people and ethnicity, territory and territorial integrity, government, sovereignty, recognition, right of secession, international military interventions, rebellion, nation-building, diffusion, power and power relations, authority and legitimacy, and conflict.

The theory of centre-periphery relations will be applied to the DRC's domestic politics, that is to say, in the analysis of the relationship between national government and lower levels of governments, particularly in the restive regions.

Furthermore, the territorial dimension of a state has lately become a fundamental topic in the social sciences raising sensible and decisive questions. Nowadays scholars of secessionism refer especially to the theory of right-sizing the State that will be helpful to discuss the problem of the DRC's huge size which, in turn, will affect the relations between the centre and the periphery.

Finally, the emphasis is on the integration of these theories into a framework that could be used to analyze secessionism in the DRC. Hence, it connects both with the intention to explain causes that would have nurtured secessionism or uprisings in the case of rebellions and factors that could lead to a resizing of the state. This framework would also be used to explain how, at the time of it being a newly independent state, the DRC managed to overcome the threats against its territorial unity and to establish increasingly a sense of nationhood.

Consequently, this chapter is organized into two sections: The first section provides the background regarding the theory of centre-periphery relations which has been extensively used since its development in the nineteenth century and that of right-sizing the State which is a

fairly recent use. The second section deals with the analytical framework of which the first part examines key concepts such as the state, territory and territorial integrity, government, people, ethnicity and diffusion and the second part provides the use of this framework in an analysis of the DRC.

2.2 BACKGROUND

The present section is about the two main sets of theories constituting the theoretical framework of this study. The purpose is to provide useful information for a good knowledge of the theories in question before their use in the analytical framework.

2.2.1 Theory of centre-periphery relations

The theory of centre-periphery relations is significant in the world of research. It helps to explain a number of phenomena in a range of disciplines in social sciences. In the literature, studies focusing on secessionism deal in some way or other with centre-periphery relations even whether scholars may never mention it as such.

The dual concept of 'centre-periphery', according to Matt Rosenberg (2014), was created in 1826 by the German farmer and amateur economist, Johann Heinrich Von Thünen (1783-1850). Thünen's centre-periphery model was formulated before industrialization and is based on the idea of the isolated state⁵ (Rosenberg 2014: no page).

It is in the twentieth century that, for Dietmar Rothermund (2006), this theory was refined and enlarged by the German geographer Walter Christaller (1893-1969), the Central Place expert. He worked out a hierarchy of service functions of centres. He analyzed their catchment areas and calculated distances between centres. It is Stein Rokkan (1921-1979) – a Norwegian political scientist and sociologist – who then enlarged the field to encompass the political arena. In his model, centre and periphery reflected power relationships of dominance and dependence (Rothermund 2006:75).

Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) followed with his theory of the world system. He divided the capitalist world economy into core states, semi-peripheral, and peripheral areas. The peripheral areas are the least developed; they are exploited by the core for their cheap labor, raw materials, and agricultural production. The concept of core and periphery is not originally

⁵ According to Michael Carr (1997), the meaning of the isolated state is that there is only one market, that is, the central city and around it an extensive plain of tillable land of uniform physical character. The market is served by one mode of transport – horse and cart. The farmers occupying the land supply the central city and adjust their resources so as to meet any changes in demand (Carr 1997:306).

Wallerstein's, but he adds to these two classes the concept of the 'semi-periphery.' Moreover, he argued that many states belong to the semi-periphery, that is they are exploited by core states but are often exploiters of peripheral states in the world economy (Rothermund 2006:75-76).

Practically, according to Nadine Cattan (2006), the use of the concept centre-periphery relations can also be traced to Karl Marx (1818-1883) - in his volume entitled Capital: Critique of Political Economy – who summarizes the relationship between town and countryside. However, its contemporary meaning owes much to theorists of inequalities that contributed to its spread in the course of the 1960s (my translation) (Cattan 2006:47).

With reference to Johan Galtung's (1971) contribution, Peu Ghosh (2013) points out that Galtung presents his version of imperialism as an unequal relationship between a centre and the periphery. His theory tried to illuminate the structure of this unequal relationship, which resists any change in the *status quo*. It is this inequality that results in the formation of a centre and a periphery and he contends that those in power in the centre have a community of interest with those in power in the periphery. The consequence that follows is a kind of relationship that operates at the expense of the mass of the people in the peripheral states, but this primarily serves the interest of the majority of the people in the centre region (Ghosh 2013:39).

According to Hamilton M. Stapell (2007) the political theorist of nationalism, Tom Nairn, with his book entitled The Break-up of Great Britain: Crisis and Neo-nationalism (1977), was among the first scholars to use the theory of centre-periphery relations in the 1970s to examine the birth of nationalist movements on the periphery of the British Empire. Remarkably, Michael Hechter (1999), a sociologist of nationalism, made a significant contribution to the understanding of the socioeconomic development and ethnicity through his theory of 'internal colonialism' as a variation to Nairn's centre-periphery relations (Stapell 2007:172-173).

The concept of internal colonialism, according to Hechter (1975; 1999), dates from the late nineteenth century and has two somewhat different connotations. According to him, the term was originally coined by Russian populists to describe the exploitation of peasants by the urban classes. Gramsci, Lenin, Preobrazhensky, and Bukharin later adopted the term to characterize the persisting economic underdevelopment of certain Russian and Italian regions. In this conception internal colonialism refers to a process of unequal exchange between the territories of a given state that occurs either as a result of free market forces, or of economic policies of the central government that have intended or unintended distributional consequences for regions. Since the 1960s, the term has been largely reserved for regions that are both economically disadvantaged and culturally distinctive from the core regions of the host state (Hechter 1999: xiii-xiv).

Furthermore, Iver B. Neumann (1999) points out that the work by Louis Cantori and Steven Spiegel (1970) through their framework for comparing regions is also relevant in this regard. They divide all regions into a core and a periphery. The core sector consists of a state or a group of states which form a central focus of the international politics within the region (Cantori and Spiegel 1970:20, quoted by Neumann 1999:120).

However, through the widespread use of the theory of centre-periphery relations, a large number of scholars have identified its shortcomings. For example, Peter J. M. Nas and Wel J. M. Prins (1983) argue that centre-periphery, dependency and world system approaches have been critiqued extensively. The most fundamental criticism is that these theories are too schematic to do justice to reality. For example they are not sufficiently diverse to analyze the problems that can be found in the development processes of the various developing countries. They have drawn attention to external dependence relations, but do not make sufficiently clear how these relations function or what processes are at stake. Thus, it is important to stress the diversity of relations, developmental situations, for example, instead of working with a too simple and often dualist model (Nas and Prins 1983:164).

G. Krishnan-Kutty (1999) is also of the opinion that the centre-periphery theory is subject to strong criticism. He particularly focusses on P.R. Panchamukhi's argument in terms of which, in the international context, the centre-periphery theory was formulated when there was just one centre. The USA was the main centre with a number of peripheries around it. In a multipolar world, a number of centres exist. There is currently a multiplicity of centres in both the developed world and in the developing world (Krishnan-Kutty 1999:66).

Lane and Ersson (1999) hold similar views on centre-periphery relations. Within a state, regions may differ with regard to their relations with one another as well as with the central government. They argue that it may be difficult to pinpoint a centre due to competition between several metropolises. First, although monocephalic and polycephalic systems, may be identified, it is not quite clear how many centres are to be identified and how national centres are to be distinguished from regional centres. Second, even if one recognizes a multiplicity of centres, regional cleavages constitute a still broader concept than the concept of a single centre-periphery. Third, although there may be a metropolis or centre in a region dominating its hinterland the region as a whole may still be characterized by a striking dissimilarity in comparison with other regions in material and cultural resources (Lane and Ersson 1999:31).

In addition to the above criticisms, Philipp Arestis and Malcom Charles Sawyer (1994) argue that by underplaying the growth of wages and technological dynamism in the centre, the theory also greatly exaggerates economic imperatives for the exploitation of the periphery by the centre (Arestis and Sawyer 1994:446). Thus, they regard the practical consequences of the

use of the centre-periphery relations must rather be disappointing to everyone interested in overcoming profoundly rooted structures of inequality.

In academic terms, as for Sonia Alonso, Andrea Volkens and Braulio Gómez (2012), the centre-periphery dimension is strikingly absent from scholarly attempts to produce comparative empirical models of the space of political competition. They argue that it is only since 2008 that a few isolated efforts are being dedicated to develop an empirical scale of the centre-periphery dimension. However, during the last thirty years, an impressive amount of research efforts have been dedicated to characterize empirically the policy spaces of Western democracies in terms of the left-right dimension. Thus, the same is not true of the centre-periphery scale of measurement for common use among scholars (Alonso et al 2012:84).

In spite of these criticisms, theories focusing on the relationship between the centre and the periphery are important when studying secessionism because, by its nature, secession involves the centre versus the periphery. Thus, the present study explicitly makes use of this theory as a way to arrive at the elucidation of the issue of the various threats of territorial integrity to the DRC.

2.2.2 Theory of right-sizing the State

Right-sizing the State is a remarkable theory about sovereign territoriality and the settlement of international and domestic territorial disputes.

The theory of right-sizing the State was formulated by O'Leary, Lustick and Callaghy and exposed in their book entitled Right-sizing the State: The politics of moving borders, (2001). The observation made on the changes of the size of the territories of a number of states by comparing the world map between 1900 and 2000 is the basis of the design of this theory. The argument forming the plinth of the theory of right-sizing the State was greatly influenced by the following two works:

First, this theory is largely inspired by earlier work done by Lustick. In his relevant volume, Unsettled States, Disputed Lands: Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank-Gaza, (1993) he constructs a model of domestic political discourse that explains both when and how political elites within a state justify and ideologically frame state expansion and contraction.

Second, the theory of right-sizing the State by O'Leary as discussed in the highly regarded volume, The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation in which he and John McGarry (McGarry & O'Leary, 1993) set forth a continuum of options by which communal strife may be managed in right-sizing the State. This schema plays a support role to Lustick's main preoccupation with downsizing the state.

Looking closely, territory seems to be the essential element of this theory. Its importance is underlined by proponents such as Ranabir Samaddar (2007). 'Territory' appears at the heart of the nation, because territory is the congealed form of the relations existing between resources, available labour mass, borders, the numerical strength of the population and its composition. All nations face governmental rationalities and the territory is the clue to the governmental imperative of right sizing, right peopling and right shaping. It is only when we understand this process that we shall be able to understand why so much violence is associated with state formation and why partition (in various forms) mark a nation's coming of age (Samaddar 2007:109). Thus the size of the state is shaped by relations between the centre and periphery that are mutually beneficial.

Ariel Zellman (2008) critiques this book (Right-sizing the State: The politics of moving borders) by arguing that the authors failed to engage with the basic question of 'rightness' itself. For O'Leary and Lustick and indeed for all the authors in this volume, the issue of right-sizing is explicitly one of matching the preferences of political agents at the centre of existing regimes with what they regard as appropriate external and internal territorial boundaries. Implicitly, however, right-sizing is about addressing those claims to territory that challenge those of the state and finding ways to satisfy those counterclaims. When it is argued that the utility of deinstitutionalizing existing hegemonic boundaries is to open the space for a wider array of options for negotiation, it is implied that these boundaries should be problematized. According to Zellman:

rather than asking whether or under what conditions it is 'right' to change the territorial status quo, these authors start from the assumption that pressures for the state to retrench, withdraw, or decentralize are 'right'. While it is understood in these cases that a state's control of a particular territory is destabilizing enough that withdrawal should be considered, it is never considered what makes for a legitimate claim to contest a state's control of a territory. Nor is it ever considered what the negative implications of withdrawal itself might be. While such a priori arguments are par for the course in international politics, we should demand more critical engagement with these crucial questions from political scientists, particularly those who claim to be seeking 'right' (Zellman 2013: no page).

Nevertheless, the theory of right-sizing the State is particularly relevant within a secessionist context. Some of the criticism against the theory is valid, but the focus should rather be on improving the theory than on rejecting it.

2.3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The focal point of this section is on the meaning of the concepts and related theories that will be used throughout this study and on the discussion about the integration of the theory of centre-periphery relations and that of right-sizing the State in the analysis of the DRC.

2.3.1 Key concepts

In this section, the following concepts and theories are defined with a view to understand how they may be applied in an analysis of secessionism within the DRC: state, territory and territorial integrity, people and ethnicity, government, sovereignty, recognition, right to secession, nation-building, military intervention, rebellion, diffusion, power and power relations, authority and legitimacy, and conflict.

2.3.1.1 State

Since secessionism aims to create new states from existing, the concept of state is one of the main concepts in this study. The latter also makes use of this term primarily in the phase of the creation of the DRC as a political entity at the Berlin conference.

The relevant elements of statehood that will be used in the analysis of the secessionism in the DRC, and which would be elaborated in the sub-sections below, can be discerned from the definition provided by the West's Encyclopedia of American Law (2008) and which is similar to most definitions of the concept of state as an actor within the international system of states. It is stated that a state is a people permanently occupying a fixed territory bound together by common habits and custom into one body politics exercising, through the medium of an organized government, independent sovereignty and control over all persons and things within its boundaries, capable of making war and peace and of entering into international relations with other states.

The use of the monopoly of the legitimate physical force in order to defeat any threat against territorial integrity within the DRC's territory will be particularly underlined. By adding the use of armed force, this study does not express a view that force is always necessary or even desirable.

Those elements of statehood such as the issue of international recognition in particular - that implies the ability to enter into international relations - require more explicit attention and will be discussed in the other key concepts below.

2.3.1.2 Territory and territorial integrity

It is important to bear in mind that people secede with territory and not without it. Describing the state, Dos Santos (2007) writes that a sovereign state wishes to preserve its territorial integrity. For this reason it will fight any group aiming to secede (Dos Santos 2007:9). There are various forms of federal arrangements that address quests for self-determination including federal arrangements that go beyond territory and emphasize the rights of the individual. Notably, Koos Malan (2012) argues that territory is the point of departure and the territorial state is the basic arrangement of political organization. He is of the opinion that territory enjoys preference over population and that the population element is handled in such way that it has to adapt and conform to the element of territory, not the other way round. Territory is not a mere fact. On account of its preference in comparison to the other elements of the state, it is also an ideologically motivated judgment (Malan 2012:114). The prior analysis of the constitution of the DRC's territory will be done before moving to the subsequent attempted secessions and rebellions.

With regard to the debate regarding the relationship between territory and the population, there are however two points of departure in this regard, namely the nationalist idea that a people defines the territory and therefore if there is an incorrect match between nation and territory there will be attempts to effect changes in the territory. This was the view e.g. of Nazi Germany. On the other hand, there is the view that territory defines the nation – this was the view of Mussolini of Italy and also the view followed by the OAU. The boundaries that were arbitrarily demarcated at the Berlin Conference was accepted and honoured by the OAU.

The huge size of the DRC's territory is relevant to theories regarding the centre-periphery relations and right-sizing the state. The explanation of the mechanism by which the DRC has such a large area will be given in the next chapter. According to Peuh Ghosh (2013), size means the total area of land that a state controls or over which it exercise sovereign authority. The size of states varies from one state to another, but the most important factors, which contribute to its national power, are the state's internal organization, its capacity for forging political unity and its ability to defend itself. A large area contributes only to a state's power if it is capable of providing it with the capacity of containing a large population and a large varied supply of natural resources. Nevertheless, size does have an influence on a state's decision-making capacity as two of the greatest powers, with vast territories, the USA and the former Soviet Union have demonstrated (Ghosh 2013:61).

2.3.1.3 People and ethnicity

Secessionism often includes a dimension of ethnic identity. Instead of dealing with the concept of population only, this study is also paying attention to the ethnic dimension of the DRC's

population for purposes of explaining major political crises that challenged the unity of the country.

The population (people) of a state, according to Phatsakone Chanhchom (2010), comprises all individuals who, in principle, inhabit the territory in a permanent way. It may consist of nationals and foreigners. International law does not require a minimum number of inhabitants constituting a State. The smallest number of nationals in a Micro-State can be found in Nauru and in Monaco. But, theoretically Pitcairn with 52 inhabitants has the right to opt for statehood by virtue of its right to self-determination (Chanhchom 2010: no page). Thus the size of a population is not fixed (Verma 2010:283). The population of a state need not be completely homogeneous in culture, language, and race. Indeed, it is rare to find a State with a homogeneous people. Of the states with sizable populations, Japan is for all practical purposes a nation-state and China's population is more than 80% Han Chinese – however due to the enormity of its population the other 20% is quite significant.

Furthermore, Avnindra Kumar Verma (2010) has captured the position according to which the progress of a nation depends on its population. It is preferable for the population to be self-sufficient to meet the needs of life. They must have a large degree of agreement on common needs of life and common interests. This does not mean that the people should belong to the same religion, language or race. What is required is cohesion so that these differences do not hamper the spirit of nationality (Verma 2010:283).

With respect to the concept of ethnicity, it is important to note that ethnicity and by extension ethnic groups and ethnic diversity remain highly contested concepts. Just as in other areas of the social sciences, several distinctly different definitions of ethnicity exist (Padgett 1995:28). Graham K. Brown and Arnim Langer (2010) explains that although there is no universally accepted definition, ethnicity is generally characterized as a sense of group belonging, based on ideas of common origins, history, culture, language, experience and values (Brown and Langer 2010:3). Robert Bates (2004) also notes the idea of common descent, whether real or putative. However, most definitions of ethnicity emphasize 'the sharing of a 'culture', the most notable aspect of which is language' (Bates 2004:5, quoted by Brown and Langer 2010:3). Thus, 'some mixture of language, religion, race and ancestral homeland with its related culture is the defining element'(Yinger 1985:151, quoted by Padgett 1995:28).

2.3.1.4 Government

A state is obliged to have a government that is in efficient control of its territory, and that is independent of any other authority. Whatsoever may be the form of government, it is absolutely indispensable for a state to have a government. It is through the government that the sovereign will of the state is expressed. Thus, it is the machines through which the state

must exercise its supreme authority. It constitutes the engine of the state. A state cannot be thought of lacking some sort of government. The government's exercise of power and the performance of certain functions could be important if the state is not the right size.

Jos C. N. Raadschelders (2003) argues that while the state may not always cater for our individual needs, it does somehow manage to meet collective needs. When citizens display discontent with government, they usually do so in stereotypical and generalized manners, but do not wish to dispense with government per se (Raadschelders 2003:44). Within the context of the DRC the dynamics of state-periphery relations, never questioned the need for 'a government', but did question its nature, composition and location. Furthermore, secession is also dependent on the ability of the secessionists to establish an effective government that could control the area under its jurisdiction and to provide the required services to the population.

2.3.1.5 Sovereignty

Apart from the importance of sovereignty as a defining characteristic of the concept of state, sovereignty is also important within the context of secession. On the one hand secession impacts negatively on the sovereignty of the state within the existing territory and on the other hand secession implies the quest for sovereignty both internal and external within a 'new' territory excised from an existing state.

Secession thus entails the quest for sovereignty by a section of the population on a section of the territory. The concept of sovereignty is closely linked with the history of the origin of the state and *de facto* with the birth of any new state. Thus, as explained by Pavković and Radan (2007) in the cases either of secession or transfer of a territory to another state, the previous host state 'loses sovereignty and jurisdiction over a territory and another state gains sovereignty and assumes jurisdiction over that territory' (Pavković and Radan 2007:9).

2.3.1.6 Recognition

A new state cannot exist and take its place in the international community if it is not recognized as such by other existing states. Recognition of a new state may be defined as a unilateral act whereby one or more states admit, whether expressly or tacitly, that they regard the said political entity as a State. Consequently, they also admit that the said entity is an international legal personality, and as such is capable of acquiring international rights and contracting international obligations (Bedjaoui 1991:450).

Viva Ona Bartkrus (1999) makes it clear that established states possess the power to recognize, or refuse to recognize, new states, and thereby bestow the legal status of sovereignty. Those

which the international community does not recognize are relegated to diplomatic isolation. The international system has even exhibited outright hostility to some secessionist entities – note the explicit condemnation of the Katanga crisis in the Congo and the Biafra withdrawal from Nigeria. Christopher Brewin (1982) discloses the trend toward other states and suggests that: ‘instead of being perceived as a relationship between the state and a particular territory, sovereignty is perceived as a social relationship between states where each recognizes the rights of others’ (Brewin 1982:43, quoted by Bartkrus 1999:220). Thus, within the context of secessionism, the decision to recognize a new entity as a sovereign state will be informed by a particular view on the right to secede. Examples of *de facto* administration of secessionist communities without *de jure* international recognition indicate that existing states exercise this power of recognition with discretion (Bartkrus 1999:220). For example with the partitioning of the ‘Bantustans’ such as Transkei and Venda in apartheid South Africa these ‘states’ were not recognized by the international community of states. Notably, the reference to this theory will be done in the analysis of the legality of attempted secessions and previously in the creation of the DRC as political entity.

What is thus of particular importance is whether a seceded state would be recognized by the international community of states as a legitimate state. There are issues. The question is whether in the case of the DRC a seceded state would have been recognized. Important within the context of the DRC is the possibility that non-recognition could deter secession but that recognition could fuel secession. This is one aspect that even European states fear because in most of them there are secessionist movements and an over eager recognition of secessionist states could negatively affect their own territorial integrity.

2.3.1.7 Right of secession

The expression ‘right of secession’ will also be used in the debate on the legality of attempted secessions in the Congo. According to Igor Primoratz and Pavković (2006) some theorists have argued that a majority of any territorially concentrated group acquires the right to secede from the host state, provided that this decision is reached through a democratic procedure (such as a referendum) or for the right reason (for example, the group wants to establish a superior type of political regime such as that of direct or deliberative democracy). Others have maintained that the right of secession, as well as a broader right to self-determination within the host state, is acquired in virtue of being a minority group distinct from the majority group or groups in the host state in virtue of its unique culture and historical memory. Yet others have argued that the right of secession and of autonomy within a state is acquired if the group has been exposed to specific types of grave injustice whose appropriate remedy is the establishment of a separate state or intrastate autonomy for the group (Primoratz and Pavković 2006:8).

As indicated in the literature review, this 'right' is often contested and not universally accepted by the international community. This is also of importance in the charter of the OAU/AU since the member states in pursuit of the purpose stated solemnly affirm and declare their adherence to the principle of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence (Point 3, Article III of the OAU charter).

2.3.1.8 Military interventions

The claim by regions to become independent is at the foundation of wars between a secessionist movement and the host state and sometimes give rise to foreign military intervention. For Emizet N. F. Kisangani and Jeffrey Pickering (2008) military interventions are defined operationally as 'the movement of regular troops or forces (airborne, seaborne, shelling, etc) of one country inside another, in the context of some political issue or dispute' (Pearson and Baumann 1993:1, quoted by Kisangani and Pickering 2008:2).

In this study the term 'military intervention' is used whenever the central government received foreign military aid to overcome the threat against the territorial unity. Examples are: the UN interventions in the secession of Katanga, the creation of the People's Republic of the Congo with Kisangani as capital city as well as MLC (*Mouvement de libération du Congo*) and RCD (*Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie*) rebellions against the presidency of Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

Other examples are the interventions by certain states such as Morocco to defeat Shaba (Katanga) I and Shaba II rebellions during the era of Mobutu and on the other hand that of Zimbabwe and other states to support president Laurent-Désiré Kabila against the RCD rebellion supported by Rwanda and Uganda.

2.3.1.9 Rebellion

Apart from the attempted secessions that occurred in the DRC, other severe threats to the territorial unity came from the abovementioned rebellions. According to the Webster's New World College Dictionary (2010) the concept of rebellion is defined as: 1) an act or state of armed resistance to one's government, 2) a defiance of or opposition to any kind of authority or control. Thus, Jon L. Wakelyn (1996) defines it as the resistance of one *inferior* to the lawful authority of a *superior*; a child against a parent; slave against master; citizens against the government; and colonies against a mother-country. But a state cannot rebel; because one sovereign cannot rebel against another, because sovereigns are equal (Wakelyn 1996:5). The use of this concept in this study refers to the resistance of the peripheries against the central government.

Theoretically, according to Daniel Little (1989), class-conflict theories consider rebellions as political responses to exploitation and conflicts of class interests; rebellions are more or less rational strategies of collective self-defense on the part of subordinate classes (Little 1989:2). This view is related to Hechter's theory of internal colonialism as discussed.

Furthermore, there is definite distinction between rebellion and revolution. It has been argued by scholars that rebellions and revolution have similar origins, however they differ in outcomes. The DRC has experienced both including civil wars as the one that opposed central Government and other rebels after the rise of president Laurent-Désiré Kabila in 1997. Thus the differences between the term rebellion, revolution, and civil war are according to Samuel P. Huntington (1962), 'Revolution succeeds, rebellion fails, and civil war leaves the question open' (Huntington 1962:40, 41, quoted by Dinavo 1984:25). For example, the revolution is the rebellion that has led to the overthrow of the Mobutu regime. It is the concept rebellion that will be largely mentioned in this study.

2.3.1.10 Nation-building

This study will integrate in the discussion the theory of nation-building in particular in the post-secessionist DRC under Mobutu in the processes of establishing nationhood. Nation-building is particularly important where there is a mismatch between the population and the territory of the state – what is often referred to as state-nations. This was the situation in most newly independent African states including the DRC. Jonathan N. C. Hill (2006) writes:

Driven by the need to preserve the integrity of their states, African governments have had to quickly establish 'hegemony' over their respective societies. Hegemony requires occupation and control of the 'social space', of predominating over other groups in society, such as ethnic factions, churches and trade unions. One of the principal strategies adopted by many African governments for establishing this hegemony was that of nation building, as nation building attempts to create 'internal connections' between the governors and the governed (Hill 2006:2).

Thus, this has implications for the interaction between the centre and the peripheries within a given state and that includes possibilities of the right-sizing of the state in question.

Carolyn Stephenson (2005) emphasizes that nation-building is a normative concept that means different things to different people. She mentions that recent conceptualizations emphasize that nation-building programs are essentially those in which dysfunctional or unstable or 'failed states' or economies are given assistance in the development of governmental infrastructure, civil society, dispute resolution mechanisms, as well as economic assistance, in order to increase stability. Nation-building therefore implies that someone or something is doing the building intentionally (Stephenson 2005:1). The attempts at nation-building in Africa also often involved the use of force including armed force.

2.3.1.11 Diffusion

This concept is required in the course of the establishment of nationhood especially in the context of this study. This will be referred to in Chapter 5 that deals with the era of Mobutu. For Hechter (1999) diffusion is 'the process, usually but not necessarily gradual, by which elements or systems of culture are spread, by which an invention or new institution adopted in one place is adopted in neighbouring areas, and in some cases continues to be adopted in adjacent ones, until it may spread over the whole earth' (Hechter 1999:7). In this study it is a question of the values and the way of life promoted and spread by the centre and which constitutes a component of national identity (see in this regard the authenticity policy discussed in sub-section 5.3.2.3).

2.3.1.12 Power and power relations

This study makes use of the concept of power in the discussion regarding various revolts in the peripheries. The issue of power has been, according to Paul J. Maginn (2004), the subject of immense academic discussion within the fields of policy analysis and political studies. An understanding of the concepts of power and power relations is necessary to appreciate how policy processes operate (Maginn 2004:27).

Moreover, according to Si Liu (2004), the term 'power' poses many problems for social scientists because of the inherent ambiguity of the term. Depending on the context, power can mean control or influence, it can be physical or political, and one can possess power in one domain or in many different domains. Indeed, there is little agreement among social scientists as to the definition of power. Many researchers do not even attempt to elucidate what they mean when they use the word 'power' (Liu 2004:15). For Kenneth E. Boulding (1989), like many basic ideas, power is a contested concept. 'No one definition is accepted by all who use the word and people's choice of definition reflects their interests and values. Some define power as the ability to make or resist change. Others say it is the ability to get what we want' (Boulding 1989:15, quoted by Nye 2011:10).

Despite the controversy, for the purpose of this study, power is defined as the participation in the making of decisions and the ability to get someone to do something he or she would not otherwise do.

According to Essortment (2011), power relations in government is a broad term which could be applied to any relationship within a government or any relationship a government has with any external power, such as between different branches of government, special interests, business interests, and those with foreign governments and international organizations (Essortment 2011: no page). What is more, according to Joseph S. Nye (2011), the ability to compel others to

change their behavior against their initial preferences is one important dimension, but not the only important aspect of relational power. One can also affect others' preferences so that they need not be compelled to change them (Nye 2011:10).

2.3.1.13 Authority and legitimacy

The concepts of authority and legitimacy are also important in the context of secessionism. Authority is usually seen as the right to exercise power, while legitimacy implies that the state's exercise of power is justified and thus should be obeyed. In the context of secessionism the question is what is the position of the periphery on the exercise of power by the centre?

According to the explanation provided by Mark O. Dickerson, Thomas Flanagan and Brenda O'Neil (2009), although we often speak of having or possessing authority, it is a misleading usage because it makes authority sound as a quality a person has, like red hair or a deep voice. They state that:

Authority is a social relationship; an individual has it only if others respect and obey it. Authority is one pole of a relationship in which the other pole is legitimacy. When we emphasize the right to command, we speak of authority; when we emphasize the acceptance of command, we speak of legitimacy. Authority is focused in the one who command; legitimacy is the feeling of respect for authority that exists in those who obey – it is what makes authority possible. It is the same type of relationship as exists between leadership and 'followership. Neither makes sense without the other (Dickerson et al. 2009:20).

Authority and legitimacy both involve perceptions of right and wrong and can therefore be considered moral or ethical in nature. We feel that someone in authority has a right to command. Similarly, we feel that it is right to obey, that we have a duty or obligation to do so. Government power without legitimacy is only coercion or force; authority is therefore legitimated power (Dickerson et al. 2009:20).

2.3.1.14 Conflict

The early and contemporary history of the DRC is marked by several conflicts. In 1960 for example, there was institutional conflict that opposed the President of the Republic – Joseph Kasa-Vubu - and his prime Minister – Patrice-Émery Lumumba. But, regarding the issue of national unity that affects to some extent the territorial unity, the attention of this study will be focussed on interethnic conflicts and the conflicts that opposed the authorities of the central government and rebels in the peripheries.

According to M. Afzalur Rahim (2011), there are many variations in definitions of the concept of 'conflict'. Much of the confusion has been created by scholars in different disciplines who are interested in studying conflict. The conflict literature show a conceptual sympathy for, but consensual endorsement of, any generally accepted definition of conflict that include a range of

definitions for specific interests and a variety of general definitions that attempt to be all-inclusive (Rahim 2011:15).

Thus, Mary Gilmartin (2009) argues that, in broad terms, conflict results from the pursuit of incompatible goals by different people, groups or institutions. Violent conflict often receives most attention because people associate conflict with violence, but this is not necessarily the case. Conflict can take place through peaceful means as well as through the use of force (Gilmartin 2009:227). The majority of conflicts that have occurred in the DRC defying its territorial integrity as well as those between ethnic groups have been violent.

2.3.2 Secessionism and the theory of centre-periphery relations

The aim of this sub-section is to outline the analytical framework for the effective use of the theory of centre-periphery relations which underpins the study of secessionism in the DRC. As stated in the introduction of the present chapter, this dissertation is eclectic in its frame of reference, that is to say, it selects the arguments from a variety of theories instead of being built on a single theory.

The most important aspects of relations between the centre and the peripheries in the DRC are set out below. It aims to give appropriate answers to the issues raised to explain the causes of secessionism and the why of the territorial unity of the country in spite of the other bloody events in its post-colonial history.

The interaction between the Congolese central government and its peripheries particularly in the 1960s is the heart of this research with a view to examine various risks of disintegration of this state and lastly to look into the reasons why the earlier secessionist regions did not breakaway in spite of the failure of the quite powerful centre in 1997. In order to shed light on this orientation, it is important to note what R. K. Sapru (2010) appropriately has written. For him, the centre-periphery framework approach analyzes the relations among the Central Government, the institutions and interests, and the territorial periphery (Sapru 2010:206).

It is paramount to mention at this stage that there is not just one periphery in DRC, but there are in fact several peripheries – and this study will look at three of them. In fact, the centre and the periphery are defined in various ways in the literature, but that for the purposes of this study the centre is defined as a city where the central government as well as high politico-administrative authorities have their seats and where the best socioeconomic infrastructures of the country are localized, while the peripheries are the geographical areas located in the provinces where key agro-pastoral activities and mining are localized, but marked by a low standard of living of its people.

The historical factors that have affected the centre-periphery relations will be the focus at the beginning of this study. Then, the discussion will be on the explanation of why the city of Kinshasa is regarded as a centre in the DRC, while other regions are its peripheries. Apart from the characteristics founded on the realities of the DRC, other distinctiveness will be sharpened by the criterion of the centre and the periphery developed by scholars such as Tomasz Zarycki (2007).

This study will look at the geography and mineral wealth of the restive peripheries where the 'new' states were created in the 1960s, namely Katanga, South Kasai and Oriental Province including Kivu. In order to provide a base understanding of the nature of the centre and the periphery in the DRC during 1960-65 in particular, the study will discuss the transport infrastructure, telecommunications and postal infrastructure, political relations, economics relations, administrative relations, and ethnic and cultural relations.

Particular attention will be paid to on the weakness of the centre and the personality of the leaders at the centre at the time of independence. In contrast, the personality of the secessionist leaders will also be examined. This is in order to see what has paved the way to secessionism.

The process of strengthening the centre during the era of Mobutu will receive attention. Consequently, a selection of the various strategies he used during this era would be elaborated on. The focus also will be on the change of the nature of the distribution of power between the centre and the peripheries and on the new organization of the territory in order to take control over, as well as to manage the peripheries. Importantly, this study looks at what benefit was there for the centre to keep the peripheries within the state and what benefits were there for the peripheries to either remain part of the state or to opt for a new state. Consequently, the main sources of income of the secessionist peripheries will be underlined. Financially, the participation at the national budget will be stressed in the discussion on the revolt of the peripheries. That is why Jim Bulpitt (2003) argued that the actual process of central-local relations is 'often highly influenced by political factors. Some central governments may try to exert detailed supervision over local-governments, especially elected local authorities. A principal weapon of control in these circumstances is finance: the extent to which local governments have their own sources of revenue and the degree to which they rely on central grants-in-aid' (Bulpitt 2003: no page).

Furthermore, the collapse of the centre and the policies of the new government will be discussed in order to investigate the lack of the actual secession at this critical phase in comparison with the breakup of Yugoslavia. The reactions of restive peripheries during the era of Mobutu as well as at the collapse of the centre receive attention to end the Chapters 5 and 6.

Finally, the nature of the centre-periphery relations that caused the failure of the various threats of downsizing the territory will receive attention during the attempted secession in the 1960, the era of Mobutu and after the collapse of the centre.

The analytical framework on the theory of centre-periphery relations such as utilized in the study of secessionism in the DRC highlights the reactions of the restive peripheries at the stages of independence, strengthening of the centre and collapse of the centre mostly in the aftermath of the policies of the Central Government.

2.3.3 Secessionism and the theory of right-sizing the State

The theory of right-sizing the State is the second main theory within which this study is located. This sub-section also aims to outline its use in the present dissertation.

As discussed above, right-sizing according to O'Leary (2001) refers either to expansion or contraction of the territory.

Thus, this study will analyze the political agents at the centre of the DRC in each phase of its history and assess their considerable contribution towards maintaining the territory of the state. The study will primarily be focussed on the external borders and to some extent to internal borders regarding the administration of the territory.

First, in order to understand the enormity of its territory, this study looks at the DRC's creation as a political entity (Congo Free State) at the Berlin conference in 1885, as well as the role of King Leopold II of Belgium in this regard.

Second, the study looks at the period after the independence of the Belgian Congo by discussing how the central government fought the attempts to create 'new' states within the territory of the DRC, which was regarded as a colonial legacy, and how they managed to reunify the country.

Third, it looks at how, Mobutu Sese Seko, Laurent-Désiré Kabila and later Joseph Kabila, as political agents at the centre have succeeded in maintaining the territorial unity of the Zaïre/DRC.

This study pays attention to the ethnic composition of the population of the DRC and the challenges faced in the realization of national unity. As O'Leary (2001) stresses states are, of course, more than territories with boundaries. They also encapsulate peoples, whether they are citizens, subjects, immigrants, refugees, or metics. The relationships between boundaries and peoples are profoundly interdependent. "Right-sizing" and "right-peopling" may be the two most important imperatives of successful state-builders and state-managers' (O'Leary 2001:15).

With respect to the theory of right-sizing the State, this study provides maps of the DRC's in an addendum with the intention to compare the initial size of the Basin of the Congo and the current size as acquired after the conquest of the lands and the settlement of the territorial conflicts with other Western powers (France, England, Portugal and Germany) when Leopold II was its monarch. This illustrates its territorial expansion and determines its borders with neighbouring countries. An analysis would be made of the way the Mobutu government tried to 'right-people' Zaïre by re-organizing the internal boundaries.

The theory of right-sizing the State is of great importance in the study of secessionism because it focusses on the settlement of the disputes about the territory. In particular, the DRC as a case study is a good example and offers an opportunity for the use of this theory mostly for the problems linked to its administration and the pressure of contraction to which the territory is regularly submitted as a result of its huge size and the multiplicity of ethnic groups regarding the composition of its inhabitants.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE INDEPENDENT DRC

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter attention is paid to the historical context that would influence the relations between the centre and the peripheries in the early post-colonial history of the DRC⁶ and which would lead to 'right-sizing' the State by maintaining the restive provinces as part of the territory of the DRC. Attention is paid to the period during which the territory of the DRC was carved from the Congo Basin and the contemporary boundaries of the DRC were demarcated. In addition, the problematic nature of the population receives attention. The population is comprised of various often conflicting ethnic groups that posed serious challenges to the unity of the DRC during the three major stages in the history of the DRC.

What is today known as the DRC has little in common with the Kingdom of Kongo, which was a significant African kingdom probably founded towards the end of the fourteenth century. The latter extended over a part of the modern DRC, Angola and the Republic of the Congo (Congo-Brazzaville). The DRC is a product of colonization in the nineteenth century and a typical case of a country that initially existed through the will and determination not of a state but rather of an individual, namely King Leopold II of Belgium.

This chapter is divided into two main sections: The first section deals with the creation of the Congo Free State (now DRC), the expansion of its initial territory and the fact that the political entity contains a variety of ethnic groups that represent, since its establishment, a challenge to its national unity. Insofar as secession is, in essence, about the downsizing of the territory of a state, the question is, why does the DRC have such a large territory and diverse population? Thus, there is a brief look at the era of King Leopold II and the colonial history of the DRC. Of importance are the two main factors that were to affect its unity in the future, namely the conquest of the land and its diverse population.

The second section pays attention to the independence of the DRC. Attention is paid to the international community and Congolese elite's pressures and the early dissensions between them.

⁶ This country was renamed from Republic of Congo to Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the Constitution of Luluaburg in 1964.

3.2 THE PRE-COLONIAL HISTORY

The focus in this sub-section is on the pre-colonial history of the three restive regions. For the purposes of this study, attention is paid to ethnic diversity that emerged in this country and to pre-colonial polities created by those people especially within the future secessionist provinces.

3.2.1 Ethnic diversity

The DRC is ethnically a heterogeneous country. Historian Isidore Ndaywel è Ziem (1998) argues that, by one count, Congo has fourteen pre-colonial cultural identity zones and no less than 365 ethnic groups (Ndaywel è Ziem 1998:256-257, quoted by Englebert 2003:2-3). The majority of ethnic groups of the DRC are Bantu⁷ (Mongo, Kongo and Luba) and Zande-Mangbetu⁸. Furthermore, there are few Nilotic (Alur, Kakwa and Bari) as well as Pygmy (Mbuti, Twa, Baka and Babinga) people in the DRC.

Many of them are small and localized, and are either a subgroup of a larger group or are related groups who form a larger ethnic cluster. Moreover, according to Léon Engulu (1987), four major groups of cultures can be distinguished in terms of their habitats. These are the cultures of the: northern savanna, equatorial forest, southern savanna and African graben. The populations living in these different habitats were influenced by the environment that have shaped their ways of living of which the differences appear in the structure of languages, economic activity, food and socio-political organization. The first major group includes the cultures of the savanna of the north, that is the regions of the Ubangui and the Haut Uele. The main peoples (cultural groups) are for example the Ngbandi, Ngbaka, Banda, Furu, Zande and Mangbetu. The second major group is the cultures of the equatorial forest that is the regions of the Itimbiri, of the Basin, of Balese-Komo and Maniema. The main peoples are for example the Pygmies, Boa, Mba, Binza, Mbudja, Lokele, Topoke, Mbesa, Ngombe-Doko, Ndunga, Libinza, Bobangi, Mongo, Bira, Komo, Lega and Tetela. The third major group is the cultures of the savannah of the south, that is the regions of Kongo, the Bas-Kasai, of the between Kwango-Kasai, the Kasai-Katanga and the Tanganyka-Haut Katanga. The main peoples are for example the Boma-Sakata, Yans-Mbun, Kubanychbek, Lele, Yakas, Mbala, Pende, Lunda, Soonde, Tshokwe, Luba, Lulua, Bangumbangu, Lwalwa, Salampasu, Kete, Ndembo, Yeke, Bemba, Tabwa, Sanga, Lamba and Hemba. The fourth major group is the pastoral cultures of the east that is the regions of Kivu and the northeast. The main peoples are for example the Fulero, Shi, Havu, Hunde, Nande, Nyanga, Hima, Alurs, Lendu, Lugbara and Logo (my translation) (Engulu 1987: no page).

⁷ According to Document-refugiés (1993), the Bantu-speaking Luba constitute 18 per cent of the total population of Zaïre (DRC); the Bantu speaking Kongo, 16 per cent, the Bantu-speaking Mongo, 13.5 per cent; other Bantu-speaking groups, (see below) 16 per cent; and the Sudanese Azande ('Zandé'), 6 per cent (Document-refugiés 1993:8, quoted by Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board 1997).

⁸ About the classification of Zande-Mangbetu – some classify the languages as Niger-Congo and other as Ubangian.

Given the cultural wealth of its population, the DRC's pre-colonial past is characterized by a variety of polities. Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002) points out that the ancient kingdoms had emerged among people possessing a homogenous culture, and whose family structures and religious practices survived well into the twentieth century (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002:102). The most important pre-colonial kingdoms below are grouped together for each restive region as discussed below.

3.2.2 Pre-colonial political entities

In this sub-section the focus is on the most important polities that have been established within the secessionist provinces before the arrival of the Europeans in the second half of the nineteenth century. These are, in Kasai, the Kingdom of Kuba and Kingdom of Luba; in Katanga, the Kingdom of Lunda and the Kingdom of Yeke; and in Oriental Province and Kivu, the Kingdom of Mangbetu, the Shi chiefdom and the Kingdom of Rwabugiri.

3.2.2.1 South Kasai

Though populated by other significant ethnic groups such as Tetela and Lulua, South Kasai Province notably experienced within its area the establishment of the Kingdoms of Kuba and Luba. The latter ethnic group experienced a bloody conflict with the Lulua people in the 1960s. That matter will be discussed in chapter 4 about the issue of the national unity of the DRC. The very charismatic leader Patrice-Émery Lumumba belonged to the Tetela ethnic group.

(a) The Kingdom of Kuba

Kuba, also called Bakuba, is a cluster of about sixteen Bantu-speaking groups in the southeastern part of the Congo basin, living between the Kasai and Sankuru rivers east of their confluence.

According to Edmond Pauly (2010), the origins of the Kingdom of Kuba date back to the sixteenth century, but it mainly took off in the seventeenth century, under the reign of Chamba Bolongongo. This sovereign ruler encouraged the planting of new crops of corn and tobacco. He taught his subjects raffia weaving and sculpture, and he instituted a real military service. The Kingdom of Bakuba is particularly interesting because it is the only one in this region of Africa, where the rulers had established a caretaker, called Moandi, in charge of oral traditions. The art of sculpture and decoration reached a remarkable level. At the end of the seventeenth century, Balubas invaded the Kingdom of Kuba. However, this Kingdom lasted until its colonisation by the Belgians in 1904 (Pauly 2010:5).

(b) The Kingdom of Luba

The Luba Empire was an African Empire located near Lake Kisale in the Lualaba Valley. According to Alistair Boddy-Evans (2014), the Luba Kingdom was established in the fifteenth century in what is now the DRC, but it only reached its zenith towards the end of the sixteenth century. Prior to the establishment of the Luba kingdom the region had been inhabited by people living in small villages whose main economic activities were fishing (along lake shores), iron casting, agriculture and pastoralism - thus planting and raising cattle were important economic activities of the people.

The Kingdom reached its zenith under the rule of *Mulopwe* (King/Emperor) Kongolo Maniema and his successor Kalala Ilunga (named after an almost mythical first king of the Luba) towards the end of the sixteenth century. The administration was carried out through a council of nobles, *Bamfumu*, and clan chiefs, *Balopwe*. Records were kept through the oral tradition by the *Mbudye*. The decline of the Luba Empire was brought about by the influx of Muslim slave traders from the east during the 1870s. The empire split into two by the end of the nineteenth century. The weakening of the Luba Kingdom made its incorporation into King Leopold II's Congo Free State that much easier (Boddy-Evans 2014: no page).

It is the Luba people in particular who would lead the secessionist movement within Kasai Province in the 1960s and the leader Albert Kalonji would bear the title of Mulopwe exactly as at the time of the Luba Kingdom.

3.2.2.2 Katanga

This area has a long history of conquest and conflict during pre-colonial time. There are two well-known major kingdoms that were created within Katanga Province prior to colonization. These are the Kingdom of Lunda and that of Yeke. However, there is another important ethnic group in the area, namely Chokwe (often spelled Cokwe) who by using guns rapidly expanded their influence in the northeast and east and replaced the Lunda culture with their own language and customs.

(a) The Kingdom of Lunda

The Lunda Kingdom was taking shape in southern equatorial Africa by 1450, along the upper Kasai River. The Lunda speak a Bantu language and live in the southern part of the Congo basin, eastern Angola, and northern Zambia.

In the Encyclopedia Britannica (2014) it is stated that although the Lunda people had lived in the area from early times, their empire was founded by invaders coming west from Luba. Bands of Lunda adventurers established numerous satellite establishments between 1600-1750. The

Lunda empire, consequently, consisted of a 'centralized core, a ring of provinces closely tied to the capital, an outer ring of provinces that paid tribute but were otherwise autonomous, and a fringe of independent kingdoms that shared a common Lunda culture. The imperial boundaries were thus only loosely defined' (Encyclopedia Britannica 2014: no page).

The Lunda Kingdom traded with both the Arabs on the Indian Ocean and, from about 1650, the Portuguese on the Atlantic. Exports mainly were ivory and slaves, while imports included cloth and guns. The empire reached its zenith by the 1850s. Thereafter the incursions of the neighbouring Chokwe led to its decline. Chokwe raiders from the periphery of the empire grew powerful enough to intervene in Lunda kingship succession disputes and briefly seized the Lunda capital - Musumba. A weakened Lunda Kingdom was unable to withstand the Portuguese troops that arrived from Angola in the west in 1884 and the Belgians from the Congo Free State in the northeast in 1898. The Lunda Kingdom was subsequently partitioned between these two colonial powers. Guerrilla warfare against the Congo Free State continued until 1909, when the Lunda leaders were captured and executed (Encyclopedia Britannica 2014: no page).

In the view of International Business Publications (IBP) (2007), the roots of some contemporary conflicts between the Lunda and Chokwe can be traced to the period of the breakup of the Lunda Empire in the late nineteenth century. Although the Chokwe were eventually ousted and their expansion halted, they succeeded in establishing themselves as rivals to Lunda power. The contemporary echoes of the competition have expressed themselves in the reluctance of Chokwe to support Lunda-led political action (IBP 2007:100).

(b) The Kingdom of Yeke also called the Garanganze or Garenganze Kingdom

The Garanganze (current Katanga) is the state created by M'Siri in 1856, which he led by terror and blood. His kingdom peaked in the period 1870-1886.

Kevin Shillington (2005) mentions that when the Yeke controlled southern and eastern Katanga where they managed to subdue a number of territories that were previously part of the three great neighbouring empires – the Luba, Lunda, and Kazembe⁹ Kingdoms - the Yeke Kingdom, although short-lived, was an extremely powerful political centre at the time. The Yeke state resembled a series of concentric bands. Direct control was exercised over the immediate area around their capital, Bunkeya. Beyond that was a band of territories whose chiefs had to pay tribute in exchange for regalia providing them with legitimacy. M'Siri sometimes installed a Yeke resident ruler in these regions while at the same time bringing local royalty to be educated

⁹Kazembe was a traditional kingdom in what now modern-day Zambia is and southeastern DRC. For more than 250 years Kazembe had been an influential kingdom or chieftainship of the Kiluba-Chibemba speaking the Swahili language, a mixture of Arabic and the traditional African languages or of the Eastern Luba-Lunda people of south-central Africa.

at the Yeke royal court. These policies led to the development of a pronounced yeke presence within and influence upon the Katanga elite. Beyond this band was yet a third region that extended as far as Zambia in which the Yeke merely sought commercial products such as slaves and ivory obtained through raids (Shillington 2005:1047).

There are two influential notables of the Lunda and Yeke ethnic groups who arranged a secessionist movement in the 1960s, namely the Lunda, Moise Tshombe, and the Yeke, Godefroid Munongo. The latter was the Minister of Interior in the secessionist Katanga government and later occupied many ministerial posts in the government of Zaïre.

3.2.2.3 Oriental Province and Kivu

In the interior of this future restive area, from the northern end of Lake Tanganyika to Lake Edward, there are a number of clusters that share cultural and political characteristics among themselves and with the interlacustrine Bantu-speaking peoples of the lakes region in eastern neighbouring countries whose interferences are nowadays harmful for the stability of the east of the DRC.

(a) The Kingdom of Mangbetu

With regard to Oriental Province, for example, in Upper Uele basin in the northeastern part of central Africa, the Mangbetu peoples – identified as cannibal - established an influential centralized kingdom. Indeed, according to Diagram Group (2013), the Mangbetu are unique in having created one of the few centralized political systems in central Africa. The Kingdom of Mangbetu was founded in the first half of the nineteenth century by a leader called Mahiembali, who extended Mangbetu control over non-Mangbetu speakers. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the court of the Mangbetu king, Mbunza, was famed as a centre for the arts and performance (Diagram Group 2013:143). The Kingdom of Mangbetu reached its apogee of power during the second half of the nineteenth century. By the time the Belgians established their control, the region had broken up into a number of smaller and weaker units.

The centralized political system applied in some pre-colonial polities such as the Kingdom of Mangbetu and the Shi chiefdom was used as a solution in order to stop disintegration in the 1960s. This mode of management of a unitary state will be discussed in chapter 5 devoted to the era of Mobutu.

(b) Shi chiefdom and the King Rwabugiri

Regarding the province of Kivu, the most centralized pre-colonial political structure was the Shi chiefdom, headed by the *mwami* (king). The economic use of space reflected the social and

political structure. Other ethnic communities in the province, such as the Rega, Tembo, or Bembe, had a less hierarchical and much more flexible social organization, and consisted of loosely connected clan structures, with limited references to larger ethnic belonging and territory. Additionally, Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem (2008) argues that in pre-colonial times, the Kivus were governed by very heterogeneous kingdoms, some of them exerting power only loosely. Bordering the Kivu in the East, though, in what is now Rwanda, a much more centralized kingdom, with a royal court and a standing army established itself over time. In the second half of the nineteenth century, its powerful king Rwabugiri, in an expansionist drive to further unify his territories, led military campaigns against the Kivu kingdoms (Ndaywel è Nziem 2008: 205-206, quoted by Thill 2012: no page). Although Rwabugiri only managed to establish his rule in the Kivu for very brief episodes in the 1890s, this episode of regional history is often exploited by some people to rationalize Rwandan presence in the eastern DRC today.

Generally speaking, the end of all the pre-colonial kingdoms was caused either by the invasion of neighbouring enemy ethnic groups or by submission at the arrival of Europeans. Yet, in the pre-colonial era, according to International Business Publications (2007), homogeneity did not imply cooperation among different groups of people because 'the potential for conflict between communities sharing the same language and culture was at least as great as that between those lacking such commonalities'. Awareness of as hared ethnic identity did not extend to villages far from one's own and certainly did not define the boundaries of war or peace. Only in the colonial era did such identity take shape when members of some of these groups migrated to ethnically heterogeneous towns (IBP 2007:98). The era of King Leopold II changed the way of life of the people living in what is now the DRC.

3.2.3 The Berlin Conference and the Congo Free State

The focus in this sub-section is on the creation of the Congo Free State, including its recognition by the international community at the Berlin Conference (November 15, 1884 - February 26, 1885) and an indication of the nature of its artificial boundaries.

King Leopold II (1835-1909) of Belgium wanted overseas territories for Belgium. Unfortunately, his countrymen did not share his colonial desires and regarded such a project as a waste of resources. In 1870, he attempted to take control of the central African region drained by the Congo River. He formed in 1876 the Committee for the Study of Upper Congo (part of the International African Association), which aimed to establish commercial and scientific stations in central Africa. The heir to this committee was the Association Internationale du Congo (AIC – also known as the International Association of the Congo and the International Congo Society), which was founded by King Leopold II in November 1879, of which, according to David W. Del Testa (2014), the stated goal was to promote exploration of the Congo River basin and to work

toward the elimination of slavery there. Its implicit goal, however, was the annexation of the entire Congo region, which the empire-hungry Leopold described as a 'magnificent African cake' (Testa 2014:108).

According to Matt Rosenberg (2014), in 1884, at the request of Portugal, German chancellor Otto Von Bismarck called together the major Western powers of the world to negotiate questions and to end confusion over the control of Africa. Later, in the winter of 1884-1885, leaders from a number of European states and America attended the Berlin Conference. Since France, Germany, Great Britain and Portugal controlled most of colonial Africa at the time they were the most important players in the Conference (Rosenberg 2014: no page).

Acting behind the scenes, King Leopold II spent considerable efforts trying to convince the European powers that he was the best man to control the Congo – promising to end the slave trade in the area, and to keep the Congo River open to legitimate trade by all the colonial powers. On February 26, 1885, the General Act of Berlin, attributed to the AIC the Congo basin – a vast territory of nearly 2 589 988.11 Km² (1 million square miles). It acknowledged the International Congo Society as having sovereignty over the territory. According to Nicola Frick, Spencer Janari, Gael Weldon, Andre Proctor and Dylan Wray (2006), decisions were passed about issues such as free trade and access to the interior via major rivers. Perhaps the most important decision was the adoption of the doctrine of 'effective occupation'. This stated that in order for a state to lay claim to an area of Africa, it had to formally occupy the land and impose a system of rule. In practice this meant conquest and colonization (Frick et al. 2006:25).

However, the Congo case illustrates both the lack of effective occupation at the time of the partitioning of Africa and the arbitrariness of territorial boundaries as determined at the Berlin Conference. Thus, Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002) argues that by the stroke of a pen King Leopold II modified the map, giving up some territory in the southwest, for which he compensated by adding other territories in the southeast. He for example annexed the Katanga region. Although the adjustments ultimately resulted in the loss of areas whose rich oil reserves were not yet known, such as Pointe Noire and the Cabinda enclave, they represented a masterful stroke with respect to Katanga, which was to prove extremely rich in minerals, particularly in its 'pedicle' (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 18-20).

King Leopold wished for more direct control over the territory allocated at the Berlin Conference to the AIC. Thus, Engulu (1987) states that on August 1st, 1885, Leopold II notified the signatory powers of the General Act of the transformation of the AIC into the 'Congo Free State' and proclaimed himself the sovereign. The foundation of the new state had already been brought to the attention of heads of missions and business houses in Vivi, in Central Congo. Vivi as a post was founded in 1879 by the English explorer, Henry Morton Stanley, (who was at the time in the service of King Leopold II) to serve as a basis for political and military expeditions of

the AIC. It was the first capital of the Congo Free State until the port town of Boma became the capital of the Congo Free State in early 1886 till 1926.

The date of birth of the new 'state' is controversial. For some authors, it is placed between February 1st, 1880, date of the establishment of the post at Vivi and April 22, 1884, the recognition of the AIC by the United States. The declaration of neutrality of the CFS was notified to colonial powers on December 18, 1894. Since then, the boundaries remained stable with a few minor changes due to the exchange of territories and corrections of the boundaries (Engulu 1987: no page).

Western colonial powers and King Leopold II therefore haggled over internal geometric boundaries of the continent. Negotiations on colonial boundaries were conducted to the exclusive benefit of Western nations. The wishes and interests of the original inhabitants of the region were not considered and boundaries were arbitrarily determined to serve the interests of the colonial powers. This explains why on both sides of boundaries there are brothers, who became subjects of different states.

According to Muhammad B. Ahmad (2013), arguments abound that tend to qualify or even to denounce the artificiality and arbitrariness of African boundaries, but realities on the ground and testimonies from the key actors at the time when the boundaries were being designed and constructed, conclusively confirm that the boundaries are indeed arbitrary and artificial. The boundaries were thus arrived at largely without reference at all to the social, political, or cultural characteristics of the people they partitioned. According to Daniel N. Posner (2006), a clear indication of the arbitrariness of the boundaries is the fact that 44 per cent of African boundaries either follow meridians or parallels, and another 30 per cent follow other rectilinear or curved lines (Posner 2006:3, quoted by Ahmad 2013:13). Further indication of their disrespect to the people they partitioned comes from Anthony I. Asiwaju's (1984) estimate that the 104 international boundaries existing in Africa in 1984 and 1985 have dissected 177 cultural areas or groups (Asiwaju 1984:3, quoted by Ahmad 2013:13-15).

The AIC – which converted into the Congo Free State - masqueraded as a scientific and philanthropic organization, but was in reality, a private holding company for the King. The shareholders and overseers focused essentially on the extraction of ivory, palm, rubber and minerals, and no indigenous person was exempt from participation. During Leopold's ownership, between 5 and 10 million Congolese died due to a system of forced labour and several violations of human rights. Their cruelty continued until England mounted a campaign to coerce King Leopold II's regime to modify the system. Finally, he surrendered to the foreign pressures.

Roger Anstey (1966) reveals that Leopold II's intention that the Congo Free State should eventually fall to Belgium was made explicit in the publication of his will and testament as early as 1890, whereby cession of the Congo to Belgium was to take place on Leopold's death (Anstey 1966:20). Yet the Congo Free State was ceded to Belgium by the AIC in November 1907, the Cession Treaty being adopted by the Belgian Chamber on August 20, 1908. The decisions of most Belgian politicians were dictated by the economic profit their country could obtain from dominance over the Congo. Thus, the Belgian Congo was born as a colony in the strict sense of the term.

To conclude, the restive regions were affected by the demarcation at the Berlin Conference. Boundary artificiality fuelled conflict, because heterogeneous ethnic groups were forced to be part of the same country. Continuing civil wars have taken place in the largest African countries, especially in the DRC where a significant part of the population resides in more than one country. For instance, Katanga Province includes Lunda and Chokwe people that are shared with Angola and Zambia. Although located in the centre of the DRC, Kasai Province encountered similar problems in its internal boundaries. It includes Luba people that also populate Katanga Province. Moreover, the Tetela ethnic group is located in Kasai area and southern Kivu. Two Batetela revolts¹⁰ against colonial authority have inspired other population of the Belgian Congo in particular one of their sons - Patrice-Émery Lumumba - for the courage when he struggled against Western neo-colonialism.

The next sub-section deals with the colonial territorial administrative legacy to the newly independent Congolese state.

3.2.4 The Belgian Congo and its administrative legacy

The present sub-section pays attention on how the Belgian Congo was territorially organised and how this legacy affected the restive regions. In addition, it discusses the emergence of the political parties and the quest for independence.

3.2.4.1 General background

The administration of the territory was the true backbone of the colonial administration. The aim of the administration of the territory was, accordingly, to represent the colonial state

¹⁰ With regards to the importance of the Tetela ethnic group in the pre-colonial and contemporary history of the DRC for their revolts, Roberto Benedetto (1996) wrote that, in 1893, Ngongo Lutete, the great Batetela chief who had helped the CFS subdue the Arabs, was murdered by the government. His bodyguard, consisting of 350 soldiers, was moved from Eastern Kasai region to Luluabourg; the Batetela soldiers, who were made part of the regular Army, subsequently mutinied (Benedetto 1996:110). Moreover, Emizet Kisangani and Scott F. Bobb (2009) states that one of the first mutinies in the Congo Free State was the revolt of Batetela that broke out on July 4, 1895 in Luluabourg as the result of late food supply and pay arrears (Kisangani and Bobb 2009:379).

throughout the colony. But the total size of the territory was an area eighty times that of Belgium. Thus, it was not easy for the state to keep an effective presence and control. This led to the regular redrawing of the administrative map of the colony in order to have more manageable provinces.

Thus, as Lukamba-Muhiya Tshombe (2013) states one of the first colonial priorities was the implementation of a proper administrative demarcation of the country. At the time, the colony was divided into 22 districts with the capital based in Boma. These 22 districts and their capital towns respectively are as follows: Aruwimi (Basoko), Bangala (Lisala), Bas-Congo (Boma), Bas-Uele (Buta), Equateur (Coquilhatville), Haut-Luapula (Kambove), Haut-Uele (Bambili), Ituri (no capital), Kasai (Luebo), Kivu (no capital), Kwango (Bandundu), Lac Leopold II (Inongo), Lomami (Kabinda), Lova (no capital), Lulonga (Basankusu), Lulua (Kafukumbu), Maniema (no capital), Moyen-Congo (Leopoldville), Sankuru (Lusambo), Stanleyville (Stanleyville), Tanganyika-Moero (Kongolo), and Oubangui (Libenge) (Tshombe 2013:32).

It is crucial to note that the territorial administration of the Belgian Congo was built on the one Leopold II established during his reign. At its founding in 1885, the Congo Free State was divided into four administrative districts, each headed by a *Chef de Division*. Several reorganizations followed and by 1912 the number of districts had increased to 22 (including the four into which Katanga had been divided after its integration into the Congo Free State in 1910). From 1913 onwards the districts outside of Katanga were regrouped into four provinces, each headed by a Vice-Governor-General. These provinces enjoyed a certain degree of self-government, by 1924. These four provinces were: Congo Kasai¹¹, Equateur, Katanga, and Orientale. Reorganization followed in 1933 when these vice-government-Generals were broken up into six provinces directly dependent on the central government. The provinces were: Equateur, Kasai, Katanga, Kivu, Leopoldville, and Orientale (Cahoon no date: no page).

These six provinces articulated both administrative convenience and the great diversity of this huge country. Each province was divided into a number of districts, and each district into territories. The provinces, the districts, and territories were all headed by Belgians. The territory was of particular importance as it was the point at which the European administration exercised its control over African intermediaries. Ebay (1995) states that a territory was managed by a territorial administrator, assisted by one or more assistants. The territories were further subdivided into numerous chiefdoms (*chefferies*). At the head of each was a traditional chief (*chefs coutumiers*) acting as clerk and appointed by the Belgian administration. 'The territories administered by one territorial administrator and a handful of assistants were often larger than a few Belgian provinces taken together' (Ebay 1995: no page). Nevertheless, the

¹¹ In 1933 Congo Kasai Province was divided into three provinces, namely South Kasai, Kivu and Leopoldville.

territorial administrator was expected to inspect his territory and to file detailed annual reports with the provincial administration (Ebay 1995: no page).

According to Kevin Shillington (2005) the Belgium government did also implement, like the French in the neighbouring French Congo (Congo-Brazzaville), an open concessionary system by allowing large companies to exploit portions of the colony in return for companies to create infrastructures. Unfortunately, the Belgian colonial government paid very little attention to developing social infrastructure and well-being of the Congolese population. Instead it granted the religious missions and the large companies that were concession holders, permission to provide health and education to the population (Shillington 2005:308). At the time, most of the important concessionary companies such as Forminière (diamond), Kilo-Moto (gold) and *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK) (copper) were located in the future main restive regions, respectively in South Kasai, Oriental and Katanga provinces. The link between concessionary companies within an area and subsequent revolt is clearest in the region of Katanga.

With regards to the situation of the colony itself, the administrative penetration of the territory was problematic because of the issues such as immensity of the country to be administrated and natural obstacles namely thick forests, rivers and hostility of the indigenous population within the Congo Basin.

3.2.4.2 Particular case of Katanga Province

It is Katanga Province that appears in the analysis of secessionism in the DRC to be at the head of the queue of the restive provinces especially of its neighbour Kasai Province. Thus, much of the explanations for this phenomenon refer to this significant political entity. Compared to other provinces, Katanga is the only one that presents particularities in the way it was administered that could lead to secession.

First, there is the issue of the particular status of Katanga Province during the colonial era that affects the unity of the DRC even today. The two highest levels of the administration of the territory were managed as follow: there was a Governor-General (Gouverneur général) at the head of the colony (Belgian Congo) and a Vice-Governor-General (Vice-Gouverneur général) at the level of each province. Encyclopedia Britannica (1995-2011) mentions that Katanga's Vice-Governor-General exercised all the executive functions of the Governor-General of the Belgian Congo and communicated directly with Brussels (Encyclopedia Britannica 1995-2011: no page). Thus, the Vice-Governor-General of Katanga Province, acted as if he was Governor-General of the colony.

Second, according to International Business Publications (IBP) (2007), Katanga had always been a special case, administered until 1910 by the privately owned Special Committee of Katanga

(*Comité Spécial du Katanga*). With regard to the Special Committee of Katanga, Devon Douglas-Bowers (2014) writes that the interests of the settlers were in line with those of the economic elite as the settlers formed the Special Committee of Katanga, 'whose principal function was to promote, in every possible way, the development of an agricultural colony. To serve this purpose, a [Frontier Syndicate of Katanga] had been set up in 1920, thanks to the financial backing of the UMHK, [the Congo Company for Trade and Industry] and several other large-scale capitalist enterprises.' In 1910 the administration of Katanga was placed in the hands of a Vice-Governor-General, still functioning as an entity separate from the rest of the Belgian Congo. Furthermore, besides the corporate interests, the settlers themselves had personal political and economic interests as they preferred the special administrative status of Katanga with a Vice-Governor-General, as a representative of the Belgian monarchy (Douglas-Bowers 2014: no page).

Administratively Katanga was brought in line with the rest of the provinces under the central colonial authorities in Leopoldville during the 1933 administrative reorganization of the Belgian Congo. This was strongly resented by Katangan residents both local and foreign. The suppression of the status of the Vice-Governor-General provoked violent campaigns in Katanga where Europeans particularly protested against the centralization that favoured Leopoldville (now Kinshasa). The predominant role Katanga played in the country's economy reinforced regional pride and a sense of separateness. In the months preceding independence, pressure to restore Katangan autonomy grew (IBP 2007:68). The new leaders of Katanga would as a result inherit an old situation created by the colonizers.

3.2.4.3 Establishment of political parties

Political activities were forbidden under Belgium rule, but various factors gave rise to the establishment of a variety of political organizations among the indigenous population. Uprisings were brewing in the Belgian Congo with the rise of ethno-nationalism in the mid 1950s. The Congolese elites had formed ethnic channels of expression which gradually evolved into the main parties striving for independence. Those organizations were created either on the basis of ethnic affinity, or relations formed in schools and urban centres.

René Lemarchand (1964) argues that in few other parts of Africa are the links between modern political developments and pre-colonial societies more apparent than in the former Belgian Congo. Although there are wide variations in the degree to which traditional factors have influenced the growth of Congolese parties, nearly all of them evidently had some sort of relationship with the traditional environment in which they were established. Indeed, even when this type of relationship would seem hardly compatible with the programme and ideology of specific parties, the evidence shows that their leaders were fully aware of the potential

advantages that might accrue from the exploitation of pre-colonial circumstances (Lemarchand 1964:7).

First, ethnicity played an important role in the establishment of political parties. The most prominent of these political parties was the Association des Bakongo (ABAKO), led by Joseph Kasa-Vubu. It was founded in 1950, as an ethnic association which promoted the interests and language of the Bakongo (or Kongo) people, as well as Bakongo-related ethnic groups. Other lesser ethnic associations included the Liboke Iya Bangala, who championed the needs of the Bangala ethno-linguistic group. There was also the Fédération des Kasaiens de Léopoldville (Fédékaléo), which consisted of people from the Kasai region. Fédékaléo later split into several groups. Although these associations represented ethnic groups from all over the Congo, they habitually based themselves in Leopoldville, since one reason for their existence was the need to maintain ethnic ties after the mass migration to urban areas.

Second, the various Alumni Associations was another source of political groups. Their membership came from ex-students of colonial Christian schools in the Congo. Most of the main politicians of that epoch were Alumni members, and these associations were used to form networks of advisors and supporters.

Third, the *Cercles*, or urban associations that sprang up in the cities of the Belgian Congo, which were designed to encourage unity amongst the évolués, (the educated and/or westernised middle class), gave rise to the formation of political organizations. In 1958, together with Cyrille Adoula and Joseph Ileo, Patrice-Émery Lumumba founded the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC), a national independence party intended to be non-tribal.

Most political parties were micro in nature with little countrywide support. Thus, Lori Lyn Bogle (2001) comments that while years of anti-colonial agitation in other African countries often led to unified independence movements - or at most the establishment of a few major parties - in the Congo over 100 ethnic, geographic or personality-based micro-parties rapidly formed in the year preceding independence (Bogle 2001:10). It is important to note that only Patrice Lumumba's MNC had an essentially national perspective. But some of the tribal parties represented such large regional groups that their programmes implied a strong possibility of secession. One example is Joseph Kasa-Vubu's Abako party (the Bakongo people live in the coastal region, where in the fifteenth - seventeenth century they established the kingdom of Kongo). Another is CONAKAT (*Confédération des Associations Tribales du Katanga*), the party led by Moïse Tshombe, based in Katanga Province.

It is important to note here that in terms of the literature on political party consolidation and institutionalization, the political parties at the time of independence were very weak in terms of

their institutionalization and in terms of Giovanni Sartori (2005) could at best be regarded as quasi-, or semi-parties.

The following sub-section assesses the colonial inheritance with the intention to identify Belgium's acts that would affect the unity of the post-colonial DRC.

3.2.5 Assessment of the colonial legacy for the unity of the state

In this sub-section the focus is on Belgium political legacy for the later independent DRC. It pays particular attention to the size of the DRC, colonial policy of education, and reinforcement of ethnicity. Gondola (2002) points out that since independence, the country has suffered the crippling effects of its colonial legacy, despite the fact that it is regarded as one of the wealthiest countries in Africa in terms of natural resources (Gondola 2002:1).

3.2.5.1 Huge size of the DRC

The huge area (2 344 885 Km²) of the DRC is definitely a colonial legacy. Its boundaries were imposed by outsiders. As discussed in sub-section 3.2.2, the origins of all of these boundaries can be traced to colonialism and imperialism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Treaties and agreements between Western colonial powers – French, England, Portugal and Germany - provide the legal basis for the boundaries. According to the analysis by Stelios Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou (2011), Europeans were not drawing boundaries with prospective states or in many cases even colonies, in mind. It is argued that the demarcation of the territory of the Congo Free State (which corresponds with the current DRC) was the product of a free trade area - hence the vastness of its territory (Michalopoulos and Papaioannou 2011:4).

With respect to the territorial organization of the DRC, internal boundaries frequently have been redrawn in a vain effort to get the perfect match between administration and the culture of the indigenous population. Paule Bouvier (1967) argues that most administrative subdivisions did not correspond to ethnic entities (Bouvier 1967:436). Thus, by regularly adjusting the boundaries of the territories in order to harmonize them with ethnic divisions, the Belgians were reinforcing the conception that territorial identity was based on the ethnic group. A consequence was that the Congolese did not identify with the provincial and even the national level of state organization.

Apart from the challenge of administrating the DRC's huge territory, there are complex issues regarding the ethnic groups that encompass its territory. Most of the civil wars occurred in the biggest states due to their ethnic diversity. Basil Ugorji (2012) argues that ethnic diversity in itself is not a bad thing, in that it constitutes part of the wealth of a nation-State. However, it

can lead to an increase in civil unrest if the leaders do not find proactive and fair ways for the distribution of resources across ethnic divisions (Ugorji 2012:65).

3.2.5.2 Colonial policy on education

Post-colonial dissensions among Congolese elites mainly are caused by the lack of preparation of the Congolese to replace Belgian colonizers in various structures of the state.

Indeed, according to Robert Frederic Lawson (2014), the overwhelming majority of schools throughout the colonial period were missionary schools. Until 1948 the schooling systems were limited to two-year primary schools, three-year middle schools, and a sprinkling of technical schools for training indigenous cadres. In 1948 the Belgian government issued a new plan titled 'Organization of Free Subsidized Instruction for the Indigenous with the Assistance of Christian Missionary Societies,' which promised more diversification in primary education (both vocational and secondary-preparatory) (Lawson 2014: no page). The primary school system was well developed at independence; but the secondary school system was limited, and higher education was almost nonexistent in most regions of the country. The main objective of the colonial system was to train low-level administrators and clerks.

The colonial policy on education had, for purposes of this research, two important consequences. First, the reliance on missionary schools meant that the provinces were not dependent on the Central Government for the provision of education. Second, the education policy gave the indigenous people only a minimum knowledge with the result that, according to Jessica Achberger (2014), on the eve of Congolese independence in June 1960, the aspiring nation had only sixteen African university graduates out of a population of more than thirteen million. There were, for example, no Congolese engineers or physicians. Perhaps most crucially, the lack of centralized education left the new nation in a stunted state of growth, ill-prepared for the transition to independence. Across the African continent, educated Africans often played a key role in the independence movements and these leaders, subsequently, stepped into governing the new nations which emerged during the independence wave of the 1960s. In many of these new African states, a uniform educational system facilitated and promoted national unity and identity - both of which were desperately needed as the colonial map had created artificially constructed nations that had numerous different and even competing ethnic groups. Unfortunately, in the DRC, an educated African elite who could serve to unify the nation was basically non-existent. This was unfortunate because the DRC at that stage was the third largest country in Africa¹², was home to many distinct ethnic groups and possessed incredible wealth in its natural resources. Post-colonial African nations needed to establish and create a national identity in the wake of colonialism and although all of these nations required

¹² Currently, DRC is the second largest country in Africa since the secession of South Sudan on July 9, 2011.

an educated citizenry, the absence of these in the ethnically diverse Congo Free State and Belgian Congo contributed greatly to its instability in the decades that followed (Achberger 2014: no page). This legacy had consequences for an independent DRC.

By failing to train the Congolese in administrative skills or giving them a political background or a system of government that could work, Belgium contributed towards the DRC sliding into anarchy after independence. Christian Hedegaard Jensen (2012) is of the opinion that the policy of non-inclusion of Congolese into state administration during the colonial era had severe consequences for the infant nation. In June 1960, a month before independence the following figures testify to the difficult situation of post-colonial administration (Jensen 2012:36):

Table 1: Summary table of the administrative staff in 1960

Ranks	Europeans	Africans
• High-ranking functionaries	5,900	0
• Mid-level functionaries		
○ Office managers	1,690	9
○ Assistant managers	1,976	24
○ Clerks	774	726
• <u>Low-level functionaries</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>10,791</u>
Total	10,340	11,550

Source: Gondola 2002:116, quoted by Jensen 2012:36

The tertiary level of education was also inadequate. According to World Bank Publications (2005), historically, universities in the DRC were created by the various churches and the state, although the former received generous subsidies from the colonial government. The University of Lovanium (now *Université de Kinshasa*) was created in 1953 as a private Catholic university which received generous subsidies from the colonial government for salaries, operating, maintenance and construction costs. The second University (*Université officielle du Congo*) was created by the state in 1956, which became the University of Lubumbashi (World Bank Publications 2005:102). Thus, although universities did exist they produced insufficient graduates among the Congolese to steer the DRC through the transition to independence.

It is important to remember the statement of Achberger (2014) that no one single factor can be said to have caused the DRC's road to independence to be a rocky one but the lack of

educational opportunities for the Congolese when they were the colonial subjects of Belgium was clearly a central factor in the new state's instability (Achberger 2014: no page).

3.2.5.3 Reinforcement of ethnicity

The Belgians manipulated ethnicity to organize and remodel administrative units in the DRC. When organizing the provinces, the Belgians paid considerable attention to the larger communities in each region. This reinforced ethnic identity among groups. Nevertheless, by focusing on major ethnic groups, the colonizer deliberately ignored other communities.

The old saying goes 'divide in order to rule' but this is a simplistic view that is in denial of the true forces of ethnicity. It was probably a case that the challengers underestimated the true power of ethnicity because they were of the opinion that the Belgians exploited ethnic sentiment for their own selfish interests.

The only thing that unified the Congolese in 1960 and led them to behave as a nation was the claim of immediate independence at the political Round Table. A spirit of anti-colonialism played an important role – but nobody really paid attention to what should happen after the colonials were gone. It is a case of my enemy's enemy being my friend. Once the conference participants came home this common alliance has been shattered. The problem of identity becomes important in explaining the extreme political instability that the DRC experienced between 1960 and 1965. Thus, in order to understand issues of identity in contemporary DRC, it is vital to look at the colonial era. This pattern was encouraged by the Belgian administration with the intention to prevent the emergence of nationalist sentiment that could lead to the quest for independence.

In addition, Crawford Young (1947) stated that at independence, the *Force Publique* which was responsible for both defence against external aggression and internal security, was probably the only true national institution in the DRC. Since the early part of the twentieth century, it was ethnically an integrated force, with members of different tribes serving in the same unit. A policy was instituted that at least four tribes were to be represented in a platoon. This prevented one ethnic group from dominating any unit. The reason for this was not to develop a national identity, but to counter the possibility of mutiny which the Public Force experienced three times during the period 1895-1900. The ethnic composition of each platoon meant that there would be insufficient tribal solidarity among the members of a unit to pose a threat to their white officers. Being Congolese was not a sufficiently uniting factor to facilitate rebellion. Special care was taken when recruiting from the cities, as there was a belief that the residents were 'losing their consciousness of small tribal differences' (Young 1947:36).

A look at the colonial history of the DRC was fundamental for a better understanding of various categories of its further centre-periphery relations at the time of independence that have led to secessionism. Thus the next sub-section deals with the independence process.

3.3 ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

The focus in this section is on the independence, from Belgian colonization from 1908 to 1960, of what will become the Republic of the Congo.

3.3.1 Overture to independence

This sub-section pays attention to the international and internal pressures under which Belgium was submitted to grant independence to Belgian Congo. However, there never was a real war of independence fought by the Congolese people as was the case in other colonies in Africa such as Angola and Algeria as prominent examples.

3.3.1.1 International pressures

Since the early 1950s Belgium came under foreign pressure, including pressure from both the USA and the Soviet Union, to grant the Belgian Congo its independence as it had ratified the UN Charter. Article 73 paragraph b of the UN Charter especially requires the states 'to develop self-government, to take due account of the political aspirations of the peoples, and to assist them in the progressive development of their free political institutions, according to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and their varying stages of advancement' (UN Charter, 1945). In addition, during the year of the independence of the DRC, resolution 1514 (XV) was passed by the UN General Assembly for the emancipation of the colonies worldwide. A part of that resolution states that:

1. The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation.
2. All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
3. Inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence.
4. All armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against dependent peoples shall cease in order to enable them to exercise peacefully and freely their right to complete independence and the integrity of their national territory shall be respected (UN GA 1514 (XV), 1960).

3.3.1.2 Van Bilsen's plan

Following the wind in favour of decolonization in most African colonies, according to Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002) the intra-élite debate revolved around a pamphlet originally written in 1955 in Flemish by a little-known Belgian professor at the Colonial University at Antwerp, A. A. Jozef Van Bilsen. Translated into French it was published in February 1956. Van Bilsen's 'Thirty year plan for the political emancipation of Belgian Africa' was a political bombshell in colonial and évolué circles (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002:81). The timetable called for gradual emancipation of the Congo over a thirty year period - the time Van Bilsen expected it would take to create an educated elite who could replace the Belgians in positions of power.

Bilsen's timetable never came to fruition. In fact, reactions to this plan were of two orders. On the one hand, a group of Catholic évolués - people who did receive secondary education and formed the basis of the black middle classes and were afforded special privilege and services - responded optimistically to the plan with a manifesto in a Congolese journal called *Manifeste de la Conscience Africaine* (Manifesto of the African Consciousness). On the other hand, the political parties ABAKO and MNC-Lumumba had decided to take a more radical, less gradualist approach that later would lead to the Congo crisis. They demanded immediate self-government for Belgian Congo. In January 4, 1959, riots broke out in Leopoldville (Kinshasa) after a rally was held by ABAKO calling for the independence of the Congo. Violent altercations between Belgian forces and the Congolese also occurred later that year, and Belgium, which in the past maintained that independence for the Congo would not be possible in the immediate future, unexpectedly capitulated and began making preparations for the Congo's independence.

3.3.1.3 Political Round Table

With an upsurge in nationalist sentiment, the Belgian government invited ninety-six delegates from the main Congolese parties to a Round Table in Brussels held on January 18-27, 1960. Lumumba, Kasa-Vubu and Tshombe are among those who were there. The Belgians advocated a four-year transition to independence, but the Congolese refused to wait. The Belgians agreed to independence but tried to negotiate for a transitional period of three to four years. The Congolese insisted that independence be granted immediately and the most that they were willing to concede was a few months. In the end it was agreed to hold elections in May 1960 with a transfer of power one month later on June 30, 1960.

Emizet Kisangani and Léonce Ndikumana (2003) argue that the,

'Loi Fondamentale' (the transitional constitution of the country at independence) provided for a parliamentary democracy that ceded substantial autonomy to the provinces. The constitution left significant ambiguity with regard to the division of power between the president and the prime minister

and with regard to the control of the central authority over provincial administrations. Provincial leaders exploited these ambiguities to advance their political interests' (Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:4).

The provisional constitution (Article 8) accommodated both defenders of a unitary state and supporters of a federal state by entrenching the unitary character of the new state while at the same time allowing each of the six provinces to have its own government and legislature. In fact, the *loi fondamentale* endowed the country with a federal structure without saying its name.

3.3.1.4 Constitutional legislation and legislative elections

At the Round Table, everything was played for the transfer of power to the indigenous Congolese. As regards the legislation, the Belgian parliament enacted Laws according to the order of emergency: first, the Law on Executive Colleges¹³ (March 8, 1960) that made provision for provisional governments at the national and provincial levels, in order for the Congolese not to rush into the independence without any preparation; second the Electoral Law (March 23, 1960) on the parliamentary and provincial elections and finally the Fundamental Law.

Twelve traditional chiefs¹⁴, a dozen political parties and Belgian parliamentarians adopted on February 20, 1960, 16 resolutions relating to the transition process and the organization of the new state, including distribution of power between central and provincial institutions. From those 16 resolutions, a Fundamental Law was then developed by the Belgian parliament to serve as interim legal framework before the adoption of a constitution drafted by the Congolese themselves. However, the Fundamental Law was signed on March 19, 1960 by King Baudouin I and Auguste De Schryver - Minister of Belgian Congo and Ruanda and Urundi.

Thus, the Congolese politicians immediately invested in preparing for elections as soon as they returned home. However, Emizet Kisangani and Léonce Ndikumana (2003) are of the opinion that the *Loi Fondamentale* (the transitional constitution of the country at independence adopted by the Belgian Parliament on 20 February 1960) provided for a parliamentary democracy that ceded substantial autonomy to the provinces. Provision was made for both an office of President and an office of Prime Minister. The constitution unfortunately left significant ambiguity with regard to the division of power between the president and the prime minister and with regard to the control of the central authority over provincial administrations.

¹³After lengthy discussions on various proposals submitted by both Belgian and Congolese, it was decided to create an Executive College in each province and an Executive College including the Governor-General that would serve in Leopoldville. The resolution was obtained in exchange for the guarantees given by the Congolese delegates about the fate of people and goods in the wake of the June 30, 1960.

¹⁴According to Jacques Brassine (1989), regarding the delegation of the traditional chiefs, the official list of the Conference of the Round Table comprised twelve members (one chief for the province of Leopoldville, three for Equateur, and two for Oriental Province, two for Kivu, two for Katanga and two for Kasai) (Brassine 1989: 38-39).

Provincial leaders exploited these ambiguities to advance their own political agendas interests (Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:4).

With effect from June 30, 1960, the provisional constitution organized the administration of the country into national and provincial levels. In the light of the constitution¹⁵, the central institutions are Head of State, government headed by a Prime Minister, Parliament (Chamber of Deputies and Senate). The provincial institutions are provincial Government and provincial Assembly (Article 8). Moreover, the appointment of the Head of state is decided by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of both Chambers (Article 12). Articles 219 and 220 of the Fundamental Law set out the main competences of the Central Government and the provinces according to three principles: first, exclusive competence of the Central Government (For example: External relations and treaties, armed forces, security of the State and general policy of the economy); second, concurrent powers of the Central Government and the provinces (For example: Police and control of local institutions); and third, exclusive competence of the provinces (For example: Primary, secondary and technical school, finances of the province, appointment of provincial inspectors educational control primary, secondary, technical and normal schools, granting of mining concessions under the general rules set out in Article 219, no. 26) (Belgian Parliament 1960).

The first general elections were held in the Belgian Congo on May 22, 1960 in order to create political institutions to govern the DRC. Members of the Chamber of deputies were elected by direct universal suffrage in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Law of 23 March 1960 (Article 84). The senate is composed of senators elected by provincial Assemblies - fourteen per province, including at least three chiefs or notables. In addition, the elected senators may enlist the co-opted members. These were elected in equal numbers by province and their total number does not exceed twelve (Article 87) (Belgian Parliament 1960).

Tom Lodge, Denis Kadima and David Pottie (2002) writes that on May 22, adult male citizens aged at least 21 years, were voting for the national deputies and for six provincial councils. Voting was compulsory. For the national elections, parties submitted lists in each district or commune. For the councils, parties compiled lists for each territory, a rather larger administrative division. Both districts and territories were to be represented by a number of members to allow for the distribution of seats between parties on the basis of their proportional share of votes. Parties were required to submit lists of candidates of which the number of names should be equal to half the number of seats to be filled.

¹⁵ Better known as 'Loi fondamentale' (fundamental Law).

An 87 member Senate was constituted from representatives of the provinces, while the Prime Minister was elected by the national deputies and the President by both houses together (Lodge et al 2002: 63-64).

Table 2: Chamber of the representatives - results of the elections of May 22, 1960

Party	Seats	% Seats
Mouvement National Congolais (MNC-L)	33	24.09
Parti National pour le Progrès (PNP)	22	16.06
Parti Solidaire Africain (PSA)	13	9.49
Alliance des BaKongo (ABAKO)	12	8.76
Centre de Regroupement Africain (CEREA)	10	7.30
Confédération des Associations Tribales du Katanga (CONAKAT)	8	5.84
Mouvement National Congolais - Kalonji (MNC-K)	8	5.84
Association Générale des Baluba du Katanga (BALUBAKAT)	6	4.38
Others	25	18.25
Total	137	100.00

Source: Lodge, T. et al 2002: 80

Futhermore, about the electoral battle within the six provinces, World ebook Library (2016) particularly specifies that only the two biggest parties presented themselves in more than one province:

- The MNC-L (Patrice Lumumba) ended first and had won the elections: with about a quarter of the seats. It obtained a majority in the Eastern (Oriental) Province.
- The *Parti National du Progrès* or PNP¹⁶ (Paul Bolya), was second, was defeated as national party by the MNC-L. It was favoured by the Belgians.
- Every other party was based in only one province; their strongholds followed ethnic divisions:

¹⁶ According to Gary Stewart (2003), PNP was a coalition of more than twenty local parties from around the country. Belgian viewed the PNP led by Paul Bolya as a moderate party which might be more amenable to the soon-to-be former rulers' interests than Lumumba's MNC. With the PNP, the Belgian placed their hopes and considerable money (Stewart 2003:90).

- In the province of Leopoldville, *Parti Solidaire Africain* or PSA (Antoine Gizenga) narrowly defeated ABAKO (Joseph Kasa-Vubu).
- In the province of Katanga, *Confédération des Associations Tribales de Katanga* or (CONAKAT) led by Moïse Tshombe narrowly defeated *Association Générale des Baluba de Katanga* or BALUBAKAT (Jason Sendwe).
- In the province of Kivu, *Centre de Regroupement Africain*, CEREAA (Anicet Kashamura) won but didn't obtain a majority; MNC-L came second.
- In the province of Kasai, MNC-L and MNC-K (Albert Kalonji, Joseph Ileo and Cyrille Adoula) fought a duel over the first place. MNC-L could count on two smaller parties (UNC and *Coalition Kasaienne* (COAKAT) to support it, given that its stronghold was in Kisangani.
- In the Oriental Province, MNC-L won a clear majority; the PNP was its only adversary.
- In the province of the Equateur, parties were very weak, but PUNA (Jean Bolikango) and UNIMO (Justin Bomboko) could be called the local parties (World ebook Library 2016: no page).

3.3.2 Independence Day

This sub-section provides in a few words the end of the formal Belgian presence in the DRC after about 95 years and an incident happened during the ceremony of independence.

The Belgian government granted independence to Belgian Congo on June 30, 1960 as decided at the political Round Table. Gary Stewart (2003) specifies that at 11:00 on Thursday, June 30, 1960, the ceremony to transfer power to the Congolese began at the Parliament building in Leopoldville (Stewart 2003:91). King Baudouin I presided over the independence ceremony that changed the Belgian Congo into Republic of the Congo. An event marked the ceremony which will have serious consequences for the unity of the Congo. According to Emmanuel K. Akyeampong and Henry Louis Gates (2013), at the ceremony of independence, Lumumba took advantage of the podium to contradict the official speeches given by the king of the Belgians, Baudouin I, and the new Congolese president Joseph Kasa-Vubu, which noted the benefits of colonialism. Lumumba's electrifying speech condemned Belgian rule as a regime of racial injustice and economic exploitation (Akyeampong and Gates 2013:527). The subsequent allegation that Lumumba was pro-communist united the West against him and prevented him from governing.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter paid attention to the historical context of the DRC. This discussion provided an understanding of the historical aspects that will affect the relations between the centre and the peripheries of the independent DRC.

First, at the pre-colonial times, the territory of what will become DRC was organised in kingdoms and chiefdoms by the indigenous population in particular within the future restive provinces. This territory encompassed several ethnic groups. Some of them are antagonists and revealed to be a challenge for the national unity insofar as the resolution of inter-ethnic conflicts implies the intervention of the Central Government.

Second, the DRC exists by the will of King Leopold II who – in spite of competition with other Western powers - managed to win the Congo Basin at the Berlin conference (1885) and to convert it into a private ownership named Congo Free State. According to the Berlin Act, the territory of the DRC should be a free trade area than a colony or a state. This explains the arbitrariness of the boundaries as well as the huge size of the territory of the DRC. Nevertheless, treaties concluded with Western powers contributed to the drawing of boundaries and to draw its current shape.

Third, the era of Leopold II was characterized by the abuse of the indigenous population in its system of exploitation of the natural resources. Following international pressures, the Association Internationale of the Congo sold the Congo Free State to Belgium in 1908. The Congo Free State formally became a Belgian colony for fifty two years. Thereafter, Belgium invested business and commercial interest in the DRC and was unwilling to grant it independence.

The Belgian government was aware of its inability to control the colony alone due to its huge size. Thus, it allocated the administration of some parts of the territory to dealer companies that operated in the restive provinces in particular. Katanga province enjoyed a special status with regard to the administration of its territory in comparison with other provinces. Its Vice-Governor-General dealt directly with the Belgian government as did the Governor-general of the entire colony. What is more, political activities were forbidden during the Belgian colonization. In its system of governing, Belgium neglected the education of the indigenous and to give them skills especially in the administration of the territory.

Finally, it agreed to grant independence following the request for the end of colonial rule by Congolese nationalist movements established in the second half of the 1950s and the riots of January 4, 1959 in Leopoldville. Internationally, this pledge was motivated by the independence

of some French and British colonies on the African continent and the pressures from USA and the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the announcement resulted in a scramble to form political parties. The Belgian government organized a political Round Table in which the resolutions – that will constitute the basis of the fundamental Law - were adopted in order to determine the calendar of the transfer of power to the indigenous population. At the meeting, the Congolese delegates presented a common front in their desire for immediate independence. The date of independence was scheduled on June 30, 1960.

Only two political parties - namely MNC- wing of Lumumba and PNP of Paul Bolya - were active through all the provinces when the legislative elections were held in May 1960. This is an important point because in the literature of political parties some are of the opinion that a political party is not properly instituted if it does not have a widespread national presence – thus this in itself indicates that there was a lack of central power that united Congolese people at the time of independence.

As a consequence of the lack of education in the field of politics, the constitution adopted for an independent DRC (*loi fondamentale*) seemed rather complicated for the indigenous elites. The parliamentary system gave more power to the Prime Minister. This would lead to tension between the Prime Minister and the President. Thereafter, the power relations between the two positions were also affected as a result of differences in approaches to the settlement of the post-independence political crises. Mueni Wa Muiu and Guy Martin (2009) argue that the Belgian-inspired *Loi Fondamentale* proved to be a constitutional straightjacket: in particular it particularly failed to clearly define the respective areas of power and competence of prime minister and of the president, thus opening the door to divergent legal interpretations and to political conflict (Muiu and Martin 2009:123).

The following chapter discusses the nature of the centre-periphery relations that could motivate the post-independence secessionist sentiment.

CHAPTER 4

THE CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS IN THE DRC BETWEEN 1960-1965

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the relations between the centre and the periphery in the DRC at the time of independence and the attempts at secession in the newly independent DRC (1960-1965). For purposes of this study, the focus is on the relations of the restive peripheries with the centre in the 1960s.

Another focus in this chapter is on the attempts to create three 'new' states within the territory of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during the four years after independence on June 30, 1960, namely the Independent State of Katanga on July 11, 1960; the autonomous Mining State of South Kasai on August 8, 1960 and the People's Republic of the Congo¹⁷, in Oriental Province including Kivu, on September 5, 1964.

Thus this chapter is divided into two main sections: The focus in the first section is on the most important points of the relations between the centre and the peripheries that would encourage the emergence of secessionism in the DRC of the 1960s, such as geography and infrastructure, political relations, administrative relations, economic relations, and ethnic and cultural relations. Undeniably, the newly independent state entered a five-year period of civil war.

In the second section, the attempts at secession in the regions of Katanga, South Kasai and Oriental, including Kivu, in the 1960s, are discussed and compared. The comparison of the various attempts at secession is of particular significance in this chapter. Of importance are the geography and geology of the restive peripheries, leaders, ethnic groups, external support, and secessionist movements. In addition, attention is paid to the issue of the legality of secession in the DRC and subsequently the possible causes of their failures, notably ethnic conflicts within Katanga and South Kasai and pressure from the Central Government, as well as international military interventions.

¹⁷ Not to be confused with the People's Republic of the Congo that was established later in Congo-Brazzaville.

4.2 THE CENTRE AND PERIPHERY IN THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT DRC

The concepts of centre and periphery as applied to the DRC are of particular importance in this section. Furthermore, it deals with the notion of the theory of centre-periphery relations. The theory of centre-periphery relations is imperative to an understanding of the fundamental issues of regional movements supporting self-government at independence and the maintenance of territorial unity of the DRC against various threats of downsizing, notably during the attempts at secession.

In the context of the DRC, the centre was not necessarily more developed but it was dominant for a variety of reasons but particularly because it was the seat of political power which implied that it was in a position to control the peripheries. The peripheries were therefore dependencies of the centre. Thus, the definition of the centre and the periphery in the newly independent DRC is similar to Zarycki's (2007) argument, as mentioned in sub-section 1.6.3, that the centre is the centre of political dominance which uses the state machinery to subordinate the entire territory of the country to itself. Provinces resisting these activities are the peripheries proper (Zarycki 2007:111).

It is crucial to focus on the relations between the centre and the periphery within the DRC with the objective to look at the issues that would notably have raised secessionism at independence.

4.2.1 The centre in the newly independent DRC

The aim with this sub-section is to pinpoint the centre within the DRC. It provides arguments that sustain its identification.

There are a number of arguments that support the fact that the capital, Leopoldville (renamed Kinshasa in 1966), which became the capital in 1930 was at the time of independence not only the seat of government but also the largest and most populated metropolitan area of the DRC (see Table 3). What is now, Kinshasa, covers 9,965 km² or 0.42% of the national territory¹⁸. In this analysis, attention is paid to the demographic, political, administrative and cultural aspects of Kinshasa as the centre.

In 1960, an area of 55 km² of urban character supported a population of 400,000 which implies a high population density. With the accession to national and international sovereignty, the context has changed and the population growth has significantly altered the spatial configuration of the city.

¹⁸ Source: RDC, Ministère du plan 2005:14

The ethnic composition of Leopoldville was extremely non-uniform when the DRC gained its independence. According to Benoit Verhaegen and Charles Tshimanga (2003), the ethnic composition of Leopoldville was distributed between Bakongo, Ngalas and Kasais.

An interesting feature of the ethnic composition of the population of Leopoldville was the importance of the Bakongo ethnic group of which the sub-group Ntandu¹⁹, with 16.4% of the Congolese population of Leopoldville, was the largest tribal group. The three other ethnic sub-groups of the Bakongo (Ndibus, Nyangas and Bisingombes) did not even reach half of that number. This is due in part by the location of Ntandus near Leopoldville. Yombés which constitute the largest sub-group of the Bakongo were only slightly more than 3,000 in Leopoldville. The radical division between Bakongo and Ngalas that prevailed at times in Leopoldville did not take the intermediate position of the ethnic Kwango-Kwilu (Mbalas, Mbundas, Yanzis, Pendes, Yakas and Sukus) into account (Verhaegen and Tshimanga 2003:51-53).

The Bakongo did claim Leopoldville as their territory, but there was a deliberate attempt to have it as a non tribal federal capital. However during the time of independence there was a fear among some other groups that a 'tribal centre' would dominate the other regions and tribes. Thus, it is important to contrast the ethnic profile of Leopoldville with those of the periphery (Verhaegen and Tshimanga 2003:51-53).

The Ngalas, also known as the 'Gens du Haut'²⁰ (People of the Top), cover all ethnic groups in Equateur Province of which the principal groups are the Mbudjas, Mongos and Ngombes and together numbered just under half of the Ngala which accounted for 8.9 % of the Congolese population of Leopoldville. The Congo River was the means of penetration of ethnic groups from the district of Lake Leopold II, Equateur Province, Oriental Province and Kivu (for example Tomba, Sakata, Mongo, Ngombe, Mbudja, Lokele, Topoke, Rega, Shi).

For a long time the name Kasais designated a set of various ethnic groups including the Lubas of Kasai. The Kasai River - a second navigable river of migration path - led ethnic groups of Kasai and Katanga Provinces into Leopoldville (Verhaegen and Tshimanga 2003:51-53).

With regard to the capitals of the restive provinces, the Lunda ethnic group is concentrated in southern Katanga where Elisabethville (now Lubumbashi) is located. As for Stanleyville (now

¹⁹ ABAKO (Alliance of Bakongo) was originally created in 1950 as a cultural association by Edmond Nzeza-Landu - member of sub-group Ntandu. The Ntandus exerted a major influence in the development of ABAKO in Leopoldville as the first Congolese political party. The Bakongo were politically more active among the population of the DRC on the eve of independence.

²⁰ The term of 'Gens du Haut' (French), in Lingala language (Bato ya likolo) designates those people from North of the DRC comparatively to those from South where Leopoldville Province is located. At the time Leopoldville city was part of the Leopoldville Province.

Kisangani), the native population belongs to the Wagenia and Kumu ethnic groups. While Bakwanga the capital of South Kasai Province is the name of a Luba clan occupying this land. The Tshiluba is the language spoken there. Bakwanga began to grow rapidly after Congolese independence in the 1960s and people from other sections of the country were now free to immigrate into this area. It was a Luba-dominated city.

In terms of ethnicity within the peripheries, the table below shows the six provinces, the major ethnic groups in the DRC, and the population of each ethnic group at the time of independence.

Table 3: Provinces, major ethnic groups, capitals and population in 1960

Provinces	Major ethnic groups	Population province	Capitals	Population ²¹ capital
Leopoldville	Bakongo	3,000,000 +	Leopoldville	400,000
Equateur	Mongo and Ngbandi	2,000,000	Coquilhatville	30,000
Oriental	Mangbetu-Zande	2,500,000	Stanleyville	100,000
Kivu	Warega	2,500,000	Costermansville	70,257
Kasai	Kuba	2,500,000	Luluabourg	60,000
Katanga	Lunda	2,000,000	Elisabethville	183,189

Sources: Adapted from Merriam 1961:102 and Zaïre. Government Archives 1962, quoted by Dinavo 1984:128

Thus, there were important differences in the ethnic composition of the centre and the peripheries and also among the various provinces. Ethnicity therefore became an important factor in the relations between the centre and the periphery as well as in and among the various regions.

Politically, Leopoldville was also a city of politicians. It was and still is the seat of parliament and the government departments. Thus, from this point it was politically an important centre, particularly given the nature of the constitution. The head of the judiciary and the military

²¹ N.B: The statistical information of the population of the regional capitals comes from various sources: Bezy, F. *et al.* 1966:63-64 for Leopoldville and Stanleyville; Bahizire 1983:2 for Costermansville; Auzias and Labourdette 2006:147 for Coquilhatville and Luluabourg; Dibwe dia Mwembu 2009:1 for Elisabethville.

command were all concentrated in Leopoldville. However, significant military bases such as Kitona and Kamina were located in Bas-Congo (located in Leopoldville Province) and Katanga Province respectively.

Administratively, at independence Leopoldville took in most head offices of the various national financial institutions and public enterprises that represented important assets of the state, respectively for example the Central Bank of the Congo and *Office des Transports Coloniaux* renamed the *Office des Transports au Congo* (OTRACO). Likewise, most public services in the provinces were headed by the ministerial departments established in Leopoldville as Department of the Interior for the Police Service for example. In June 1960, the best health services were located in Leopoldville with V.I.P sanitary-medico infrastructure such as *Cliniques universitaires* within University Lovanium, *Hôpital général*, *Clinique Danoise*, *Clinique reine Astrid* and *Sanatorium*.

However, by looking closely, this early administrative concentration of public services for the benefit of Leopoldville was not sufficient in preventing the provinces to secede from the Central Government.

With regard to culture, Leopoldville was a centre of education, arts and culture. The University Lovanium (now University of Kinshasa), founded in 1954 was the first university of the DRC. In the 1960s, Leopoldville was vibrant with music. Numerous groups of Congolese musicians and artists were established there, such as the fathers of Congolese Rumba Antoine Wendo Kolosay and Joseph Kabasele (Grand Kalé). According to Gary Stewart (2012), a call for musicians came at the end of 1959 to entertain Congolese delegates at the political Round Table on the transfer of power to the Congolese held in January 1960. Grand Kalé, the Belgian Congo's star, was an obvious choice to go, as was Franco of OK Jazz. They were contacted in Leopoldville to form a select band which would perform in Belgium in the days to come (Stewart 2012:224).

Fabiana D'Ascenzo (2013) found in his study that the relations between Leopoldville and the other provincial capitals (Elisabethville, Stanleyville, Luluabourg, Coquilhatville and Costermansville) were rather weak: these cities were too distant and too poorly linked to allow an efficient exchange system with the capital. They in turn had limited interest in the metropolis, given the latter's involvement in more expedient international relations. Apart from the distance between Leopoldville and its peripheries which makes that the connection is weak, there is the fact that Leopoldville depended on import itself to satisfy its own needs. As a result, most centres within the peripheries obtained and still obtain fresh supplies from neighboring countries and developed better links with foreign countries than with Leopoldville. For example, Elisabethville turned towards Zambia in order to satisfy its needs in maize meal as mentioned in sub-sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.4. With regard to Leopoldville, it could be said that its strongest relationship was with itself, despite its dependence on the provinces, in particular for

its food supply, for example smoked fish, salted fish, fresh fish, maize, rice, cassava, venison, potatoes, vegetables, coffee, cotton, peanuts, beans, pineapple, citrus, mango, sweet banana, plantain banana, caterpillars, squash, palm oil, pepper, tomatoes and onion. Indeed, the capital seemed focused inwards, on itself and its own activities, or, in any case, oriented towards external areas that were neither Congolese nor African (D'Ascenzo 2013:100-101).

The period from 1960 to 1965 is regarded in the literature as one of the most unstable in the history of the DRC in many respects, because of the civil wars resulting from the revolt of the peripheries. This made critical the connection between the centre and the peripheries in terms of exchange. For example, due to the lack of security, the producers of foodstuffs experienced difficulties in selling their products in the biggest centre such as Leopoldville. At the time, the Central Government was spending more time to quell the unrest in order to unify the national territory than to focus properly on the socio-economic development of the whole DRC.

The following sub-section is devoted to the discussion on the peripheries of the DRC at the time of independence.

4.2.2 The periphery in the newly independent DRC

The rest of the DRC constitutes the periphery of Leopoldville as the centre. The periphery is made up of territorial entities different from each other in size, number of inhabitants and economic importance. The focus in this sub-section is on the selected restive peripheries.

4.2.2.1 Geography

The DRC's core region is the central Congo Basin. It measures roughly 800,000 Km², constituting about a third of the DRC's territory. At the time of independence, except for Katanga Province, the Congo Basin comprised Equateur Province, Leopoldville Province, southern and the western fringes of Kivu Province, Oriental Province and northern Kasai. The following sub-section exposes the geographical settings within which the attempted secessions were staged. The three restive regions under discussion present geographic differences.

South Katanga in particular is a savannah region of eastern and southeastern DRC. According to the United Nations Development Programme (2009), among the provinces Katanga Province ranks second, after Oriental Province, in terms of land area representing 21.3% of the national area and covering 496,877 Km². Katanga province has two seasons (rainy and dry season) and two types of climates prevail there. Part of the province enjoys a tropical humid climate with a dry season and cold that lasts two to five months depending on the region and the other part a temperate climate with temperatures that can drop to -3°C. The annual average temperature is 20°C in the south and 24°C for the north. It varies between 19 and 25°C throughout the

province (UNDP 2009:3). The Katanga Province is exceptional with its unique vegetation that reflects the richness of its basement. According to Copperflora (2012), the Katanga copper hills are recognized as a hot spot for biodiversity with more than 600 recorded taxa (Copperflora 2012: no page). The peripheral site and high inaccessibility of the South Katanga necessitated the search for foreign maritime outlets such as Lobito and Beira in Angola then Portuguese colony.

Geographically, the South Kasai corresponds nowadays to Kasai Oriental Province. Located in the centre of the country, the Kasai Oriental covers 173,110 km². According to Tourisme RDC (2015), the South Kasai was located in the heart of the DRC over an area of 173,110 km², about 7% of the total land area. South Kasai was bordered by the Oriental and Equateur Provinces to the north, Kivu Province in the east, West Kasai (Lulua ethnic group and Kuba region) in the west and Katanga in the south. South Kasai had no borders with the neighboring countries of the DRC. This explains and justifies the lack of influence or direct cross-border transactions with foreign countries as is the case with the other provinces of the DRC. The South Kasai was an agro-pastoral province disposing of vast expanses of arable lands for food-producing, garden and permanent production, and of lowlands and trays favourable to the breeding of the big and small stock. But the lure of artisanal diamond mining has caused a significant movement of people to the diamond mining centres (for example Bakwa Tshimuna, Tshiala, Lubilanji and Tshiaba) and therefore, the abandonment of agricultural activities and making it dependent on other provinces and abroad for its food needs (Tourisme RDC 2015: no page).

Bakwanga, the capital of South Kasai, was formed essentially as a result of the mass exodus of Lubas who came from several provinces such as Katanga and the rest of Kasai in the context of conflict discussed in section 4.4.

Located in the northeast of the DRC, with its 503,239 Km² (or 22 % of the national territory), Oriental Province was and still is the vastest province. According to Dominique Auzias and Jean-Paul Labourderette (2006), Oriental Province is dominated in the northeast by high trays. In the south, the province is covered with shrubby savannah. In the southeast, the massif of mount Hoyo which leans back on the big forest of Ituri consists of grey or reddish sandstones. The forest of Ituri, part of the big equatorial forest, shelters several kinds of fauna (such as the okapi) and flora. The south and the west are covered by the big equatorial forest which occupies the eastern part of the Congolese bowl and of which the forests with the colossal trees, the crossing of snaky rivers seem impenetrable (Auzias and Labourderette 2006:178).

By the time of independence, according to Fondation Monseigneur Emmanuel Kataliko (FOMEKA) (2014), the Kivu occupied a vast area of 260,000 km², which represented about 11% of the national area. The eastern portion of Kivu, characterised by plateau and big lakes, has a good quality soil for agriculture and enable a large variety of food and industrial cultures either

mild or tropical climate. Some areas, especially around and in the north of Lake Kivu, are constituted by rich soil of volcanic origin. All these aspects contributed toward growing populations along the northern portion of Lake Tanganyika and northern region in general (FOMEKA 2014: no page). At that time, conflicts about land between the various communities were less prominent and bloody than is currently the situation.

4.2.2.2 Mineral wealth in the peripheries

A prominent characteristic of the peripheries is that the most important natural resources of the DRC are located there. According to Kakonde Mbuyi (1991), the first urban settlements were located in the mining zones where the mining operations are often related to primary industrial processing plants. Examples are: Elisabethville (now Lubumbashi), Jadotville (now Likasi) and Kolwezi in Katanga, Tshikapa and Bakwanga (now Mbuji-Mayi) in Kasai which all originated in this way. Urban settlements are also found in zones with high-yielding agro-industrial production such as Costermansville (now Bukavu) and Stanleyville (now Kisangani) in Kivu and Oriental Province respectively, as well as along sea, rail and river communication routes, especially at transshipment points, as in the case of Leopoldville (Mbuyi 1991:117). The above-mentioned cities have in turn peripheries in their own hinterlands.

The striking similarity between Katanga, South Kasai and Oriental, including Kivu, is the fact that they are geologically all gifted with a wealthy basement. They were rich with mineral wealth at the time of independence and continuous to be so. Katanga was at the time of its attempted secession geologically the richest which induced a quite advanced industrialization of mainly metallurgy and chemistry. International Business Publications (IBP) (2013) argues that the Katanga province is the area with notable mineral opportunities. Katanga is part of the Central African Copperbelt, which extends from Angola through the DRC into Zambia. The Copperbelt is one of the world's greatest metallogenic provinces containing 34% of the world's cobalt reserves and over 10% of the world's copper reserves (IBP 2013:35).

Devon Douglas-Bowers (2014) argues that the South Kasai region, like Katanga, was rich in mineral wealth, particularly diamonds. Until the mid-1970s, it produced one-third of global output of industrial diamonds. Although its mineral wealth was important due to the economics of the DRC (Douglas-Bowers 2014: no page).

At the time of independence, known mineral resources of the Oriental Province were gold, diamonds, iron, cassiterite, coltan, oil shale and limestone. Of all the minerals it is gold that was most exploited. According to Agayo Bakonzi (1982), the gold mines of Kilo-Moto are located at the extreme northeast of the DRC. They include two centres of mining operations: the gold mines of Moto in the District of the Upper Uélé and the gold mines of Kilo in the District of Kibali-Ituri. Gold was discovered there in 1903, and the mining of gold began in 1905 in Kilo and

in 1911 in Moto. The local management of the gold mines of Kilo is located at Kilomines or Bambu; and that of Moto is at Watsa (Bakonzi 1982:355-358). However, in the 1960s, the Kivu region was known for its large deposit of valuable minerals such as tin, gold, wolframite, Prochlorine, diamond, amethyst and tourmalines, spread across the north and south of the region. There was also an abundant quantity of methane gas in the Kivu Lake.

The largest mining companies of the DRC at independence were located in the restive peripheries, namely *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK) in Katanga, *Société Internationale Forestière et Minière du Congo* (FORMINIÈRE) in South Kasai, *Office de Mines d'or de Kilo-Moto* (OKIMO) in Oriental Province and *Société Minière du Kivu* (SOMINKI).

With regard to the appeal of secessionism, the natural resources were a major determinant of secessionism in the DRC. The leaders of the restive provinces were unquestionably motivated to secede from the Central Government given fabulous natural resources their regions enjoyed comparatively to other provinces of the DRC. The geographic concentration of mineral deposit in particular and their unequal distribution made the DRC for the most part prone to secessionism in the first half of 1960s. The three main restive regions were historically the biggest contributors to the national budget of the DRC. For that reason, the attempted secessions of the rich provinces would deprive the Central Government of substantial natural resources income. However, the role of mineral resources in the attempted secessions should not be overemphasized or seen in isolation of other factors such as ideological differences and ethnic conflict (Douglas-Bowers 2014: no page). See section 4.4.2.2 for more detail.

Furthermore, the peripheral areas within the provinces of the DRC are either rural or urban. According to D'Ascenzo (2013)'s analysis on territorial organization of the DRC, the country outside of the centre is dotted with small towns and big villages that are generally situated along the rivers or between other bigger cities on the main roads, beyond which there are vast non-urban areas characterised by a lack of significant urban nuclei (D'Ascenzo 2013:100). The area of the cities of Elisabethville, Stanleyville and Bakwanga is 747 km², 1910 km² and 154.12 km² respectively. At independence, the rural population was largely orientated towards the regional capitals because of their proximity. Moving away from the community warmth inspired a feeling of fear to the natives of the peripheries distant from Leopoldville.

As mentioned, the principle that the provinces should give according to their means and receive according to their needs, applied. Many villages were far removed from the centre and received very little in return from the centre. Consequently, the peripheries were underdeveloped and their inhabitants faced poverty and security problems. The abolition of the ban on access to the cities at the time of independence led to mass rural migration to the centre and other cities, increasing the population numbers of these centres as well as the unemployment and crime rate among young people.

The next section deals with the relations between the centre and the periphery within the DRC at the time of independence.

4.3 THE CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS IN THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT DRC

The focus in this section is on the various categories of relations between the centre and the peripheries that could explain the rise of secessionist sentiment. The vastness of the country would affect the connection between the Central Government located in Leopoldville and the peripheries.

4.3.1 Infrastructure

This sub-section provides an analysis on how, given their geography, the restive provinces of the DRC were connected with Leopoldville in terms of transport and telecommunications infrastructure. Even though its huge size is one of the DRC's assets, it also constitutes a handicap without efficient transport and telecommunications extending over the entire territory. The transport infrastructure in particular is dependent on the geographical conditions of the country dominated by the Congo Basin.

4.3.1.1 Transport infrastructure

At the time of independence the transport system of the DRC was fundamentally a colonial legacy. In the creation of a transport infrastructure, the Belgians were primarily driven by the motivation to export the Congo's rich agricultural and mineral resources. The transport system was oriented towards overseas exports. When major rail lines or roads were constructed in the DRC, little attention was paid to connecting people centres in order to facilitate the transfer of goods, services and public servants between these centres and even their hinterlands. Because the DRC originally was an area of trade, economic interests were more important than the administration of the country.

The restive provinces were not close to Leopoldville. Ieuan Li Griffiths (1995) mentions that the DRC is a country of vast distances. For example, Leopoldville, the capital city, is about 1,600 km by air from Elisabethville the copper-mining town in Katanga Province; Stanleyville is over 1,200 km by air from Leopoldville and 1,360 km from Elisabethville. Distances by surface transport between the three centres are even greater and the journeys slow and inconvenient because of the use made of river transport and the transshipment from river to rail. Leopoldville to Stanleyville by river is 1,720 km and a journey upstream takes over a week; Leopoldville to

Elisabethville is 840 km by river plus 1,578 km by rail (Griffiths 1995: no page). Leopoldville is about 1283 km by car and 940 km by air to Bakwanga.

The DRC's river transport is vital for communication with the peripheries that are difficult to reach by road. There are three major water routes, all of which meet on the downstream terminus at Leopoldville on the Malebo Pool. These are from Stanleyville, from Port-Francqui (now Ilebo) on the Kasai, and from Bangui on the Ubangui. But not all sections are navigable. Thus, according to Arthur Wubnig (1951), where navigability is hampered by rapids and falls, the fluvial route is continued by rail links. Regions not continuous to the River are linked to the river ports by feeder railways, feeder roads, or both.

The main transport artery of the Belgian Congo for export, import, and internal traffic is the so-called *Voie Nationale*. This is a broad term to designate the complex of river, rail, road, and port facilities comprising the Congo route proper plus the connecting transport networks which serve the Katanga and Great Lakes Region.

The *Voie Nationale* follows the route described below:

- Matadi, a seaport on the maritime stretches of the Lower Congo is the ocean gateway.
- Leopoldville, a seaport on the downstream limit of navigability on the Middle Congo, is the river gateway.
- Matadi is linked to Leopoldville by rail through the *Compagnie de chemin de fer du Katanga* (CFKL) Railroad.
- Leopoldville is linked with the interior river ports by waterway routes running along the main stream to Stanleyville and along the Kasai River to Port Francqui.
- From Stanleyville, the *Voie Nationale* goes to the Great Lakes region over the rail, river and lake services of the *Compagnie du Chemin de fer du Congo Supérieur aux Grands Lacs africains* (CFL) railroad.
- From Port Francqui, the *Voie Nationale* connects the Katanga region over the rail network of the *Compagnie du chemin de fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga* (BCK) railroad.
- The *Voie Nationale* is completed by several feeder routes such as the Vicicongo railroad, serving the northwest via the river port of Bumba; the Mayumbe railroad, serving the Mayumbe region area via the seaport of Boma; and the Kivu railroad which forms a rail – road link between Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika (Wubnig 1951:1).

Many scholars are of the opinion that when the Belgians left in 1960, the Belgian Congo had one of the finest road systems in Africa. However, for example, a journey from Leopoldville to Stanleyville by the Congo River took about nine days; and Leopoldville to Elisabethville by road and rail took about two weeks. More than half of the DRC's mineral exports took a circuitous

route by air, riverboat, railway, and road from Katanga to the Matadi port. Copper shipments could take 45 days to go from the plant to the dock.

Due to the fact that the terrain and climate of the Congo Basin present serious barriers to road and rail construction, the fastest way to reach the restive provinces especially from Leopoldville was by air. N'djili International Airport linked Leopoldville with its peripheries. Each capital of the restive regions, Elisabethville (747 km²), Bakwanga (135.12 Km²) and Stanleyville (1910 km²), were also equipped with airports, namely Luano, Bipemba and Simi-Simi airports respectively that connected with Leopoldville.

Alfie Ulloa, Felipe Katz and Nicole Keketh (2009) argue that the rail network was once the most vital means of transport for Katanga. The rail system provided Katanga with a strategic three-axis system that connected the province's east, north and west with the rest of the DRC. Southern Katanga were connected to Leopoldville and to the world through a three section route of nearly 2600 kilometer via the *Voie Nationale* that, first linked Elisabethville to Port Francqui in the Kasai Province by train (1,575 km), second Port Francqui to Leopoldville via the Kasai and Congo Rivers (650 km), and third Leopoldville to Matadi by rail (366 km). The most extensive lines, connecting Elisabethville to the railhead port in Port Francqui (Kasai Province), was in fact a continuation of the Kasai River by land into Elisabethville. This multimodal path was the main transport route for Katanga's minerals to Leopoldville (Ulloa et al 2009:38).

The agricultural districts of Haut-Katanga and Tanganyika in the north of Katanga, important as a 'granary' of the province, were connected to Leopoldville via rail to Kabalo-Kindu (406 km), by river to Kindu-Ubundu; rail again from Ubundu to Stanleyville, from Stanleyville to Leopoldville by the Congo River (1,000 km) and finally from Leopoldville to Matadi by rail. CongoForum (no date) mentions that Elisabethville and the rest of Katanga Province were linked to Zambia through which the tared main roads and rail networks of Southern Africa could be accessed. Such links with neighbouring countries remain generally more important for the east and south-east of the country, and are more heavily used, than surface links to the capital (CongoForum 2014: no page). Additionally, according to Milorad Majkic (2014), there were a 3,516 km long rail network (of which 858 km were electrified) connecting mine centres Katanga and Kasai with Zambia, Tanzania and Angola. Furthermore, a 1,026 km long section rail line linked Kilo Moto gold mines (Oriental Province) with the River Congo with the objective to reach Leopoldville (Majkic 2014: no page).

The route for exporting natural resources was quite long and expensive in the interior of the DRC. To overcome this shortcoming, the colonial administration explored other routes such as the railway link to Benguela. The British South Africa company constructed railway lines linking South Africa, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Katanga in the

Southern DRC. A part of the ores from Katanga was therefore exported south by rail to South Africa, which was also an important source of imports to Katanga.

The Benguela railway (Portuguese: *Caminho de Ferro de Benguela* (CFB)) connects the Atlantic port of Lobito, Angola, to the eastern border town of Luau and to the rail networks of south-eastern DRC, of Zambia and beyond.

The structure of transportation of the DRC described above had the shape of a funnel. Natural resources were collected and transported towards the Atlantic Ocean at Matadi port. From there it was shipped overseas. On the whole, the connection between the restive peripheries and Leopoldville was poor. The restive peripheries especially Katanga and Oriental including Kivu were easier accessible from neighbouring countries than from Leopoldville. For example, a typical flight from Leopoldville to Stanleyville (1224 Km); from Leopoldville to Elisabethville (1571 Km); from Leopoldville to Costermansville (1575 km) lasted about 1:32; 2:25 and 2:10 respectively. Yet, the flight time from Elisabethville to Lusaka is estimated at 0:52 for a distance of 425 km only.

The emphasis on trade and exports in the development of transport left a legacy that is characterized by the underdevelopment of the transport infrastructure at independence. The transport network described above may appear to be extensive, but the vastness of the country should be taken into account. As a result of this, the penetration of the central administration into its peripheries was problematic. Apart from the location of Leopoldville far away from the major part of the country, especially from the restive provinces, the inadequate transport infrastructure complicated the integration of the peripheries into national life. The Central Government in the 1960s did not have enough means to dispatch territorial officers everywhere. The consequent underadministration, or for all practical purposes the absence of the state, led citizens to organize themselves. The administrative vacuum was filled, *inter alia*, by the solidarity of clan, custom and religion. This is why in some parts of the country, customs served as law. Taking into account the vastness of the country it should be noted that citizens have to travel long distances to have access to certain administrative documents or utilities. Thus, for example to record a marriage, a couple should travel to the capital, and given the condition of roads and other, transport it is not surprising that some are limited to traditional weddings and do not want a civil marriage despite all the legal rights and protections of civil marriage. In other parts, missionaries and other clerics 'ruled' and applied the rules of religion, and even provided some administrative services in the absence of officials of the state. Likewise, some of the concessionary companies in the DRC provided services in the area where they were operating.

From the above it should be clear that, as Dan Landris and Rosita D. Albert (2012) argue, the DRC's size and lack of infrastructure made it impossible to govern the peripheries efficiently

from what was then Leopoldville. The centre for example over the years progressively, lost control of the volatile eastern part of the country, because it became more integrated into the Great Lakes Region than the DRC (Landris and Albert 2012:385). Transport and other public services during the Congo crisis of the 1960s suffered as a consequence of multiple decision-making centres leading to the degradation of infrastructure. What is more, in order to cope with the difficulties of transport in the peripheries, rural populations opted for walking, cycling or the canoe to go from one place to another. This complicated the relations between the centre and the peripheries even further.

4.3.1.2 Telecommunications and postal infrastructure

In a country as vast as the DRC, devoid of a dense network of land roads and rail, the telecommunications between the centre and various peripheries were essential to strengthen the state's unity. The aim in this sub-section is to make clear that telecommunications services were rudimentary and how this specifically affected centre-periphery relations in the DRC at independence.

Inspired by Cecil John Rhodes, the British South Africa company constructed railway and telegraph lines linking South Africa, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Katanga in the Southern DRC. While Katanga was as mentioned above already connected to some Southern African countries, at independence, the postal, telephone, and telegraph services were owned and operated by the Central Government in the DRC. The telecommunications include postal services. But there is a link between transport infrastructure and postal services. The issue of the transport infrastructure had a negative impact on the transmission of mails in the hinterland despite the establishment of the Post Office in the peripheries especially in the capitals of the provinces. Once again Christian missions were used as channels for mail to reach its destination and contributed to the reinforcement of social ties between relatives who remained in the peripheries and those that immigrated to the biggest centres for example Leopoldville, Elisabethville, Bakwanga and Stanleyville.

The existence of telecommunications infrastructure in the provinces is mentioned by John René Kamba N'Kiamvu (1997) in his study on 'Management par exception dans le secteur télécommunications à l'Office Congolais des Postes et Télécommunications à Kisangani'. He states that an Italian digital telephone exchange of the type S12 was installed in Kisangani in 1988 to replace the manual telephone exchange with the network cables dating back to colonial times (my translation) (N'Kiamvu 1997:46).

As with the above mentioned transport infrastructure, the telecommunications network also served primarily economic interests. Bisimwa Ganywa and Bukasa Tshilombo (1999) states that the Belgian Congo was a region of intense economic activity, and because the productive units

were scattered, considerable resources were placed into telecommunications. The telecommunications system linked several production units within the Belgian Congo and the capital Leopoldville. 'By having no role in the development of the system, however, and no experience in technology or management, the newly independent nation and its citizens did not realize the importance of telecommunications for social and economic development' (Ganywa and Tshilombo 1999:122-123). The lack of political stability during the post-independence era interrupted the development of telecommunications infrastructure (Ganywa and Tshilombo 1999:122-123).

Consequently, fixed-line telephone services in the DRC during the 1960s were generally poor with only a limited number of connections in operation. Needless to say that administratively, the central authorities could hardly contact officials in remote areas. This contributed to a widening gap between the centre and the peripheries.

Transport and telecommunications infrastructures were important in the nature of the relations between the centre and the peripheries at the independence of the DRC and would have affected the political relations that are discussed below.

4.3.2 Political relations

The emphasis in this sub-section is on the problems of legitimacy and participation in the political life of the DRC in the 1960s. Attention is paid to the debate about the form of the state (unitarism and federalism) and the involvement of the political parties established throughout the entire DRC in the first legislative elections held on the eve of independence.

Some provincial governments in the periphery sought more autonomy from the Central Government. This led to an exciting debate among Congolese leaders especially those of Katanga, South Kasai and Bas-Kongo against the idea of centralization. But it should be borne in mind that the politicians at the centre and in the peripheries did not have practical political expertise.

Kisangani, E. F. and Ndikumana, L. (2003) argue that disputes about the constitutional orientation of the country were a central factor in the Katangan secessionist movement. The different positions regarding centralization versus decentralization generated antagonism within the national political elite and between nationalists and Belgium (Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:4).

Regarding Congolese political actors' views on the structure of the state, Jules Gérard-Libois (1966) makes it clear that Patrice-Émery Lumumba and his party advocated a unitary and centralized Congo state as the expression of true national independence. Lumumba's

opponents led by CONAKAT president Moise Tshombe, wanted secession or at least broad independence of the provinces from the Central Government. Tshombe believed that provincial sovereignty was a means of achieving a fair distribution of resources based on each province's needs and contribution to the national wealth (Gérard-Libois 1966:47). Kasa-Vubu and the Alliance of the Bakongo (ABAKO), also shared Tshombe's views. They supported the organization of the DRC into a federal system, and at times threatened secession.

At the time of independence this debate continued. All restive provinces participated in the elections that were held. Lumumba emerged as the most popular of the numerous Congolese politicians, with his MNC winning the most votes but not an outright majority (Shillington 2005:530). In view of the election results mentioned in sub-section (3.3.1 point d), CongoForum (2005) points out that in the national parliament, the pro-centralization Lumumba could count on a coalition of (in order of loyalty) MNC-L, UNC and COAKA (Kasaï), CERECA (Kivu), PSA (Leopoldville) and BALUBAKAT (Katanga). Lumumba was opposed by PNP, MNC-K (Kasaï), ABAKO (Leopoldville), CONAKAT (Katanga), PUNA and UNIMO (Equateur) and RECO (Kivu) (CongoForum 2005: no page). According to Denis Kadima and Dieudonné Tshiyoyo (2006), Lumumba made a deal with his main rival, Joseph Kasa-Vubu in order to have a smooth investiture of his newly formed government by Parliament. Lumumba's move was also aimed at pre-empting Kasa-Vubu's threat to create a separate state in the coastal Bas-Congo region, if he was not elected as the State President. Lumumba's government was subsequently approved by the Chamber of Deputies by 74 votes against 1 with 5 abstentions and 57 absences. The Senate also approved Lumumba's government by 60 votes against 12 with 8 abstentions. Kasa-Vubu was then elected as Head of State with 159 votes against 43 with 11 abstentions or spoiled ballots (Kadima and Tshiyoyo 2006:64).

Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu now had the legitimacy to govern the newly independent DRC. In a gesture of national unity, Lumumba formed a coalition government, accepting the position of prime minister and defense minister for himself. Ministerial portfolios were distributed among other parties who joined in the coalition with the MNC. Although Lumumba formed a coalition government, the government excluded several important political parties, such as CONAKAT. It is therefore arguable whether he formed a government of national unity as is often claimed. Nevertheless, Nzongola-Ntalaja (2014), argues that, more importantly, the greatest legacy that Lumumba left the DRC is the ideal of national unity (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2014: no page).

Thus, by looking closely, Lumumba did not include in his government the major leaders of the future restive provinces. For example, the political party of Moise Tshombe (CONAKAT) was not represented. Moise Tshombe was elected president of the province of Katanga. Yet in Lumumba's cabinet, BALUBAKAT, the rival party to Moise Tshombe in Katanga, got the *Ministère de Justice* (Ministry of Justice) occupied by Rémy Mwamba and *Secrétaire d'Etat à la*

défense nationale (State Secretary for National Defence) occupied by Albert Nyembo. Furthermore, according to Gondola (2002), in 1960, following Lumumba's decision not to include any representative of the MNC-Kalonji in the government, Albert Kalonji led the Kasai region in seceding from the Central Government (Gondola 2002:187). Following the repression of the attempt at secession in South Kasai, as it will be discussed in sub-section 4.4.2.2, Prime Minister Lumumba was dismissed by President Kasa-Vubu. Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002) argues that the dismissal was based on a controversial and little-understood article of the interim constitution written by the Belgians. Both houses of parliament, where Lumumba still had a working majority, gave him a vote of confidence and rejected Kasa-Vubu's decision as null and void. Lumumba reacted by dismissing Kasa-Vubu, whom he had supported for the ceremonial presidency against Jean Bolikango for purposes of appeasing the strong ABAKO constituency in Leopoldville. Parliament also refused to remove Kasa-Vubu from office, and by dismissing²² Lumumba illegally, Kasa-Vubu created a constitutional crisis for the young republic (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002:108).

Colonel Joseph-Désiré Mobutu, subsequently, put in place a temporary government called *Collège des Commissaires Généraux* led by Justin-Marie Bomboko from September 19, 1960. But, on November 23, 1960 the UN decided in favour of the legality and legitimacy of the sole power of President Kasa-Vubu. In February 1961, Mobutu returned the power. Thus, Kasa-Vubu remained Head of State and Joseph Ileo was appointed prime minister. However, Lumumba was permanently ruled out. Mobutu, in turn, was rewarded for his actions with the rank of Lieutenant-General by President Kasa-Vubu.

By contrast, with regard to Oriental and Kivu Provinces, Godfrey Mwakikagile (2014) mentions that Thomas Kanza, a staunch supporter of Lumumba, had served in his first cabinet as the DRC's ambassador to the UN and joined Christophe Gbenye's insurgent movement after Lumumba's assassination (Mwakikagile 2014:41). Gbenye created a new state in Oriental Province that will be dealt with further in section 4.4. Another dissatisfied, Antoine Gizenga, had served as deputy Prime Minister under Lumumba, and formed a rival government in Kisangani after the fall of Lumumba, because the new Congolese Central Government rejected Lumumba's political vision

²² By dismissing Prime Minister Lumumba who had the majority in the parliament, President Kasa-Vubu had only considered the constitutional prerogatives granted to him by Article 22 of the Fundamental Law. This Article stipulates that the head of state appoints and dismisses the prime minister and ministers. Garry K. Bertsch, Robert P. Clark and David M. Wood (1986) explain that, in a parliamentary system of government, the prime minister and cabinet may continue in office as long as they retain the support (confidence) of a majority of the Parliament. If they do not lose majority support, they may stay in office until the end of the Parliament's term (four or five years). Should the majority be lost on a vote of confidence or a vote of nonconfidence, the prime minister will resign or ask the head of state to dissolve Parliament, meaning that new elections will be held before the end of the Parliament's term. Resignation may also come as a result of shifts in parliamentary support that are not formally registered in votes of confidence or nonconfidence (Bertsch *et al.* 1986:95).

insofar as Joseph Ileo - a co-founder of MNC-Kalonji a rival party of MNC-Lumumba - was appointed Prime Minister after Lumumba's removal. A rapid succession of prime ministers followed within a short period of time (Joseph Ileo, Justin-Marie Bomboko, again Joseph Ileo, Cyrille Adoula and then Moise Tshombe).

However, Gizenga agreed to join the Central Government after the new Prime Minister Cyrille Adoula (August 2, 1961 to June 30, 1964), promised to follow the policies of Lumumba. He formed a new cabinet which included Katangan representatives and gave strongest representation to the Lumumbist party. Gizenga was made Vice-Prime Minister, but he was removed from his post in January 1962 for defying a parliamentary resolution that he is going to Leopoldville to face secession charges.

The personality of the radical and charismatic Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, harmed the relations between the centre and the periphery in the days following the independence of the DRC. As a central leader, his uncompromising attitude negatively impacted on the interests of the peripheries. Lumumba advocated a strong Central Government and was determined to get it. He supported the idea of a centralized unitary state in spite of the huge size of the DRC that encompasses antagonist ethnic groups. Such a view also was not in accordance with the interests of the wealthiest peripheries. Influential notables advocated significant autonomy for the provinces. Thus, at independence, the DRC had severe regional and ethnic divisions and a fragile sense of national unity.

The lack of political expertise would be critical at this stage of independence. For Lumumba's governmental team of 31 posts - 4 Ministres d'Etat, 19 Ministres and 8 Secrétaires d'Etat - only two members (Justin-Marie Bomboko and Thomas Kanza) of the government of Lumumba were university graduates. The rest had the level of primary and secondary school.

Economic relations were a factor in the political relations between the centre and the peripheries. Thus it is important to have a look at the economic reasons for the argument whether the restive peripheries should be part of the DRC.

4.3.3 Economic relations

The focus in this sub-section is on the financial problems of the first Government of which Lumumba was the Prime Minister, the importance of the peripheries in the economy of the DRC and the potential reasons of their subsequent revolts.

In the early 1960s, the economy of the DRC was mostly based on mineral resources. In this regard, the restive peripheries have most of the state's assets in mineral and industrial wealth. These played an outstanding role in motivating the peripheries to challenge the Central

Government, particularly because they received very little in return for their contribution towards state income. Katanga and South Kasai were historically the biggest contributors to the state budget. Thus, at independence leaders from those areas sought to take control of their mineral-rich regions for their own gain, irrespective of the interests and demands of the Central Government in Leopoldville. Moreover, the Government's collection and distribution of revenues from raw material extraction established a key potential for conflict.

The relations between the centre and the periphery were probably affected by the decisions made at the economic Round Table held in Brussels in April 1960 after the political Round Table. Thus, a look at the legacy of the economy is essential to understand the economic plight which the Central Government faced at independence and also the reasons why it needed rich provinces to remain part of the DRC for its economic stability. At the economic Round Table, according to Jeanne M. Haskin (2005), the Belgian government informed the Congolese that they inherited a public debt of £350 million (which had been raised and guaranteed by the Belgians) (Haskin 2005:20).

Colin Legum (1961) specifies that the servicing and redemption of this debt required almost 25 per cent of the Congo's annual budget, by far the highest debt burden bequeathed to any of the former African colonies. Two features of this debt lessened its impact on the economy. First, the DRC Government inherited a portfolio of assets valued at about £240 million, comprising a large slice of the holding in the Union Minière, and outright ownership of several large public utilities. This inheritance contributed nothing in ensuring the immediate liquidity of the new Government. Second, full allowance should be made for the fact that the greatest part of the debt had been incurred in development work within the DRC.

If the long-term problems were serious, the immediate economic problems were critical. On the eve of its independence the Government was faced with large current deficits (£40 million on the current account for 1960 alone). The flight of capital and the loss of international confidence, because of the events of 1959²³, meant the new Government would come to power with no liquid assets at all.²⁴ First, a quarter of its budget was already mortgaged to its public debt. Second, a portion of its future earnings was drawn upon to repay the advance borrowings in taxes and duties from the principal mining and industrial taxpayers. Third, and

²³ This is a reference to major riots that broke out in Leopoldville, on January 4, 1959. This date is a national public holiday in the DRC named martyr of independence.

²⁴ According to Legum (1961), to help meet this position the Belgians had offered to subsidize the 1960 budget by £17.5 million. It had raised a long-term loan from the international Bank of Reconstruction for £14 million, and a short-term loan in New York for £7 million. Apart from the lack of economic wisdom of meeting current and past deficits by long-term loans, the total amount rose in subsidies and loans amounted to less than two-thirds of the estimated 1960 budget deficit (Legum 1961:92).

worst of all, it would have little independent control over its own Central Bank. The DRC Central Bank already had been made a prisoner of Brussels early in 1960 (Legum 1961:82, 92).

The leaders of the richest provinces, that is to say Katanga and South Kasai, were aware of the fact that the money to refund the public debt inherited from colonization and for the funding of the state budget will come from their provinces. Furthermore, feelings of internal colonialism by the peripheries were exacerbated by strong central leaders such as Lumumba. This may have inclined leaders in the peripheries to secessionist acts. Moreover, there was the fear among some Katangans that it might be dominated by the centre and particularly in light of the fact that it enjoyed some privileges prior to independence. Even during the colonial era, according to Devon Douglas-Bowers (2014), settlers in Katanga felt that ‘the proportion of public expenditures devoted to Katanga appeared minute when compared with the overall contribution of its taxpayers to colonial revenues’ (Douglas-Bowers 2014: no page). At independence, the best economic response for the centre’s expectations must be based on a permanent contribution by the peripheries to the Central Government. Yet no provision was made in the Loi fondamentale regarding the percentage of revenues from the raw materials sector that should be ploughed back into the provinces.

Clement Bota Bamuamba (2001) states that from independence until 1969 the Government operated on a budget deficit financed largely by advances from the Central Bank, despite the fact that the country had one of the highest tax efforts (measured by the ratio of tax revenue to monetary gross domestic product) of the world’s developing countries. The budgetary deficits incurred by the Government were the main source of inflation that plagued the country for seven years after independence (Bamuamba 2001:44).

With regard to the economic weight of the restive provinces, Chaitanya Davé (2007) illustrates that Katanga was DRC’s richest province in mineral and other resources. In 1960, it accounted for 75 percent of the Congo’s mining production at 11.8 billion Belgian francs. (Then 50 francs to one US dollar). Its contribution towards the total resources of the DRC amounted to 50 percent of the budget. In addition it contributed 75 percent of DRC’s total foreign exchange earnings. The production of copper approximated 300,000 tons, valued at over eight billion Belgian francs (Davé 2007:152).

Paul Nugent (2004) points out that the Katanga region had traditionally shared closer economic ties with the Copper Belt of neighbouring Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) than with the rest of the Congo. The major mining company in Katanga, the *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK), began to support CONAKAT during the final days of Belgian rule amid concerns that the MNC-L might seek to nationalize the company's assets after independence. UMHK was largely owned by the *Société Générale de Belgique*, a prominent holding company based in Brussels and which had close ties to the Belgian government (Nugent 2004:85-86). Indications of the extent to

which the government would support nationalization in order to build a strong centre will be provided in Chapter 5 relating to the era of Mobutu.

As mentioned earlier, the South Kasai region situated in the centre of Congo was also commercially valuable. Although South Kasai was not as rich as Katanga, it produced, as already mentioned, much of the Western world's industrial diamond supplies. The Belgian companies, especially the FORMINIÈRE diamond company, had substantial interests in the region. Bakwanga (capital of South Kasai) is the administrative headquarters of the private diamond Company la *Minière de Bakwanga* (MIBA). The city of Tshikapa – a hinterland of Bakwanga - is endowed with large deposits of diamonds and many foreign investors have mining concessions in this city.

In the centre and southeast and the mining complexes of Bakwanga and Elisabethville, the Luba ethnic group sought to reclaim for themselves the large revenues provided by the export of diamonds and copper and other precious metals.

Moreover, in Oriental province where Kisangani is the capital there is an enormous mineral deposit of gold in the Ituri District. After independence in 1960, the state nationalized many of the mining companies, including the *société des Mines d'or de Kilo-Moto* (SOKIMO) that mined the mineral deposits in northeastern DRC. It granted the large SOKIMO concession in the Ituri and Haut Uélé District of Oriental province to the new state-owned Office of the Gold Mines of Kilo-Moto (OKIMO) (Human Rights Watch 2005:13-14).

In terms of economic exchange between the centre and the periphery with reference to the discussion on the infrastructure, Leopoldville was isolated when considering its relationship with the greater part of the DRC. For example, Global Witness (2004) states that the geographical position of the Kivu provided a degree of political and economic autonomy from Leopoldville, reinforced by the region's historic role as a transit-zone for regional trade (Global Witness 2004:9).

The economic relations were important for determining some of the administrative arrangements in the DRC. The administrative relations between Leopoldville and the remainder of the country thus require some examination.

4.3.4 Administrative relations

This sub-section looks at the ability of the Central Government to exercise political control over the whole territory and the distribution of scarce commodities and services. It largely deals with what is often referred to as the penetration crisis of developing states.

It was already mentioned in chapter 3 that during the colonial era the administration of the territory was partly provided by the Belgian colonial government, the religious missions and the large companies that were concession holders. Basically because of the hugeness of the territory its administration required colossal means. Most of the population of the peripheries was reached by the state thanks to the establishment, particularly, of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the country. Christian missions intervened in the social sectors such as medical care and education.

According to Maryinez Lyons (1994), health services were provided by a combination of the government medical services, philanthropic medical organizations, concessionary companies and a few private practitioners. Preventive services were often in the hands of voluntary associations. Unofficial organizations included: *Service Auxiliaire de l'Assistance Médicale aux indigènes* (SAMI) which included numerous medical missions and religious infirmaries; the *Croix-Rouge du Congo* which focused on a small region of northern Congo; the *Fondation Médical de l'Université de Louvain au Congo* (FOMULAC) which aimed to bring medical assistance direct to villages; le *Centre Scientifique et Médical de l'Université Libre de Bruxelles en Afrique Centrale* (CEMUBAC) which functioned in the eastern parts of the colony; *la Fondation Père Damien pour la lutte contre la Lèpre* (FOPERDA); and *l'Assistance aux Maternités et Dispensaires du Congo* (AMDC) (Lyons 1994:371). With regard to sanitary-medico infrastructure, Kisangani and Bobb (2010) mentions that in the year before independence, each of the 135 territories in the then Belgian Congo, with 50,000 to 150,000 inhabitants, had a rural medico-surgical section, a maternity ward, and a prenatal and infant welfare advice centre. Each medico-surgical centre was also served by two Western doctors, one of whom was responsible for visiting rural dispensaries that were scattered across each territory (Kisangani and Bobb 2010:214). As previously mentioned in sub-section 4.2.1 the best health services were located in Leopoldville. This infrastructure was not further developed after independence because of the civil war that occurred in the DRC at independence.

Thus, in the early 1960s, the Central Government of the DRC was also confronted with the problems of inadequate state presence within the territory. The state was assisted by small Portuguese and Greek traders who held the trade of rare commodities and services in the cities of the provinces, as well as in rural areas that were cut off from the outside world. Therefore, state presence in the peripheries was not ideal, but one cannot say that the people in the restive provinces were completely neglected. Moreover, the mining companies that were established in the peripheries, as already mentioned in sub-section 4.2.2.2, catered for the social needs of workers.

The fact that the provincial government was elected by the provincial Assembly (Article 162) and which also elected the provincial president would reinforce the politico-administrative

'independence' of the provinces towards the central authorities. Due to the lack of human and logistical means, including the exodus of several Belgian administrators and technicians, the armed forces, the police and the services of safety of the State were too weak at the time of independence to exercise control over the whole territory and to preserve its unity.

Administratively, higher posts in the army and police were held by whites. Although there were many indigenous members in the 'Force Publique', there were no indigenous commissioned officers. At independence in 1960, the Belgian commander of the Force Publique (replaced by the Congolese National Army after independence), General Émile Janssens, declared on July 5, 1960 at a meeting with members of the Force Publique: 'After independence = before independence' (Ebenga and N'Landu 2005:65). This statement caused great unhappiness among the members of the military and led to a mutiny, violence and rapid Africanization of the Force Publique's officer corps. The mutiny spread from Leopoldville to the other main cities of the DRC and was a trigger of the DRC's post-independence crises. According to Igbo Natufe (2011), the mutiny was part of the expectations of independence as the mutineers perceived independence to mean an end of Belgian involvement in all aspects of governance, including the armed forces (Natufe 2001: 241).

Moreover, Ebenga and N'Landu (2005) argue that the 'Congolization of the Army' faced a lack of skills at officer and command levels, with Janssens' successor having been promoted from the rank of Sergeant-Major to commander. Officer ranks were distributed to all non-commissioned officers above the rank of sergeant. These men were instructed to 'take their units in hand' (Ebenga and N'Landu 2005:65).

These practical realities could explain the inability of the Congolese National Army (ANC) as instrument of the Central Government to discourage attempts to compromise the territorial unity at the critical time of independence and when necessary to quell such attempts. A state's primary goal is to protect its territory and population against both external and internal threats. Thus, it is necessary for a state to possess military capabilities that enable it to fight not only external challenges but also internal uprisings within its territory (Dos Santos 2007:10). Kisangani and Ndikumana (2003) point out that Tshombe, for example, argued that he needed to restore order to prevent the political chaos in the Central Government from disrupting Katanga's economic and administrative system (Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:6). In fact, Tshombe worked closely with Belgian business interests in Katanga that could help him to attempt to do that.

The situation on the ground is clear. Even the control of local institutions by the Central Government was more theoretical than practical. Most officers of the territorial administration were originating from the province where they served as public servants. This could give a way to the provincial leaders for organizing secession and setting up military forces unbeknownst to

the Central Government. However, a major weakness of the restive provinces is the internal ethnic division that will be discussed in the section regarding the causes of the failure of attempted secessions. Some influential ethnic groups within Katanga and South Kasai Provinces in particular did not share the project of secessionism. Their strong point was that the support the secessionist received from Belgium was dictated by economic interests in the regions given their exceptional mining resources.

The analysis of the administrative relations was important for determining what may be the causes of the secessionist sentiment in terms of the ethnic relations.

4.3.5 Ethnic and cultural relations

The problem of identity in the DRC at independence receives attention in this sub-section. It explores the extent to which cultural divisions are problematic in terms of a national identity. Thus, to what extent did the various ethnic groups, as discussed above and in Chapter 3, identify with the 'nation' instead of with tribal and/or regional identities?

Historically, throughout the territory of the DRC, most ethnic groups were isolated from one another by the thick forests that engulf the country. As discussed in chapter 3, ethnicity was exploited by the colonial powers and as a result the various ethnic groups were not prepared to live together as a nation.

Some scholars and African politicians regard ethnicity as a recent phenomenon and assumed that at the time of independence, the 'recently formed' ethnic identities were still malleable and would prove susceptible to an easy transformation into a national identity (Vail 1989:4). Leroy Vail (1989) mentions that through processes of political mobilization associated with 'nation-building', the various ethnicities could be coopted into the national political establishment (Vail 1989:4).

At the time of independence, most of the Congolese were more attached to their rural communities and by extension to their home provinces than to the state. As already suggested in chapter 3 parliamentary elections held in May 1960 showed that apart from the MNC and the PNP that had a national character, the rest of the political parties were based on ethnic allegiances. Thus, awareness of belonging to a nation comprising all of the people of the DRC sharing the same fate was negligible.

It is for example argued by Hon Raila A Odinga (2007) that at the time of independence, ethnicity in the DRC was indisputably highly politicized. The politicization of ethnicity led to the formation of ethnic political parties by the various ethnic groups (for example the Bakongo and the Luba-Kasai). The emergence of regional/ethnic-based political parties was largely facilitated by the absence of a national elite that could spearhead the formation of nationalist parties on

the eve of independence. Some of these ethnic political parties had been fostered by the former colonial masters on the eve of independence and they introduced a relationship of conflict in the body politic of the DRC. 'With the advent of political independence in the 1960s, the colonial divisions found relevance in the competition of different communities for scarce resources, particularly land. Communities that had co-existed in relative peace before and even during colonialism found themselves competing for political power. Because resource allocation and distribution under the colonial administration and the post-independent governments were always lopsided, unequal and discriminatory, political power was viewed by each community as the vehicle to "prosperity"' (Odinga 2007: no page).

Some ethnic groups were ferociously antagonistic at independence. Michael Crowder (1984) argues that in the DRC, the politicization of ethnicity in the era of nationalist politics was strongly marked by the particular contours of social competition in the principal cities: Kongo versus Ngala in Leopoldville; Mongo versus Ngombe in Coquilhatville; Shi versus Kusu in Bukavu; Lulua versus Luba/Kasai in Luluabourg; Kasaian versus 'authentic' Katangan in Elisabethville (Crowder 1984:710). There are likewise always grievances between the Hema and Lendu of the Oriental Province as well as the Banyarwanda and the largest part of ethnic groups from Kivu.

Competition among these various ethnic groups was important. In the northwest and in the city of Coquilhatville (now Mbandaka), according to David N. Gibbs (1991), the Bangala group and their allies of the Equateur Province for example lacked important economic assets but were disproportionately represented in the colonial forces and sought to secure their share of power in the new institutions (Gibbs 1991:88).

With reference to the restive peripheries, Katanga and Kasai Province in particular, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch (1992) states that 'tribalism' became a social and political fact. It was entrenched in the minds of the people by the pre-colonial and colonial heritage and through the state apparatus. Both encouraged it and protracted its existence, but it would be an oversimplification to explain the phenomenon as mere ethnic or linguistic differences. On the one hand, groups may speak different languages, yet coexist in harmony, while, on the other, communities with a common culture may fiercely claim autonomy from one other. For example, the Luba and the Lulua (Kasai Province), shared a common origin and language but reacted differently to colonization. They strongly affirmed their separation, 'which is in fact of quite recent origin' (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1992:103).

In the manner in which the ethnic groups spread over the country and the various language groups communicated with one another at the time of independence, there was insufficient cultural commonality between the centre and the peripheries. There was insufficient intermingling among the various ethnic populations from different parts of the country. For

example, Leopoldville attracted people from the hinterland as domestic workers. Elisabethville and its hinterland hosted Lubas from Kasai (even Rwandans) to supplement the shortage of labour force in the mines. In addition, the colonial administration used relegation to punish the instigators of revolt against the colonial system. Thus, individuals from a community were relegated to another environment more remote and culturally different.

Stewart (2012) argues that under colonial rule the intermingling of the DRC's ethnic groups accelerated in the cities with the influx into the cities of members from most ethnic groups. In this regard, the anthropologist Colin Turnbull (1962) once wrote – in a passage that was perhaps overly pessimistic – that in the city an African 'quickly discovers that here he is no longer a member of a family, even of a tribe; that his neighbour is not bound by the same beliefs that bind him, and so cannot be relied on to behave as a reasonable man. The only sensible and safe thing to do is to distrust one's neighbour, to think for oneself alone, to have no consideration for others' (Turnbull 1962:125, quoted by Stewart 2012:228).

However, Stewart (2012) is of the opinion that the breaking of old bonds presented opportunities for new ones to be forged. One such bridging of old ways to new could be found in the adoption of Lingala as a lingua franca. Lingala is a pidgin language that had evolved among traders and the rivers largely because it bore little ethnic or cultural baggage. It soon spread and is widely used as a means of communication, along with the French of the colonial administrators – especially in Leopoldville. Nearly all of Leopoldville's musicians adopted Lingala for their compositions, for example in soukous music. As records sold outward, away from the capital, they helped to spread the language to rural areas, thus nurturing a growing sense of a broader Congolese nationhood. But it would take more than shared language and music to make a country (Stewart 2012:228), let alone a state.

Even if some 700 home languages are spoken, the linguistic diversity is also bridged by the use of French as official language to communicate with the central state institutions - but it is seen as the language of the 'évolués'. French was introduced by the Belgian colonial administration in the late 19th century. An ordinary uneducated citizen communicates verbally in his home language as long as the representative of the state understands this language. Otherwise he gets help from an interpreter. The indigenous languages Kikongo, Tshiluba, Swahili and Lingala played a similar role. Kikongo is spoken in the Province of Leopoldville. Tshiluba is the language spoken in Kasai, whereas Swahili is spoken in Katanga, Oriental and Kivu Provinces. But the Oriental Province also shares Lingala with neighbouring Equateur Province.

Ethnic identity among the Congolese ethnic groups was without a doubt mobilised by political competition. For example, although sharing a common culture, the problematic ethnic relations between the Luba of Kasai and the Luba of Katanga that intensified in 1960 could be traced back to 1957 when the Belgian government organized the first municipal elections in the DRC.

At that time, Katangans did not have any political party. As a result the Luba of Kasai viewed as strangers by natives of the Katanga Province won the election in Katanga. Bogumil Jewsiewicki (2007) argues that one of the conceptions of ethnicity is the notion of 'a necessary solidarity and an inevitable specificity which link together the descendants of a common ancestor' (Jewsiewicki 2007:325). Emphasis on the historical competition between communities, a competition which selectively reinforces their identifying traits, thereby seemingly transforming social characteristics into hereditary biological law, is another conception of ethnicity (Jewsiewicki 2007:325). Therefore it is not surprising that with regard to the ethnic roots of members of the Central Government and their provinces of origin, the ethnic groups or provinces that have not been represented in the Central Government in Leopoldville seemed to have resentments. Ethnicity and nationalism are extremely complex phenomena. It is in the end about personal interests and survival. If ethnicity is the only way through which you can realize yourself, ethnicity would be nurtured (this could be for a variety of reasons for example language – if you can speak only your own language and no French you will not identify with what French can do for you), but if it has no benefits, ethnicity can be denied. However it also appeared that there are instances where identity in itself becomes an interest. That is the self is derived from an ethnic identity and by denying the ethnic identity is to deny self-existence. All of these facets of ethnicity came into play in the political dynamics of the DRC at independence.

This is precisely the situation with the leaders of the secessionist provinces. Kasa-Vubu as Head of State supported the unity of the DRC although he was a supporter of provincial autonomy. Unity can sometimes best be achieved by accommodating diverse interests through devolution. Moise Tshombe, another federalist, was in favour of secessionism, one of the reasons was because he was not represented in the Central Government.

In summary, at independence, the transport and telecommunications infrastructure of the DRC to connect the centre and the peripheries was a legacy of colonization. This connection was problematic because the first objective of the establishment of this infrastructure was the export of natural resources instead of linking Leopoldville and the provinces. Moreover, the identification with the nation depended on the participation in power at the central institutions. For example, main secessionist leaders Moise Tshombe and Albert Kalonji, including Godefroid Munongo and Joseph Ngalula their respective close comrades, were frustrated by not being appointed to important posts in the Central Government. Given the significant participation of the rich Katanga and South Kasai in the national budget, they found in their exclusion from the Central Government the perfect justification to consolidate their secessionist long planned projects with the support of Belgium. Due to his uncompromising attitude and stubbornness to institute what he regarded as a strong Central Government, Lumumba could not foresee the impact of the non-participation of Tshombe and Kalonji in the coalition government on the newly independent DRC's territorial unity. There was little that

kept everything together and it was understandable that some regions would regard the DRC as unmanageable and that secession would constitute attempts at making the administration more manageable and economically viable.

The following section deals with the attempts at secession during the early years of the independent DRC.

4.4 SECESSIONISM IN THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT DRC

The focus in this section is on the attempts at secession in the early history of the independent DRC. It provides an historical overview of the creation of the 'new' states within the territory of the DRC by comparing the three attempts at secession. In this regard, the focus is on the external interests and support, leaders, failure, internal divisions and separatist movements. Lastly, it discusses the legality of secessionism in the context of the DRC in the 1960s.

As mentioned in chapter I (see 1.4 - key concepts), for purposes of this research the concept of secessionism is defined as the actions following from a belief or state of mind of a group under the influence of a leader, or leaders to create a new state in a territory that is part of a larger sovereign state.

4.4.1 External interests and support

The attention in this sub-section is paid to the geostrategic interests of both superpowers in the DRC at the time of independence and to the external support granted to the peripheries involved in secessionism, as well as finally to the centre.

4.4.1.1 Geostrategic interests in the DRC

This sub-section looks at the involvement of the USA and the USSR in the Congo crisis in the 1960s. The already delicate and weak centre-periphery relations should not be seen in isolation of the geostrategic interests of the territory. These interests would be exploited by the secessionists, but at the same time international interests would attempt to exploit weaknesses in the centre-periphery relations. As Stalin is reported to have said, 'you cannot export a revolution unless the people want it.'

At the time of the Cold War, the USA and the USSR were competing in order to spread their ideology around the world and particularly in the newly independent Africa. One of the reasons why Christophe Gbenye and other followers of Lumumba created a breakaway communist

state on September 7, 1964, was because in their opinion the DRC had fallen into the hands of imperialists.

The USA was, however, determined to prevent the spread of Communist ideology in Africa. Amy Claire Thompson (2013) argues that many in the West believed that moving Africans towards the realm of potential freedom was highly dangerous, because it would lead to Communist tendencies. Poverty was regarded as a breeding-ground for potential communists. Oddly the USSR does not seem to have been concerned either way. In the 1950s, there were only two Communist Parties active in Africa, in South Africa and in Egypt, and Communist ideology itself was not common among African independence leaders. Wherever the USA and other western states saw the potential for collaboration or if a leader exhibited leftist leanings and could be manipulated, they were more likely to become involved. The coming of independence to the DRC in 1960, however, was of particular concern to the USA. It was thought by many in the West that Patrice Lumumba was dangerous, crazy and probably a Communist. It was also well-known that the DRC had rich uranium ore to be mined, and it was also geo-strategically important given its size and number of borders. Concern grew that, without intervention, there would be a significant chance of the DRC being used as a base for subversive communist activity in neighbouring states. The West also had significant interests in the far south of Katanga Province, because of the mining and mineral wealth. (Katanga borders the Zambian copper belt). The DRC was thus considered to be a sitting duck for Communist penetration (Thompson 2013: no page).

Apart from the internal dissension between politicians on the organization of the political life in the DRC, the ideological stakes in the international environment are an important factor that led to the creation of the People's Republic of the Congo in 1964. Stephen R. Weissman (2014) argues that the root of the CIA's intervention in the DRC was an overhyped analysis of the communist threat. Experts on the DRC have long been skeptical of the notion that had Lumumba stayed in power, his government would have fallen under the sway of the Soviet Union or China. At the time, even some US officials had doubts. In 1962, shortly after he retired as director of the CIA, Dulles admitted, 'I think that we overrated the Soviet danger, let's say, in the Congo' (Weissman 2014: no page). The Kennedy administration's initial policy paper, soon modified, advocated a broad-based government of 'all principal political elements in the Congo,' to be followed by the release of Lumumba (Weissman 2014: no page).

In his thesis, Erik M. Davis (2013) mentions that from a geostrategic perspective, the DRC was important to the USA for its potential influence on its neighbours - Cameroon, Gabon, the Central African Republic, and Sudan. US officials were worried that if a pro-Communist government came to power, it could set the tone for other African nations to follow and, assist the Soviet Union in spreading Communist ideology. An unfriendly government in Leopoldville

could quickly influence the heart of Africa in a negative manner for the USA. An unfriendly government in Leopoldville that was controlled by communists could be exploited by the Soviets to spread their influence into the DRC's neighbours thus creating a Soviet sphere of influence in central Africa (Davis 2013:.51-52).

A look at the geostrategic interests in the DRC, as well as the positioning of the DRC in the East-West cleavage, was set to analyze the external support granted to the restive peripheries.

4.4.1.2 External supports to the restive peripheries

The attempted secessions would have been impossible without external support. Each secessionist movement had insufficient resources to succeed. Success subsequently depended on the weakness of the centre and on external support. Thus this sub-section focuses on the role played by other states in secessionism within the territory of the DRC.

The Central Government of the DRC was unable to be represented throughout the huge territory by reliable public servants who would oppose all threats to the territorial integrity of the state. What would have prompted secessionism is the balance of power that was in favour of the breakaway states in view of the support they received from other states. Before proclaiming the independence of the provinces, secessionist leaders certainly assessed the chance to achieve their projects by military means. At that time, the Congolese National Army was a deterrent and the Central Government was unable to keep its peripheries together. The weakness of the national security forces gave rise to the desire for secession in the peripheries. As a consequence, with purposes of right-sizing the DRC by strengthening the centre, Lumumba requested military aid from the Soviet Union after the UN was reluctant to intervene and particularly in the attempt at secession of Katanga.

In terms of right-sizing the state Lustick (2011) mentions that in the event of a violent breakaway it can only succeed if the breakaway state has more military power than the centre. The fact is that the centre in the DRC was too weak to prevent breakaways and it could only quell the situation with the assistance of the international community. However, the breakaway states did not in the long run have sufficient power to be successful either.

Belgium's role in helping Katanga to secede and taking additional measures to sustain the breakaway state to develop was beyond dispute, according to Olivier Boehme (2005). Belgium did not want its relationship with the newly independent nation to end - not only for sentimental reasons but economic considerations as well. Fresh from breaking away, Katanga asked Belgium for help and Prime Minister Gaston Eyskens' government obliged, and was willing to recognize Katanga's *de facto* independence. In July 1960, the Belgian government created the Mission Technique Belge (Mistebel), an organization that would supply assistance

to the breakaway province. Belgian policymakers, however, were not unanimous in the government's decision to accommodate the breakaway state (Boehme 2005: no page, quoted by Bamfo 2012:39).

Because of the international involvement in Katanga's secessionist movement due to the extraordinary mineral wealth of Katanga, the case of the creation of the State of Katanga is the one that produced a significant body of literature among scholars. Alexis Heraclides (1991) in his study on 'The Self-Determination of Minorities in International Politics' demonstrates that several states worldwide (for example: USA, Belgium, England and France) provided support to the attempted secession in Katanga and had relations with the State of Katanga (Heraclides 1991: no page). Foreign powers exploited weaknesses in the centre's inability to exercise proper control over the territory of the DRC. Belgium provided financial and military support. According to Abi-Saab (1978), the Belgian intervention also shifted the military balance of power in favour of Katanga. While Belgian forces in other parts of the Congo were instructed to 'intervene when Belgian lives are threatened' in Katanga they were instructed to occupy 'all centres of importance' (Abi-Saab 1978:41). Belgian troops in Katanga rounded up and neutralized the *Force Publique* (ANC), attacked troops loyal to the Central Government in their barracks and trained the Katangese gendarmeries (Oxford 2011:72). In addition, in terms of diplomacy, South African History Online (SAHO) (2014) mentions that Tshombe also received support from Western leaders including then US Vice-President Richard Nixon, who praised Tshombe as a pro-Western advocate and staunch anti-Communist Christian. However, after Tshombe's soldiers brutally executed the DRC's first Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, in January 1961, the UN and the USA ended their support for Katanga's secession from the DRC (SAHO 2014: no page).

In Claude Kangudie's (2012) report on Albert Kalonji's account of the events pertaining to the secessionist attempt in South Kasai, it is stated that Kalonji himself, revealed that the Belgians were behind the leaders of this new entity. All this was in the logic of the war led against Lumumba. It was necessary to deprive the Central Government of its cash flow. Thus MIBA put at the disposal of the new authorities its logistics and infrastructure. Kalonji was advised by Belgians, a Mr Cravatte of the MIBA and Dr. Letard, both Belgians he had known in Tshikapa. Given the magnitude of the task, he wondered how to govern the new 'state'. His Belgian advisers told him he had to do like in Katanga, to follow the example of Tshombe. MIBA promised to pay taxes to the State of Kasai that it owed to the Central Government. But as it had already paid the Central Government the first six months of the year, it promised to pay taxes in the second half. MIBA also placed at the disposal of the government (Autonomous Mining Republic of South Kasai) a number of villas reserved for its executive and administrative buildings for the operation of new institutions (my translation) (Kangudie 2012: no page). In this respect, the attempt at secession by South Kasai appears to have been insufficiently planned.

This creates the idea that, while the revolt was encouraged by the Belgian colonists, the contagion of secessionism in neighbouring Katanga on South Kasai is important because of various similarities. Their economic weight in the DRC and the demand for provincial autonomy expressed earlier by their local leaders are of particular importance in this regard.

With regard to the People's Republic of the Congo, the *Armée Populaire de Libération* commanded by General Nicholas Olenga received military assistance from the United Arab Republic (UAR), Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, Congo-Brazzaville, Burundi and Sudan as prominent examples among African states. According to Robert Anthony Waters (2009), the rebels captured Stanleyville on August 4, 1964. Five US Embassy staff, including the consul and CIA agents, were captured and held prisoner for 111 days²⁵. For a few months they controlled almost two-thirds of the Congolese territory. Gbenye issued standing orders for the execution of hostages if attacked. In April 24, 1965, Che Guevara arrived with a contingent of approximately 120 Cuban troops (Waters 2009: xxx). The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) supported the People's Republic of the Congo through the International Committee for Aid to Algeria and the Congo (Leopoldville). According to Bruce D. Larkin (1973), arms and supplies were shipped to Christophe Gbenye's forces around Stanleyville in December 1964 by China and the Soviet Union (Larkin 1973:57-58). The Cold War was more obvious during this phase of the DRC crisis; the latter was becoming an arena of global ideological confrontation.

The next sub-sections provide information on the attempts at secession which are a major aspect of conflict between Leopoldville and the restive peripheries.

4.4.2 Threats to the territorial unity of the DRC (1960-1965)

The events that followed independence are referred to in the literature as the Congo Crises. Thompson (2013) warns that the crisis in the DRC in the early 1960s is something which is very difficult to get a real understanding of, mostly because of the contradictions in much of the literature, and the variety of concurrent governments all vying for power and international recognition (Thompson 2013: no page).

A few days after independence of the DRC, the Central Government faced several threats against its territory. Those actions affected the relations between the centre and the restive peripheries. Attention in this sub-section is paid to the creation of the breakaway states that downsized the territory of the DRC during the First Republic.

²⁵ More than 1,000 foreign hostage

4.4.2.1 State of Katanga (July 11, 1960- January 14, 1963)

The greatest challenge and the immediate post-independence crisis faced by the DRC is the declaration of independence of Katanga Province by Moise Tshombe. Samuel Malonga (2013) describes the event as follows:

In order to address to his nation and the world, he needs the radio. The scene takes place in Elisabethville in the premises of College Radio studio founded in 1947 by father Dethier, science teacher at College of St. Francis de Sales. On Monday, July 11, 1960 at 22:30 local time, Moise Tshombe is on air. At the microphone, but he solemnly proclaim unilateral independence of the Copper province *de facto* cease to be a Congolese territorial entity. The state of Katanga was born. Self-proclaimed president, he is cheered by a jubilant crowd fully supporting his cause then carried in triumph by his supporters. Tshombe was appointed Head of State of Katanga by the National Assembly and the Grand Council meeting in congress. After the promulgation of the constitution of Katanga in August 5, 1960, the elected provincial government on June 16, 1960 became the Katangan government. It was expanded in October with the appointment of state secretaries. The independent Katanga has all institutions and all the attributes of a sovereign state: constitution, presidential guard, government, national assembly, currency: Katangan franc; motto: Strength, hope and peace in prosperity; National Anthem: The Katanga; Gazette: Katangan Monitor; coat of arms and flag. The army was called Katanga Gendarmerie; Air Force called Katangan Air Force; national airline is called Air Katanga. Public order is guaranteed by the Katanga National Police (my translation) (Malonga 2013: no page).

The timing of secession was important – a mere 11 days after independence – this could strengthen arguments that personalities played a role and that the constitution did not adequately address the interests of the provinces and the whole of the population. The literature also suggests that internal unhappiness and weaknesses were exploited by international powers, both from the West and the Soviet Union in order to further their strategic political and economic interests particularly within a Cold War context. Gibbs (1991) points out that the Belgians tried to arrange other regional secessions on the model of Katanga throughout the Congo (Equateur and Leopoldville Provinces under the leadership of Jean Bolikango and Joseph Kasa-Vubu respectively). Stephen Weissman (1974) writes that Belgian agents had instruction to ‘encourage any rallying of other provinces of the Congo to Katanga ... of course with discretion’ (Weissman 1974:62, quoted by Gibbs 1991:88). The Belgians thus proceeded to try to dismember the Congo (Gibbs 1991:88). The reason is that, as explained in section 4.3.3, this old colonial power was not agreeing to let the DRC go, despite its political independence. Its mineral resources were too important. The DRC was acquired by Belgium basically for its wealth despite the opposition of some of its citizen to colonization.

Meantime, the assassination of Lumumba²⁶ on January 17, 1961 in Katanga aggravated the disintegration of the DRC during the early years of independence.

(a) Ethnic support

Ethnicity in Katanga was ambivalent with regard to secessionism. A separate movement developed among the Katanga Baluba named BALUBAKAT which was led by Jason Sendwe and was pro-Central Government in Leopoldville. On the other hand, as argued by Joshua B. Forrest (2004), the Lunda elites succeeded in obtaining the support of ethnic minorities, including especially the Tshokwe and Bayeke, as well as the Ndembu, Luena, Basonge, Bena Marungu, Minungu, and others. This alliance building helped to strengthen Katanga's secessionist movement through the 1960-1963 periods, during which time the region lay virtually outside the political rubric of the Congolese nation-state. A broad spectrum of chiefs from different parts of Katanga were included in the separatist Katanga government and provided with substantial local powers. Ten chiefs from different ethnic origins initially became ministers of the state of Katanga, and this group was broadened in August 1960 to include twenty chiefs grouped into a grand council. Such incorporative efforts led one observer to comment that the Lunda leader of Katanga's secession, Moise Tshombe, had 'transcended ethnic affiliation' (Forrest 2004:108). Persistent, though only partially successful, efforts were also made to create ties with potential allies outside Katanga, including Salampasu chiefs in Kasai and Lunda groups in Angola and in the former Northern Rhodesia (Forrest 2004:108).

(b) Causes of failure

There are three main causes of the failure of the attempt at secession of Katanga. First, internally from Katanga, while the attempt at secession of Katanga was in progress, the secessionist government of the State of Katanga faced its own opposition. The Katanga attempt at secession, with its centre of gravity in the South where the Lunda and the Bayeke are concentrated, rapidly produced an equal and opposed secession among the Baluba of Katanga. Thus, the separate movement among the Baluba of Katanga weakened the state of Katanga. According to CongoForum (2008), in January 1961, Katanga faced a secession crisis of its own when BALUBAKAT leaders declared independence from Katanga. Throughout the period of

²⁶ According to Share news (2012), on January 21, 2011, while interviewing Adam Hochschild, author of *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, on the popular American radio program *Democracy Now*, host Amy Goodman commented: 'Lumumba's pan-Africanism and his vision of a united Congo gained him many enemies. Both Belgium and the USA actively sought to have him killed. The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) ordered his assassination but could not complete the job. Instead, the USA and Belgium covertly funnelled cash and aid to rival politicians who seized power and arrested Lumumba (Share news 2012: no page).

secession, Katangan forces were never able to completely control the province (CongoForum 2008: no page).

Second, the Central Government refused to recognize this act of self-determination and struggled for three years to reintegrate the Katanga Province into the DRC.

Third, internationally, Belgium never recognized the independence of Katanga and Tshombe failed to gain the recognition of any other state for the new State of Katanga. According to Ndaywel è Ziem and Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi (2009), this ambiguous position sprang from a statement in the Belgian Senate, made by Paul Henry Spaak, on January 23rd, 1963:

In Congo, we were in a situation which held at the same time tragedy and light comedy. We supported both the Katanga and the rest of Congo. We granted our technical aid to both governments (Département de la Défense Nationale 1978:21, quoted by Ndaywel è Ziem and Mudimbe-Boyi 2009:181).

Additionally, Rik Coolsaet (2002) states that this 'policy of double game' implicated that it is possible to choose, if necessary, the card of secession of Katanga just in case the international circumstances would allow it, or if the developments in Leopoldville conflicted excessively with Belgian interests. The murder of Lumumba in mid-January in 1961 put an end to the possibility of a Lumumbist government which Belgium feared (Coolsaet 2002:161). In this regard, it was considered impossible, for Belgium, to support a completely independent Katanga. But it would have been possible if Katanga followed its autonomy in the context of a confederation.

The option of recognizing the State of Katanga disappeared definitely after UN troops entered Katanga following the Security Council Resolution 169 of November 24, 1961 as mentioned in sub-section 4.5. Redie Bereketeab (2015) argues that throughout 1961-1962, Tshombe was able to maintain the independence of Katanga. In December 1962 the UN launched Operation Grand Slam on Katanga's political and military infrastructure. This was a decisive attack, and by January 1963 Elisabethville was under full UN control. This ended the secession of Katanga. However, the operation and negotiations would not have succeeded if there had been strong local alliances and organizations, and a committed political will among leaders (Bereketeab 2015:177).

Though reluctant in the beginning of the crisis, the UN finally intervened at the request of the Central Government of the DRC. For a scholar such as Davis (2013), the UN intervention is to be viewed in the perspective of US policy towards the DRC between 1960 and 1965. The USA focused on installing a friendly regime in the DRC in order to protect its national security interests. Weissman (1974) contends that it was possible in the mid-1960s to consider the UN as a vehicle for American policy (Weissman 1974:60, quoted by Davis 2013:73). He supports this position with an analysis of the UN Secretariat. For example the Secretary-General of the UN, Dag Hammarskjöld's closest advisers were American. Additionally, American, British or French

diplomats filled 49 out of 102 senior positions in the Secretariat. It is presumed that the UN, while not always completely aligned with US policies and interests, acted against Katanga only because the US allowed it to do so (Davis 2013:73). This decision had implications for the right to secede. After the UN took control over Katanga Province, Tshombe surrendered and accepted Katanga to be part of the DRC.

4.4.2.2 Autonomous Mining Republic of South Kasai²⁷ (August 8, 1960- October 5, 1962)

The unilateral declaration of autonomy by Katanga was soon followed by the second instance of secession, namely the announcement of independence of South Kasai.

According to the Federation of the Free States of Africa (FFSA) (2014), the Republic of Great Kasai was the product of secession during the early 1960s. Kasai sought independence in similar circumstances as neighbouring Katanga during the political turmoil arising from the decolonization of Belgian Congo. Ethnic conflicts and political tensions around the diamond areas of Kasai between leaders of the Central Government and local leaders plagued the diamond-rich region (FFSA 2014: no page).

On June 14, 1960, days before Belgian Congo was to become independent, Kasai declared its independence and proclaimed the Federal State of South Kasai. Less than two months later on August 8, 1960, it was followed by the autonomous Mining State of South Kasai with its capital at Bakwanga (present-day Mbuji-Mayi). Albert Kalonji was named President of South Kasai and Joseph Ngalula was appointed head of government (FFSA 2014: no page). Between June 14 and August 8, 1960, following the violence directed against the Luba by the Lulua in Luluabourg on October 11, 1959, the Luba people were moving from there to Bakwanga their homeland.

Although the attempt at secession of South Kasai was dictated visibly by economic considerations as in the case of Katanga, Albert Kalonji claimed that the secession was largely sparked by the persecution of the Luba people in the rest of the DRC. However, Nugent (2004) argues that the South Kasai government was supported by FORMINIÈRE (Now MIBA), another Belgian mining company, which received concessions from the new state in return for financial support (Nugent 2004:86). Despite the justification given by the leaders of South Kasai, this shows that the true rationale for the proclamation of independence of South Kasai is related to the wealth of its resources and the belief that it could use its wealth for the development of the region.

²⁷ Also named Republic of Great Kasai

(a) Ethnic conflict

Kalonji had the support of the Luba chiefs, whose people had been attacked by the *Lulua*. The attempt to secede was effective in the Baluba area.

With regard to the Lulua-Luba conflict as one of the factors of secession, Kisangani and Ndikumana (2003) mention that the trigger factor of the Kasai attempt at secession occurred in 1957 after the Baluba won the December 1957 municipal elections in Luluabourg. In 1959, the Lulua regrouped and won the legislative elections, thus securing the majority of the seats in the provincial Parliament. The dominance of the Baluba in all clerical jobs in a Lulua land was also another motivation for conflict. The first clash between the Lulua and the Luba occurred in late 1959 in which dozens of Baluba were massacred in a suburb of Luluabourg. The government sent an investigation team to the area that held a conference with customary chiefs at Lake Mukamba on January 11, 1960. The conference suggested the displacement of more than 100,000 Baluba from the area of Southern Kasai to solve the issue of land in the Lulua region. The Luba initially refused to leave but they eventually were forced to move. This created severe social tensions, setting the stage for the secession of South Kasai (Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:9). The ethnic conflict served as a pretext to Albert Kalonji for proclaiming unilaterally the independence of South Kasai. The motivation for the attempt at secession of South Kasai seemed to be more complex than that of Katanga. There were internal conflicts between Kasaians and, as mentioned earlier, the non participation of the MNC-Kalonji in the Central Government, coupled with the desire to enjoy exclusively the income from the mineral resources for the well-being of the local population.

(b) Causes of failure

South Kasai intended to expand its territory to other ethnic groups, but met resistance mainly among the Lulua area. Internally, Kalonji faced the ethnic group Lulua as opposition to his project to build a state of Great Kasai. Gondola (2014) mentions that although backed by the Belgians and financed by the FORMINIÈRE diamond company (another subsidiary of the Société Générale), Kalonji's 'mining state' was short-lived. Before Kalonji could recruit enough mercenaries to strengthen his army, Lumumba ordered Congolese troops to occupy Luluabourg (now Kananga) and Bakwanga. On August 28, 1962 overwhelmed by the Congolese army, Kasai's soldiers retreated without regaining control of the major cities (Gondola 2002:123). According to Mwakikajile (2014), after four months of fighting, the province was retaken by the Congolese army and brought under control of the central Government. The secession was ended with the arrest of Kalonji on December 31, 1961. On September 7, 1962, he escaped from prison and attempted to regain the province. He set up a new government but it was dissolved less than a month later (Mwakikajile 2014:34).

4.4.2.3 People's Republic of the Congo (September 5, 1964- January 14, 1965)

The third instance of an attempt at secession is the establishment in September 1964 of the *République Populaire du Congo* (People's Republic of the Congo) in Oriental Province and Kivu by Christophe Gbenye – long time follower of Lumumba - with its capital city at Stanleyville (now Kisangani). He proclaimed himself the president of the People's Republic of the Congo.

Jules Gérard-Libois and Jean Van Lierde (1964) wrote:

By decree of September 5, 1964 was established the People's Republic of the Congo from which Christophe Gbenye was both the president and the chief of the Government. The Government was formed immediately but held its first meeting on September 25. Stanleyville was declared capital of the Republic and Christophe Gbenye decided to restore the six provinces within the boundaries of June 30, 1960 (my translation) (Gérard-Libois and Van Lierde 1964:267).

Gbenye called his forces the Armée Populaire de Libération (People's Liberation Army) – APL.

The timing of this event is different – four years after independence. Contrary to the establishment of the new 'states' in the provinces of Katanga and South Kasai, the creation of a breakaway state in Oriental Province, including Kivu, was dictated by an ideological orientation that a number of lumumbist leaders wanted to give to the DRC. Apart from the incontestable orientation of the DRC towards the West, one can refer to the internal political discontent as mentioned further in sub-section 4.4.4. The choice of ideology to govern the DRC was not part of the agenda of the political Round Table held in January 1960 in Brussels. Although Lumumba did not openly express in favour of communism, his followers however did it after his death through their actions.

Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao and Cheng-Yi Lin (2009) argue that the Cold War was a confrontation of ideology, namely between capitalism and communism, which also differentiated the basic social-economic systems (Hsiao and Lin 2009:41). According to Toyin Falola and Emmanuel M. Mbah (2014), the Cold War also caused bitter ideological divisions on the African continent. This manifested in the confusion among African leaders, workers, youth and students' organization as to which ideology to adopt in the political and economic management of states and unions. While a few African states – Kenya, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Liberia – resisted communism, others went for socialism. The United States did not control the nonsocialist states as it did in Asia (Falola and Mbah 2014:111-112). Before 1945, according to Tukumba Lumumba-Kasongo (1999), the economic history between Africa and the USA was characterized by a lack of strong linkages between them. However, with the expansion of the world economy, decolonization, and the expansion of communist ideology the USA went into the action in Africa (Lumumba-Kasongo 1999:40).

Ethnic background was not really at the origin of the creation of the People's Republic of the Congo that affected the Oriental and Kivu Provinces, but rather political issues. The ruling team of this movement constituted Congolese politicians united by the communist ideology and not by their ethnic affiliation. Prominent figures belonged to different ethnic groups, such as General Nicholas Olenga, (a member of the Tetela ethnic group and the Commander-in-chief of the *Armée Nationale de Libération*); Thomas Kanza, (a member of the Bakongo ethnic group and the Foreign minister); A member of the Luba from Katanga by his father and Lunda ethnic group by his mother, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, the Secretary General for Social Affairs, Youth and Sports was also half Luba and half Lunda. They also came from different provinces in the DRC, namely Kasai, Leopoldville (nowadays in the Bas-Congo) and Katanga respectively. The leadership of the People's Republic of the Congo was heterogeneous ethnically. They followed Lumumba in their political beliefs which succeeded in overcoming feelings of ethnic regional interests.

The People's Republic of the Congo was also a short-lived breakaway state. According to Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002), with military and financial support from the USA, Tshombe used his gendarmes and mercenaries to defeat the *Comité National de Libération* government and the *Armée Nationale de Libération*. However, the gendarmes and the mercenaries would not have succeeded without external support. A more direct intervention of metropolitan troops was deemed necessary to break the back of the insurrection in the east, by providing better support to the mercenaries and Belgian-officered government troops sent to reconquer Stanleyville. The treatment of whites and the taking of a large number of hostages prompted Western governments to intervene. On November 24, 1964, operation Red Dragon was launched, with US planes dropping Belgian paratroopers at Stanleyville and providing air cover for a column of mercenaries and élite units of the Congolese army led by Belgian Colonel Frédéric Vandewalle. This ended the People's Republic of the Congo (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002:138,273). Thus, the People's Republic of the Congo was ended by a combined Belgium and USA military intervention. The territory of the DRC was again restored.

In the next sub-section attention will be paid to the main political authorities of the Central Government and the leaders of the restive peripheries at the time of the Congo Crises in the 1960s.

4.4.3 Leaders involved in the Congolese crisis

This sub-section is devoted mainly to the personalities and skills of the leaders of the centre and of the restive peripheries. Leaders of the centre as discussed above in sub-section 4.3.2, these are President Joseph Kasa-Vubu and Prime Minister Patrice-Emery Lumumba, including Joseph Ileo, Justin-Marie Bomboko and Cyrille Adoula as well as ironically Moïse Tshombe - after the reintegration of the Katanga Province into the DRC - as Lumumba's successors at the

post of prime minister. As regards leaders from the restive peripheries, these are Moise Tshombe, Albert Kalonji and Christophe Gbenye as heads of state of State of Katanga, Mining State of South Kasai and the People's Republic of the Congo respectively.

4.4.3.1 Central authorities

Initially at the centre were the Head of state Joseph Kasa-Vubu and the Prime Minister Patrice-Emery Lumumba.

With regard to Kasa-Vubu as Head of State, Davis Snell (1960) mentions that Kasa-Vubu (1910-1969), by virtue of both elementary and secondary schooling and three years study for the Catholic priesthood, won a Belgian certificate attesting to his special status in a restricted native elite (Snell 1960:23), and became a teacher and civil servant.

As for Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba (1925-1961), Snell (1960) mentions that he had only three years of elementary school education. But, at age 35, he developed a flair for flamboyant but effective leadership (Snell 1960:23). In addition Lumumba worked full-time as a postal clerk in Stanleyville in 1944 and took evening courses with the Marist Brothers (a Catholic Religious Institute). Impressed by his qualities, his employers transferred him to a better position at the agricultural centre in Yangambi. In 1947, he was accepted at the postal academy in Leopoldville (Fabian 1996:73).

In terms of their personalities and political styles the two leaders differed. Norrie MacQueen (2014) mentions that Kasa-Vubu was relatively downbeat and reticent in his political style. Kasa-Vubu lacked the image of a dynamic strong man capable of being obeyed at the centre, as well as in the peripheries. It is obvious that with the absence of a dynamic president, the centre could not hold its peripheries. But, as a leader of a political party, he supported the idea of an ethnically homogeneous country. Patrice Lumumba was initially more positively viewed by the Belgians than older-style nationalists like Kasa-Vubu. By the time of independence, Lumumba had undergone something of a self-reinvention as a radical pan-African. With his power base in Oriental Province in the east of the country away from the national capital, his strong anti-tribalist stance was at least in part due to the fact that, unlike Kasa-Vubu, his own ethnic base was relatively weak in the national context. Many people saw Lumumba as a unifying factor and the leader of all citizens and not just those of his small ethnic group, Tetela, in Kasai. In contrast to Kasa-Vubu, Lumumba commanded considerable rhetorical skill (MacQueen 2014:38). He was a radical revolutionary and a talented public speaker. He spoke the four Congolese national languages (Lingala, Swahili, Kikongo and Tshiluba).

Kasa-Vubu's personality was seen to serve the interests of the West in contrast to Lumumba. This disqualified his rival, Lumumba, at the centre. Robert Antony Waters (2009) argues that

Kasa-Vubu's moderation and, what US officials believed, pliable and lazy personality made him a valuable US ally against the radical nationalists, secessionists, and Communists who threatened the unity of the DRC, as well as its Western political and economic orientation during the Congo crisis (Waters 2009:138). As a leader, most political scientists are of the opinion that Lumumba was a controversial personality and an enigma - alternatively viewed as 'god' and 'devil'. He had a persuasive, exciting and attractive personality. Applet-magic (2014) mentions that other politicians receiving the prime ministership as a result of obtaining a mere 25 percent plurality would perhaps have accepted that they did not have a mandate and would have worked to build consensus. But compromise and moderation were not part of Lumumba's character. He was more of a Leninist personality (Applet-magic 2014: no page). Moreover, Lumumba had an undeniable talent as a political organizer and activist.

The two men had bitterly opposed personalities which meant that they did not succeed in governing together the DRC harmoniously at the centre. The nature of the power relations between the two was to some extent responsible of constitutional crisis of the DRC at the time of independence.

Joseph Ileo (1921-1994) was born on September 15, 1921 in Leopoldville. According to Le Phare (2010), after primary school, he attended from 1954 to 1957 the Centre for Social Studies organized by the Christian unions in collaboration with Lovanium University. Journalist, editor of the monthly 'African Consciousness' Joseph Ileo is co-author with Joseph Ngalula and the young Father Albert Malula, co-author of the political document called 'Manifesto of the African conscience' mentioned in sub-section 3.3.1 (Le Phare 2010: no page). Ileo was considered a moderate pro-Belgian leader. He was in office for two periods as prime minister (September 05, 1960 – September 20, 1960 and February 09, 1961 – August 02, 1961). According to Celebrities-Galore (2015), Ileo was family-oriented and had a talent for settling disputes between people to the satisfaction of both sides. He somehow knew the middle ground (Celebrities-Galore 2015: no page). But his terms of office were too short for him to have an impact on the conflict within the DRC.

Justin-Marie Bomboko (1928-2014) succeeded Joseph Ileo as prime minister – the latter held the position for two weeks. Bomboko was born on September 22, 1928 in Boleke in the province of Equateur. He attended high school at '*Groupe scolaire de Coquilhatville*' (Mbandaka). In 1951, he graduated at the School of Political and Administrative Sciences of Lovanium-Kisantu²⁸. He was a gifted student. After graduation, he worked for three years in the colonial administration in Coquilhatville. His missionary sponsors sent him to Brussels to complete his university studies. In 1959, he became the first Congolese graduated in Political and Diplomatic Sciences at the *Université Libre de Bruxelles* (ULB) (Mopipi 2010: no page).

²⁸ Later University of Lovanium

Bomboko participated as an observer in the Round Table held from January 20 to February 20, 1960 in Brussels as President of the *Union Générale des Etudiants du Congo Belge, Rwanda-Urundi*, but also, as Secretary of the Royal Union of Congolese in Belgium. Following the parliamentary elections won by the *Mouvement National Congolais* (MNC) of Patrice-Émery Lumumba on the eve of independence, Bomboko was appointed Foreign Minister. As such he co-signed the act of the declaration of independence on behalf of the DRC. He held one of the longest political careers in the DRC. As first foreign minister of an independent DRC, he left the image of a great and a hard working diplomat. The Foreign Ministry is somehow his niche. His cabinet was composed of some bright young academics and other executives from the administration. He led the *Collège des commissaires généraux* when Colonel Mobutu neutralized the two heads of the executive in September 13, 1960 as mentioned in sub-section 5.2.1. He played an important role within the ministry of foreign affairs but as prime minister of the DRC was not in a position to prevent or address the political turmoil the DRC experienced at the time.

Cyrille Adoula (1921-1978) was prime minister from 1961 till 1964. According to Waters (2009), he came from a poor family (son of a docker of the Ngalas ethnic group) and had little formal education. He became a labour leader thanks to his intelligence and ability to work with people of disparate economic and tribal backgrounds. Adoula was known as hardworking, a nationalist, an opponent of tribalism, and a conciliator. Adoula was the first Congolese to be employed at the Central Bank of the Belgian Congo. He was also a union activist and had a thorough knowledge of the labour world. Adoula was an anti-communist and had the image of an honest public servant. He had considerable strength of character and personality and was able to keep his distance to retain his freedom of maneuver as Prime Minister (Bakajika 2004:101). He used all these skills and talents to end the persecution of lumumbists but was unsuccessful in his negotiations with Moïse Tshombe, the president of Katanga, to reintegrate his breakaway republic, and with Gizenga to end his communist-backed rebellion (Waters 2009:2).

The quick succession of a number of governments between June 30, 1960 to November 24, 1965 (including Tshombe's government) points to the fragility and instability of the centre. It is therefore to be expected that strong personalities would try to take advantage of the situation for a variety of reasons including the preference to distance themselves from an 'incompetent' centre.

4.4.3.2 Secessionist leaders

The common denominator between these leaders is that they are all founders of secessionist movements, which they led in the restive peripheries.

Moïse Tshombe (1919-1969) was educated at local mission schools and became the manager of his family's business interests. He was a teacher before becoming involved in the political life of the DRC. Ali A. Mazrui (1969) argues that Tshombe was, in personality, political adroitness and intellectual calculation, a bigger man than Lumumba ever was. In nationalistic terms, Tshombe had demonstrated a polished style of political manoeuvre and an air of sophisticated calculation. It was these skills that made it possible to mobilise secessionist sentiment. The problem with Tshombe was his political ethics. As the UN officer, Conor Cruise O'Brien put it Tshombe was 'the best politician that money can buy' (Mazrui 1969:285). This means that Tshombe lacked political ethics. Furthermore, he had mainly localized support in Katanga, which should also be considered as a factor in his failure as prime minister.

Albert Kalonji (1929 - 2015) was a businessman and an accountant. Traditionally, he was a Luba tribal chief. Heraclides (1991) presents Kalonji as a megalomaniac (Heraclides 1991:76). Thus, Kalonji styled himself as 'Chef Suprême du Peuple Muluba et Protecteur Incontesté des Tribus Associées à son sort' (Supreme Chief of the Luba ethnic group and Protector of the Associated Tribes). He ruled South Kasai as *Mulopwe* that is Emperor Albert I Kalonji. He was an opportunist. He took advantage of ethnic conflict between the Lulua and Luba to declare the secession of South Kasai and to accomplish his ambition to rule a state. Above all, according to Al J. Venter (2001), Kalonji was a 'bibulous drunk albeit an important political figure during this upheaval' (Venter 2001:194). The unwinding of the event suggests that the attempt at secession of South Kasai was done with haste and that Kalonji was not a good political organizer and strategist.

Christophe Gbenye (1927-2015) was a Belgian-trained civil servant. Moreover, he was a radical lumumbist, revolutionary and a Prague-trained Communist. According to The Spokesman-Review (1964), Gbenye appears to have been a highly volatile character whose lurid oratory often aimed at inspiring his listeners to savagery against all white men. He spoke to crowds in French, Swahili, and Lingala, and often refers to himself as 'baba' – Swahili for father (The Spokesman-Review 1964:14). The cruelty of Gbenye against whites demonstrated by taking Western hostages was a mistake that led to the attack by the Western armies and the failure of the People's Republic of the Congo as mentioned above.

From the above it can be concluded that personalities played a role. The centre lacked leaders with a unifying vision and good skills in political strategy. The peripheries that attempted secession were characterised by relatively strong, but opportunistic leadership. Thus, leadership is vital in good centre-periphery relations.

After the discussion on the three secessionist leaders' personalities and skills, for purposes of this research, the following section examines their secessionist movements.

4.4.4 Secessionist movements

The focus in this sub-section is predominantly on the circumstances of the creation of three secessionist movements as well as on their programmes. Except for the Comité National de Libération du Congo in Oriental Province, including Kivu, the secessionist movements of the State of Katanga and the Autonomous Mining Republic of South Kasai (CONAKAT and MNC-Kalonji) participated as political parties in the legislative elections held in May 1960. On the eve of independence, they already called for the autonomy of the DRC's provinces.

4.4.4.1 *Confédérations des Associations Tribales du Katanga (CONAKAT)*

With regard to the Katanga's secessionist movement, its origin dates back to the municipal elections of 1957 prior to independence. According to Widener LtSrary (1962), no political parties existed at the time in Elisabethville. The people of Kasai, because of their tribal unity, won most of the seats. Stimulated by these election results, Katangans eventually formed on October 4, 1958, a confederation of the tribal associations of the Katanga which was destined to become the celebrated CONAKAT (LtSrary 1962:4).

As already discussed the Katanga secession war was influenced by the ethnic character of the political parties that developed in the period leading to independence. The main parties that contested power at independence were polarized along ethnic lines. In Katanga the leading political force was CONAKAT created to defend the interests of 'authentic Katangans' (mainly Lunda, Baluba of Katanga and Bayeke) against the threat of 'strangers', mostly from Kasai (Lulua and Luba) recruited by the *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK) to work in the mines (Young 1965: no page, quoted by Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:3).

The programme of Moise Tshombe's political party 'CONAKAT', included:

- autonomy of Katanga and union with Belgium;
- control of Katangan public funds by 'authentic Katangans' and
- measures favourable to the authority of traditional rulers (Gérard-Libois 1966:296).

Since its establishment, argues LtSrary (1962), CONAKAT has benefited from the support of certain Europeans in the Katanga region who represented the worst kind of colonialism. Mr. Gavage, head of the Katangan Union, a party composed of Europeans favourable to a 'Belgian-Katangan community,' and chief lobbyist for the policy of mass immigration by whites, publicly supported CONAKAT (LtSrary 1962:4). The attempt at secession of Katanga, as discussed, is a striking case of the quest for self-determination in the DRC which was based on the desire to take exclusive advantage of the rich concentration of natural resources in the province.

4.4.4.2 *Mouvement National Congolais-Kalonji (MNC-K)*

The secessionist movement at the origin of the creation of the breakaway state in South Kasai is the MNC-Kalonji named also MNC-K. As background, according to International Business Publications (2007), the MNC was formed in August 1956. Its declared objective was to 'pursue the political emancipation of the Congo,' while fostering among its member 'a consciousness of their national unity and responsibility.' The party only disavowed its commitment to national unity, with the arrival of Patrice Lumumba in Leopoldville in 1958. It consequently entered its militant phase. His unfettered control over the affairs of the party led to serious frictions within its leadership. Internal dissension came to a head in July 1959 when Joseph Ileo, Cyrille Adoula and Albert Kalonji set up their own moderate wing, then known as the MNC-Kalonji (IBP 2007: 63). It was the MNC-K that was changed into a secessionist movement.

Kisangani and Ndikumana (2003) argue that the secessionist movement in the Kasai was determined by three interconnected factors: the Lulua-Luba (Kasai) clash, ideological disagreement between Lumumba and Kalonji (a Luba) over the constitutional orientation of the state (unitary vs. separatism), and the fight for the control of diamonds in the Kasai periphery (Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:7). Kalonji espoused Tshombe's opposition to a centralized system. Thus, the MNC-K somewhat joined the Tshombe's political party programmes.

4.4.4.3 *Comité National de Libération du Congo (CNL)*

The creation of the People's Republic of the Congo within the territory of the DRC was planned by the *Comité National de Libération du Congo* (CNL). According to Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (2006), the CNL was a clandestine, rebel, secessionist political organization in opposition to the Central Government in Leopoldville (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères 2006:541). As mentioned earlier, this breakaway state was ruled by Congolese leftist leaders that were sympathetic towards Lumumba. An indication of the origin of the creation of the CNL comes from Eric S. Packham (1996) who argues that at the end of September 1963, President Kasa-Vubu dissolved parliament on the grounds that it had failed to produce a permanent constitution for the country. A number of the opposition members of parliament who was no longer protected from arrest by parliamentary immunity, fled to Brazzaville. There, on October 3, 1963, Christophe Gbenye, Gaston Soumialot, André Lubaya and others, set up the CNL (Packham 1996:255). The programme of the CNL promised an end to foreign domination. This referred to the indisputable allegiance of the Congolese Central Government to the West. Ideology was very important within the CNL's framework.

Although all three secessions failed and was put down through internal and external military intervention, it is imperative to have a look at their legality in the next section, since that largely affected the international community's response to the secessions.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF THE LEGALITY OF THE ATTEMPTS AT SECESSION IN THE 1960S

The failure of the three attempts at secession due to the intervention of the UN forces for the most part and the army forces of the Central Government of the DRC, including the lack of the international recognition of the three breakaway states call for a debate on the legality of those post-independence secessionist acts. This was an important part in the reasons for international intervention and it was largely international intervention that put an end to attempted secessions.

The attention in this sub-section is paid to the condemnation of secessionism in the DRC. Thus the focus is on the provisions of the Loi fondamentale, Resolutions of the United Nations and Organization of African Unity with regard to secessionist activities.

4.5.1 Loi fondamentale

The Loi fondamentale (fundamental Law) of May 19, 1960 on the structures of the DRC did not contain a provision that recognizes the right to secession by the provinces.

By considering this provisional constitution, one realizes that the legislators (Belgian Parliament) did not really pay attention to the possibility of secession. Perhaps they were aware of this eventuality, but they seemed to ignore it. As a consequence, the Loi fondamentale had no disposition prohibiting secession specifically. But one can say that the mind of this Law denied the right of secession and made secession an illegal act. This issue in the literature regarding the constitution and the right of secession is discussed in sub-section 1.6.2.3.

Concerning the unlawfulness of the decision of Tshombe to withdraw Katanga from the DRC, LtSrary (1962) is of the opinion that it must be noted that in making this proclamation Tshombe placed himself in a position of total illegality. The fundamental Law of May 19, 1960 stated explicitly, in Article 6, that 'The Congo is within its present boundaries an indivisible and democratic state'. By seceding Tshombe was contravening this stipulation (LtSrary 1962:20).

Furthermore, the Loi fondamentale states in Article 7 that the Congolese state consists of six provinces, namely Equateur, Kasai, Katanga, Kivu, Leopoldville, and Oriental, each with a legal personality (Loi fondamentale 1960). According to this provisional constitution all these provisions would remain in force until the establishment of public institutions that will have been organized by the new Constitution. As previously mentioned, the Loi fondamentale which was the creation of the Belgian Parliament and which was based on the resolutions of the round Table, served as a provisional legal framework before the adoption of a written constitution by the Congolese themselves.

At the time of the attempted secessions by the provinces of Katanga, Kasai, Oriental, including Kivu as discussed above, the Loi fondamentale was still in use. One could not conceive of the DRC in the absence of some of its provinces. Since secessionism would change the shape of the DRC, the consequences of Article 7 are that the withdrawal of a province from the territory of the DRC to form an independent state is unconstitutional. The Central Government was therefore in a position to mobilize all resources in order to restore its territorial integrity.

A look at the Loi fondamentale was necessary to establish the unconstitutionality of the attempts at secession in the DRC before examining the international framework of the right to secede and the resolutions of the UN and OAU.

4.5.2 Resolution of the United Nations

The aim with this sub-section is to provide the arguments of the United Nations and the resolutions that declared the secessionist acts in the DRC illegal.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 142 of July 7, 1960, adopted unanimously at the 872nd meeting, recommended the admission of the DRC to the UN as a unit. This gave a legal permission to the UN to deal with the DRC question. However, the illegality of the attempted secessions in the DRC should be seen within the wider context of the UN Charter of which the quintessence is taken back in sub-section 1.6.2.1 of this dissertation.

The resolutions of the UN regarding the attempt at secession of Katanga were also valid for that of South Kasai. The following analysis refers to the explanations provided in the literature review in sub-section 1.6.2.2 with regard to the right of secession. The secessionist provinces did not fulfil the conditions for getting the right to secede from the DRC and *de facto* recognition by the international community as statehood.

First, the Lunda and Yeke ethnic groups in Katanga and the Luba ethnic group in the South Kasai that were in the vanguard of autonomy of their regions were not victims of oppression on behalf of the authorities of the Central Government. In the light of this study, though there was a difference of pretexts, the birth of the secessionist movements was motivated particularly by the sentiment of exploitation of the peripheries and the problem of underdevelopment in addition to ethnic and other factors.

Second, the populations of the main three restive regions did not approve democratically of the secession by referendum. The above discussion demonstrated that there were ethnic groups within the seceding territories that were opposed to secession. This is patent for the provinces of Katanga and Kasai. In this regard the ethnic groups Luba of Katanga and Lulua of Kasai are prominent examples. Thus each of the restive regions experienced their own centre-periphery problems.

Third, the leaders of the restive provinces obtained military aid from foreign states. This was obviously the case with the State of Katanga and the People's Republic of the Congo backed by Belgium and Communist states (for example: China and Cuba) respectively (see to that effect the sub-section 4.4.1.2 regarding the external supports to the restive peripheries where it is mentioned in more detail about who funded who particularly).

Fourth, the breakaway states were using the expertise of the mercenaries. European mercenaries were involved in several chaotic episodes in Africa. Thus, Juan Carlos Zarate (1998), for example, argues that international attention focused initially on the problem of mercenaries during the 1960s post-colonial era in Africa (Zarate 1998:77). At the time of independence, even the Central Government of the DRC was using the services of the mercenaries because of the weakness of the national security forces to quell secessionism in particular.

At the 942nd meeting on February 20/21, 1961, the Security Council Resolution 257 instructed the Secretary-General of the UN, Dag Hammarskjold, to negotiate the replacement of foreign military personnel in Katanga, both Belgian and mercenary, with UN troops (This was already discussed previously by the UN - see Security Council Resolution 143 of July 14, 1960). According to Bartkus (1999), the underlying assumption was that the Katanga secession, dependent on external aid and would collapse once foreign advisers and troops had been removed. Katanga's inflexibility combined with Hammarskjold's tragic death²⁹ led the UN to adopt a more intransigent position toward the secession (Bartkus 1999:74-75). This reinforced the UN's support for continued territorial integrity of the DRC.

The full text of the United Nations Security Council, Resolution 169 (1961) of November 24, 1961 regarding the secessionist activities against the Republic of the Congo (Leopoldville) was as follows:

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 143 (1960) of 14 July 1960, 145 (1960) of July 1960, 146 (1960) of 9 August 1960 and 161 (1961) of 21 February 1961; Recalling further General Assembly resolutions 1474 (ES-IV), 1592 (XV), 1599 (XV), 1600 (XV) and 1601 (XV); Reaffirming the policies and purposes of the United Nations with respect to the Congo (Leopoldville) as set out in the aforesaid resolutions, namely:

(a) To maintain the territorial integrity and the political independence of the Republic of the Congo, (b) To assist the Central Government of the Congo in the restoration and maintenance of law and order, (c) To prevent the occurrence of civil war in the Congo, (d) To secure the immediate withdrawal and evacuation from the Congo of all foreign military, paramilitary and advisory personnel not under the United Nations Command, and all mercenaries, (e) To render technical assistance,

²⁹ UN Secretary-General Hammarskjold died in a plane crash near Ndola, northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), on September 17, 1961 while he tried to solve the Congo Crises marked by the attempt at secession of Katanga.

Welcoming the restoration of the national Parliament of the Congo in accordance with the *loi fondamentale* and the consequent of a Central Government on 2 August 1960; *Deploring* all armed action in opposition to the authority of the Government of the Republic of the Congo, specially secessionist activities and armed action now being carried on by the provincial administration of Katanga with the aid of external resources and foreign mercenaries, and completely rejecting the claim that Katanga is “sovereign independent nation”; *Noting with deep regret* the recent and past actions of violence against United Nations personnel; *Recognizing* the Government of the Republic of the Congo as exclusively responsible for the conduct of the external affairs of the Congo; *Bearing in mind* the imperative necessity for speedy and effective action to implement fully the policies and purposes of the United Nations in the Congo to end the unfortunate plight of the Congolese people, necessary in the interest of world peace and international co-operation and of the stability and progress of Africa as a whole,

1. *Strongly deprecates* the secessionist activities illegally carried out by the provincial administration of Katanga with the aid external resources and manned by foreign mercenaries; 2. *Further deprecates* the armed action against United Nations forces and personnel in the pursuit of such activities; 3. *Insists* that such activities shall cease forthwith, and calls upon all concerned to desist therefrom; 4. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General to take vigorous action, including the use of the requisite measure of force, if necessary, for the immediate apprehension, detention pending legal action and/or deportation of all foreign military and paramilitary personnel and political advisers not under the United Nations Command, and mercenaries, as laid down in paragraph 2 of Security Council resolution 161 A (1961) of 21 February 1961; 5. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to prevent the entry and return of such elements under whatever guise and also arms, equipment or other material in support of such activities; 6. *Requests* all states to refrain from the supply of arms, equipment or other material which could be used for warlike purposes, and to take the necessary measures to prevent their nationals from doing the same, and to deny transportation and transit facilities for such supplies across their territories, except in accordance with the decisions policies and purposes of the United Nations; 7. *Calls upon* all Member States to refrain from promoting, condoning, or giving support by acts of omission or commission, directly or indirectly, to activities against the United Nations forces and personnel; 8. *Declares* that all secessionist activities against the Republic of the Congo are contrary to the *Loi fondamentale* and Security Council decisions and specifically *demand*s that such activities which are now taking place in Katanga shall cease forthwith; 9. *Declares* full and firm support for the Central Government of the Congo and the determination to assist that Government, in accordance with the decisions of the United Nations, to maintain law and order and national integrity, to provide technical assistance and to implement those decisions; 10. *Urges* all Member States to lend their support, according to their national procedures, to the Central Government of the Republic of the Congo, in conformity with the Charter and the decision of the United Nations; 11. *Requests* all Member States to refrain from any action which may directly or indirectly impede the policies and purposes of the United Nations in the Congo and is contrary to its decisions and the general purposes of the Charter (UN SCR 169, 1961).

Adopted at the 982nd meeting by 9 votes to none, with 2 abstentions (France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

4.5.3 Resolution of the Organization of African Unity

Furthermore, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) - now African Union (AU) – also supported the territorial unity of the DRC. The OAU was founded on May 25, 1963. At that time the attempts at secession of Katanga and South Kasai were already put down. Thus, the OAU dealt with the creation of the People's Republic of the Congo established in 1964 within the territory of the DRC.

With regard to the territorial integrity of the African states, the OAU had already decided to honour colonial boundaries irrespective of how arbitrarily they might have been. This is referring to the principle of *uti possidetis* explained in sub-section 1.6.2.2. The key principle enshrined in the OAU Charter regarding this question is principle 3 of the Article III that is expressed as follows:

The Member States, in pursuit of the purposes stated in Article III solemnly affirm and declare their adherence to the following principles: ... 3. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence (OAU Charter 1963).

When the Central Government of the DRC experienced secessionism, the most influential member states of the OAU such as Ghana, Guinea-Conakry, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, were led by the Pan-Africanists. Most African leaders were friendly towards the followers of Lumumba who established the People's Republic of the Congo. The latter was, thus, receiving logistical assistance and diplomatic support from those African states. This implies that the resolution of the OAU did not outright support the Central Government of the DRC led by the pro-Western and former secessionist Moise Tshombe. But the OAU did prefer reconciliation and thus implied unity of the DRC.

The Resolution of the Third Extra Ordinary session of the council of ministers held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 5 to 10 September 1964, regarding the threat of the territorial integrity of the DRC when People's Republic of the Congo was established is as follows:

The Council of Minister of the Organization of African Unity meeting in its Third Extra-Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, from 5 to 10 September 1964, to examine the Congolese problem, its repercussions on the neighboring States and on the African scene at large,

Having studied the message addressed to it by several African Heads of State and Government, especially that of President Kasavubu expressing his conviction that the solution to the Congolese problem should be found within the Organization of African Unity,

Having noted the invitations of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) and the Kingdom of Burundi to the OAU to send a fact-finding and goodwill mission to their countries to seek means of restoring normal relations between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo and the Kingdom of Burundi,

Taking note of the statement by the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo indicating his efforts and desire to bring about a national reconciliation in his country,

Deeply concerned by the deteriorating situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo resulting from foreign intervention as well as use of mercenaries principally recruitment from the racist countries of South African and Southern Rhodesia,

Reaffirming the resolutions of the Organization of African Unity inviting all African States to abstain from any relationship whatsoever with the Government of South Africa because of its policy of apartheid,

Considering that foreign intervention and the use of mercenaries has unfortunate effects on the neighbouring independent States as well as on the struggle for national liberation in Angola, Southern Rhodesia, Mozambique and the other territories in the region which are still under colonial domination, and constitutes a serious threat to peace in the African continent,

Convinced that the solution to the Congolese problem although essentially political, depends on the pursuit of national reconciliation and the restoration of order, so as to permit stability, economic development of the Congo, as well as the safeguarding of its territorial integrity,

Deeply conscious of the responsibilities and of the competence of the Organization of African Unity to find a peaceful solution to all the problems and differences which affect peace and security in the African continent,

1. APPEALS to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stop immediately the recruitment of mercenaries and to expel as soon as possible all mercenaries of whatever origin who are already in the Congo so as to facilitate an African solution; 2. NOTES the solemn undertaking of the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to guarantee the security of combatants who lay down their arms; 3. REQUESTS especially all those new fighting to cease hostilities so as to seek with the help of the Organization of African Unity, a solution that would make possible national reconciliation and the restoration of order in the Congo; 4. APPEALS to all the political of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to seek, by all appropriate means, to restore and consolidate national reconciliation; 5. DECIDES to set up and to send immediately to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) and the Kingdom of Burundi an AdHoc Commission consisting of Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Somalia, Tunisia, U.A.R., Upper Volta and placed under the effective Chairmanship of H.E. Jomo Kenyatta, Prime Minister of Kenya, which will have the following mandate:

(a) to help and encourage the efforts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the restoration of national reconciliation in conformity with paragraphs 2 and 3 above; (b) to seek by all possible means to bring about normal relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours, especially the Kingdom of Burundi and the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville); 6. INVITES this Commission to submit its report to the Administrative Secretary General, for immediate distribution to all Member States; 7. APPEALS strongly to all powers at present intervening in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to cease their interference. The Member States are further invited to give instructions to their diplomatic missions accredited to these powers with the view of impressing upon them this appeal; 8. REQUESTS all Member States to refrain from any action that might aggravate the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or worsen the relationship between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours; 9. and REQUESTS the Administrative Secretary-General to provide the commission with all the necessary assistance to accomplish its mission [OAU ECM/Res.5 (III)].

This resolution was far away from solving the Congo Crises. Keesing's Record of World Events (1964) points out that the above resolution contained no decision on Tshombe's request for African troops because a motion to sanction the dispatch of such troops had been narrowly defeated, with Ethiopia abstaining and Madagascar absent—a fact which was believed to have led to Tshombe's abstention from voting on the resolution. On the other hand the resolution contained no call for an 'immediate cease-fire' and said nothing about the proposed Commission's powers, President Kasa-Vubu having sent a message that it should on no account have jurisdiction to help to mediate between Congolese parties (Keesing 1964:204). The OAU has neither declared illegal nor condemned the creation of People's Republic of the Congo. It recommended rather the reconciliation of all Congolese politicians involved in the crisis. As mentioned earlier in sub-section 4.4.2.3, this breakaway state was ended militarily by the UN operation Red Dragon.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The focus in this chapter was on the nature of the centre-periphery relations at the time of the independence of the DRC and during the first series of attempts at secession. This investigation reveals that there was little that kept Leopoldville and the provinces together and that it was understandable that some provinces would regard the DRC as unmanageable and that secession would constitute attempts at making the administration more manageable and economically viable. The size and communication problems of the territory were important contributors in this regard.

Several factors, stemming from the centre-periphery relations, were at the origin of sentiments of secessionism in the DRC in the 1960s, namely:

First, there were important differences in the ethnic composition of the centre and the peripheries and also among the various provinces. Ethnicity therefore became an important factor in the relations between the centre and the periphery as well as in and among the various regions. By the time of independence, the rural population was more orientated towards the regional capitals than Leopoldville, because of their proximity to the regional capitals. Moving beyond the community warmth inspired a feeling of fear among the indigenous population of the peripheries distant from Leopoldville, which was mainly populated by the ethnic group Bakongo.

Second, administratively, the Central Government of the DRC was unable to be represented throughout the huge territory by reliable public servants who would oppose all threats to the territorial integrity of the state. Needless to say that administratively, the central authorities

could hardly contact officials in remote areas due to the weakness of transport and telecommunication infrastructure aggravated by natural obstacles. This has contributed to a widening gap between the centre and the peripheries. At this stage it is important to understand that at this point there is an interesting intersection between theories of internal exploitation and the theory of right-sizing the state. The centre was able to extract resources and income from the peripheries but was not in a position to penetrate the peripheries effectively from an administrative point of view. This led to resentment – give more get less – but oddly it appears the fear of dominance by the centre was a reality and particularly in the case of Katanga which was somewhat more equal than the other peripheries. It was also the fear for the personality of Lumumba.

Third, from an economic perspective, a prominent characteristic of the peripheries is that the most important natural resources of the DRC are located there. Consequently, the largest mining companies of the DRC at independence were located in the restive peripheries, namely *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK) in Katanga, *Société Internationale Forestière et Minière du Congo* (FORMINIÈRE) in South Kasai, *Office de Mines d'or de Kilo-Moto* (OKIMO) in Oriental Province and *Société Minière du Kivu* (SOMINKI). The peripheries were in the position of a fear of dominance and exploitation by the centre. Whereas, as centre of political dominance, Leopoldville was in the position to use violence in order to exploit the peripheries.

Thus, with regard to the appeal of secessionism, the natural resources were a major determinant of secessionism in the DRC. The leaders of the restive provinces were unquestionably motivated to secede from the Central Government given the fabulous natural resources their regions enjoyed in comparison to other provinces of the DRC. The geographic concentration of mineral deposits in particular and their unequal distribution made the DRC for the most part prone to secessionism in the first half of 1960s. For that reason, the attempted secessions of the rich provinces would deprive the Central Government of substantial income from natural resources. The Katanga is definitely a striking case of the quest for self-determination based on the desire to take exclusive advantage of the rich concentration of natural resources in the province, such as strategic important deposits of cobalt and uranium. It was also industrially advanced compared to the rest of the DRC.

Fourth, from a political perspective, taking advantage of local leaders' frustrations as a result of the implementation of a centralized unitary form of state by Lumumba, which excluded local specificities, secessionism in Katanga and South Kasai was externally encouraged by Belgium and other Western powers in order to create or maintain Western economic and geostrategic interests in the DRC. Subsequently, the creation of a breakaway state in Oriental Province, including Kivu Province, was motivated by ideological choice in favour of communism and supported by the major communist states of the world from the days of the Cold War.

There were economic implications of the centre in the creation of the People's Republic of the Congo insofar as there is a greater link between the ideology implemented by the centre and the type of economy in effect. Moyra Grant (2003) argues that communism is often perceived – especially from a liberal standpoint – as a philosophy of anti-individualism which denies the fundamental rights of private ownership and economic freedom. However, since these abstract 'natural rights' have only ever, in reality, applied to a minority of individuals even in the most affluent societies, the ethical virtues of communism continue to appeal to some people. Communism embodies an ideal of freedom, from exploitation and want, as the natural consequence of economic equality. Communists would argue that capitalist 'freedom' is a fiction, that economic exploitation and oppression are wholly inimical to any genuine freedom and that any belief in freedom under capitalism is simply the product of false consciousness (Grant 2003:26). Overall, the sentiment of exploitation of the peripheries by the Central Government sustained the creation of the secessionist movements in the three wealthiest restive provinces, particularly in Katanga and South Kasai, which were historically the biggest contributors to the national budget. Thus, the wealthiest provinces should imperatively remain part of the DRC for the survival of the centre. The principle that the provinces should give according to their means and receive according to their needs was applied, but found wanting among the restive peripheries.

The three attempted secessions would have been impossible without external support. What would have prompted secessionism would be the balance of power that was in favour of the breakaway states in view of the support they received from other countries. Thus, Sandra W. Meditz and Tim Merrill (1993) argue that throughout the first five years of independence, the armed forces fragmented into several competing power centres, working for various ethnic political leaders as well as their own interests. A combination of ineffective national leadership and a chaotic political and social environment limited the ANC's ability to operate in a professional manner. As a result, the ANC was a national armed force in name only. It was not only incapable of protecting the country, but at times even threatened its existence. Only the performance of the UN forces in ending the 1960-63 secession of Katanga Province kept the DRC intact' (Meditz and Merrill 1993:278).

The illegality of the three attempted secessions was ultimately established in terms of the DRC constitution. OAU of which the DRC was a member was also opposed to secession. The OAU in particular 'guaranteed' the territorial integrity. Moreover, the UN charter is hesitant on the issue of secession, including the works of the scholars of the right of secession. In addition, from an international law perspective, the right to secession also came into play.

It is true that the attempts at secessionism were in fact put down by external forces. They were all ended militarily, firstly by the operation military of the Congolese National Army against

Autonomous Mining Republic of South Kasai, secondly by the UN intervention against State of Katanga and thirdly by a combined action of the forces of the UN and Congolese National Army against People's Republic of the Congo. The fact is that at independence the centre was too weak to prevent breakaways and it could only quell the situation with the assistance of the international community. However, the breakaway states did not in the long run have sufficient power to be successful.

CHAPTER 5

THE CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS DURING THE ERA OF MOBUTU (1965-1997)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The historical factors that have affected the centre-periphery relations in the DRC as well as the causes of the attempts at secession of the peripheries at the time of independence have thus far received attention in this study.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the centre-periphery relations during the Second Republic, that is the period of rule by President Mobutu Sese Seko who came to power on November 24, 1965, in order to identify probable reasons why, despite its experience with the attempts to create three breakaway states in the first half of the 1960s, the territory of the DRC remained intact after the wave of suppressed secessionism.

The focus in this chapter is on President Mobutu's leadership and the strategies he employed in order to discourage secessionism and to prevent the secession of any part of the DRC.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section provides a background regarding the context in which the Congolese National Army and Mobutu Sese Seko became involved in the political affairs of the DRC. Furthermore, it deals with the various strategies that aimed at promoting the unity of the country. This is done by analyzing the relations of the restive peripheries with the centre in the second section of this chapter in order to determine in the third section how the peripheries reacted to the various strategies employed by the centre to pacify the restive peripheries.

Lastly, a conclusion is provided in order to summarize what had been done in terms of the territorial and national unity in opposition to secessionism in the DRC.

5.2 BACKGROUND TO MOBUTU'S LEADERSHIP

For a proper understanding of the role of Mobutu Sese Seko and the Congolese National Army in the politics of the DRC, an understanding of the most important political events that led to their involvement in the political sphere is necessary. Thus, the coming to power of President Mobutu Sese Seko receives attention in this sub-section. Above all, it mentions his skills, personality as well as the course of his life before taking the reins of power.

Born in Lisala in the Equateur Province on October 14, 1930, Mobutu Sese Seko (previously Joseph-Désiré Mobutu) belonged to the Ngbandi ethnic group, but he grew up among the Bantu people referred to as Ngalas³⁰.

Mobutu's early education at the mission schools of the region was interrupted by his frequent moves³¹, according to Laurie Lanzen Harris and Cherie D. Abbey (1997), but his teachers could tell that he was an intelligent child but he also became known as a disruptive and bullying presence in the classroom. At age 10, Mobutu entered junior high school at Mbandaka. This school was the first of many Catholic missionary schools that he attended in junior high school and high school. The instructors at these schools often had to discipline him for his rowdy behaviour, but in spite of this, he performed well enough academically to be selected by Belgian authorities to attend the Institut d'Etudes Sociales de l'Etat in Brussels, Belgium. This was a big honor for Mobutu, since very few Congolese were invited to study at the institute. After spending a year in Belgium, he returned home in 1949 as one of the Congo's best-educated native-born people.

³⁰ The term of Ngalas indicates people in the Province of Equateur who speak Lingala language in addition to the dialect of their own ethnic group. These are for example ethnic groups Ngombe, Mbudja and Mongo. However, the Ngbandis do not speak Lingala as such in their area located in the North-Ouest of the Province of Equateur. By referring to the description of the populations of the DRC of Crawford Young (1965), Kisangani N. F. Emizet (1997) explains how Belgian officials first made use of term 'Ngala' in the nineteenth century to distinguish the people dwelling alongside the Congo River and later extended the term to include people from riverain area who migrated to the capital city of Kinshasa. The label came to describe Africans who were recruited from this area for the service of the state and who clustered around the mission and state outposts. The Ngala group could not have developed an ethnic identity without the spread of urbanization (Kisangani 1997:4). Linguistically, the city of Lisala where Mobutu was born as well as the city of Mbandaka where he attended school is located within the area of the Lingala language.

³¹ With regard to Mobutu's youth, Harris and Abbey (1997) mention that Mobutu's childhood was marked by confusion and instability. After his father's (Alberic Gbemani) death in 1938, his mother (Marie-Madeleine Yemo) chose to place her family under the protection of her husband's tribe, the Ubangi. They relocated to the village of Gbadolite, joining relatives who already lived there. One of these relatives was Mobutu's uncle, Sese Seko. His uncle was a well-known warrior and leader in the village, and when Mobutu decided to change his name later in life, he added his uncle's name to his own. The young Mobutu had a comfortable with life in the village. But he was unable to stay in Gbadolite for very long. In accordance with tribal custom, Mobutu's mother was expected to marry one of her husband's brothers, but she refused. The resulting tension convinced her to move on. Mobutu and his mother spent the next few years moving from village to village (Harris and Abbey 1997: 95).

Mobutu returned to school in the Belgian Congo, but after attacking a school principal, he was expelled in 1950 and forcibly conscripted into the *Force Publique*. The *Force Publique* was controlled by Belgian officers, but composed primarily of Congolese enlisted men. Mobutu's education and his ability to speak French enabled him to pursue opportunities that were not available to the other soldiers. He received special training in accounting and clerical work, and he acted also as a freelance journalist for several newspapers. When he was discharged in 1956, he had achieved the rank of sergeant-major. This was the highest ranking that a Congolese could attain in the *Force Publique* at the time. He subsequently became a journalist. In addition, he was highly educated for a Congolese man, and he had performed well in the *Force Publique*. With all these factors in his favour, Mobutu had little trouble finding a job. Mobutu quickly took a writing position with a newspaper called *L'Avenir*, which was published in Leopoldville. After a few months, Mobutu moved on to the *Actualités Africaines*, where he impressed his supervisors with his writing skills and hardwork. Numerous promotions followed, and by 1958 he was editor-in-chief of *Actualités Africaines* (Harris and Abbey 1997: 95-96).

In his critical biography on Mobutu, Sean Kelly (1993) mentions that many people regard Mobutu Sese Seko as a traitor. By 1959, he was working secretly for the Belgian police whom he supplied with detailed reports on the activities of fellow Africans. He had been sent to Brussels by the Belgians; and while he studied journalism he infiltrated Lumumba's political party. He was subsequently recruited as a CIA informant (Kelly 1993:179, quoted by Ndirangu Mwaura 2005:46).

Nevertheless, as journalist, through press contacts, he met several influential politicians, including Lumumba. According to Frank Northen Magill (1999), Mobutu became increasingly interested in the politics and affairs of the state. He rose quickly in a new national party, the *Mouvement National Congolais* (MNC), founded in 1958. His connection to the MNC marked the commencement of his political career. Thus, as member of the MNC, he became Lumumba's private secretary. When the party split in 1959, Lumumba appointed Mobutu as head of the party office in Brussels. This position allowed him to be a delegate to the Round Table Constitutional Conference of 1960 and later in the same year to the Round Table Economic Conference (Magill 1999:2562).

Taking advantage of the departure of the Belgian officers as mentioned in sub-section 4.3.4, Lumumba as Prime Minister and Minister of defense appointed the ambitious Mobutu to the rank of colonel and at the same time chief of army staff of the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC). According to the opinion of several political scientists such as Jeroen Van den Bosch (2014) and Guy Vanthemsche (2012), several factors worked in Mobutu's favour. Some of these are internal disagreements among the Congolese political class, the fact that he was associated with Lumumba and his military experience.

The intervention of the ANC and Colonel Joseph-Désiré Mobutu Sese Seko in the political affairs of the DRC was motivated by two constitutional crises: The first was when Kasa-Vubu dismissed Lumumba due to the massacre of the Lubas by the ANC troops sent by Lumumba to quell the attempt at secession in South Kasai. This matter was previously mentioned in sub-section 4.3.2 regarding political relations. Subsequently his first attempt to seize political power was in September 1960.

The second intervention in the politics of the DRC by the ANC was in 1965 when President Kasa-Vubu and Prime Minister Tshombe were in a power struggle which threatened to paralyze the Central Government. At the end of the first legislature, the parliamentary elections took place from March 18 to April 30, 1965. According to Lodge, Kadima and Pottie (2002), there were 223 political parties contesting for 167 seats (Lodge *et al.* 2002:66). Although Tshombe won the legislative elections, Kasa-Vubu gave preference to Evarist Kimba in place of Tshombe.

The conflict between Kasa-Vubu and Tshombe began to intensify when Tshombe posed a threat to Kasa-Vubu's reelection as President. Tshombe achieved majority victories in national and provincial legislative elections. In response Kasa-Vubu illegally annulled the election results in four provinces and refused to convene parliament (Schraeder 1994:75).

According to Crowder's (1984) account, as the evenness of the division between Kasa-Vubu and Tshombe became clear and tensions began to build, on October 13, Kasa-Vubu dismissed Tshombe as prime minister, and named Evariste Kimba as interim premier. On November 14, the Kimba government failed to obtain a vote of confidence, by a vote of 121 to 134 (counting both houses). Kasa-Vubu immediately asked Kimba to form a second government. However, at this point there simply was no majority available for either side. The DRC appeared once again to be in a cul-de-sac. Under these circumstances the military high command decided to install Lieutenant-General Mobutu as president on November 25, 1965. The same day, a suddenly chastened and united parliament convened, and approved the coup d'état (Crowder 1984:730). President Mobutu appropriated this coup by moving aside gradually his comrades from the wake of power.

All things considered, President Mobutu took in hand a country damaged by five years of civil war and political struggles for power in the Central Government. Mwakikagile (2010) states that more than 100,000 people mostly Congolese, perished in the early sixties in this conflict which also had ideological dimensions involving super-power rivalry between the USA and the Soviet Union as well as the People's Republic of China (Mwakikagile 2010:53). The most recent and critical political situation that he inherited when coming to power was the division of the DRC into several provinces called provincettes. The coming to the Central Government of Tshombe as Prime Minister on July 10, 1964 allowed the drafting of the Constitution of August 1st, 1964 called the Constitution of Luluabourg. This Constitution established a federal system meant to

satisfy the aspirations for autonomy of the provinces. In Article 4 is stipulated that the DRC consists of the city of Leopoldville and 21 autonomous provinces³² from which the following are restive peripheries: South Kasai, Katanga (Lomami, Lualaba, Eastern Katanga and North Katanga), Oriental Province (Haut-Congo, Uele and Kibali-Ituri) and Kivu (Central Kivu, North Kivu and Maniema). At that time, each province ran its own government autonomously of the Central Government which was regarded by some, such as Mobutu, as a potential threat to the DRC's territorial unity. Mobutu in particular was critical of the First Republic. In his *speech* before the 28th General Assembly of the UN in New York on October 4, 1973, President Mobutu pronounced a ruthless verdict on the First Republic:

The situation which we have experienced from 1960 to 1965 was cruel for our people. And we must recognize that anarchy, chaos, disorder, negligence, and incompetence were master in Zaïre³³. Some of you look in the dictionary perhaps to understand the definition of the word 'anarchy', while in Zaïre we have experienced it so thoroughly that many thought the word 'anarchy' was a Zaïrian invention' (Etudes Zaïroises 1973:2, quoted by Crawford 1984:730).

The following discussion is about various strategies employed by President Mobutu Sese Seko to suppress the centrifugal trends of the peripheries as previously discussed in chapter 4.

5.3 STRENGTHENING THE CENTRE IN THE DRC

The discussion in chapter 4 on the centre-periphery relations at independence has revealed that the weakness of the centre has prompted attempts at secession of the three restive peripheries. Thus attention in this section is paid to the strategies employed by President Mobutu Sese Seko in order to keep the peripheries connected with the centre and to create feelings of national unity in spite of the ethnic diversity of the DRC.

5.3.1 Political strategies

This sub-section looks at the political measures aimed at promoting unity and eradicating ethnic division. However, as Crowder (1984) noted, the complete blueprint was not at hand; indeed, the coup had not been planned far in advance. From the outset, however, certain themes were clear: depoliticization, cleansing the country of the political divisions of the First Republic; centralization; creation of new political institutions; personal rule, with the presidency as the supreme institution. Mobutu intended to serve as a political leader, not as military caretaker.

³² These are Central Basin, Haut-Congo, Eastern Katanga, Kibali-Ituri, Central Kivu, Central Kongo, Kwango, Kwilu, Lake Leopold II, Lomami, Lualaba, Luluabourg, Maniema, Middle Congo, North Katanga, North Kivu, Sankuru, South Kasai, Ubangi, Uele, and Kasai Unit (Constitution of Luluabourg August 1st, 1964).

³³ President Mobutu changed the name of the DRC to Zaïre on October 27, 1971.

From the outset, few military personnel were called upon to serve in either political or administrative roles (Crowder 1984:731). For example Major-General Léonard Mulamba was appointed prime minister (head of government) on November 28, 1965, and served until October 26, 1966. Finally, Mobutu became both head of government (October 26, 1966 – July 6, 1977) as well as head of state.

For the purpose of this research, Mobutism as ideology and Mobutu's two strategies namely the centralization of power and the institutionalization of the one-party system are of particular importance. Both strategies are characteristic of the rejection of the legacy of the First Republic which serves as a point of departure for an understanding of the Second Republic. Thus, his aim was to strengthen the centre vis-à-vis the peripheries even though this could require the weakening of the peripheries.

This discussion highlights also the establishment of personal rule by Mobutu in the centralized control process and elimination of potential challenger politicians through co-optation, intimidation and political assassination.

5.3.1.1 Mobutism

Mobutism as advocated by President Mobutu from the outset of his reign requires some discussion at this stage, because it provided the ideology for organizing and governing the state.

Mobutism or Mobutuism was the system of President Mobutu's government and the official party ideology of the Popular Movement of the Revolution as well as the official state ideology in Zaïre during Mobutu's rule (Cram101 Textbook Reviews 2015). The Manifesto of N'Sele, which outlined Mobutu's political party mandate, laid down the principles. It encompassed and glorified the thoughts, visions, and policies of the Zaïrian president and self-proclaimed 'Father of the Nation', Mobutu Sese Seko. The ideology included major initiatives of Mobutu such as 'Zaïrianization' (Cram101 Textbook Reviews 2015: no page). This entailed the sharing of foreign-owned businesses; enrichment of Mobutu supporters as well as Mobutu himself and an unprecedented economic crisis in Zaïre. The policy of Zaïrianization will be discussed in subsection 5.3.3.2 regarding economic strategies.

However, there was a gap between the official statement of Mobutism and its practice on the ground. By analyzing Bob W. White's (2008) scholarly work entitled 'Rumba Rules: the Politics of Dance Music in Mobutu's Zaïre,' Yoly Zentella (2013) mentions that, Mobutism, rhetorically translated as nationalism, revolution and authenticity, language through which economic and political independence would be achieved, and capitalism and communism would be supplanted. Instead, what Mobutism came to stand for was corruption and injustice (Zentella

2013). In addition, Mobutism was, according to Horace Campbell (2003), the term to describe the politics of repression, support for genocidal forces, the use of the national treasury for personal enrichment and the absence of participatory democracy (Campbell 2003:185). By summarizing this system, Ngoy-Kangoy (2006) argues that one can deduce that Mobutu equalled the State. It was the era of unanimity and interventionism, the sacred nature of the State and its institutions through 'Mobutism' (Ngoy-Kangoy 2006:21).

Article 46 of the Constitution of 1974 established the political Bureau as the guarantor of Mobutism and as such it may even accuse the president of deviationism over doctrine. But it states that this rule cannot be applied to President Mobutu himself.

The following sub-section intends to deal with the centralization of power which is one of the pillars of achievement of Mobutism.

5.3.1.2 Centralization of power

President Mobutu Sese Seko, immensely popular *in* the early years of his rule for the return of peace, reacted against the idea that the autonomy of the provinces is supposed to pacify secessionist leaders. The rejection of the 'provincettes' meant the restoration of the central authority in a state that lived in fear of attempts at secession and civil war especially in the restive peripheries.

The centralization of power, according to Byong-Man Ahn (2003), means a pattern of power distribution that sees ruling and administrative power vested with the central government. In this case, hierarchical relations are established between the central and local authorities, whereby the former oversees the latter in the administration of local affairs. The local authorities administer local affairs in accordance with standardized rules or prescriptive procedures of the central government, with the authority to make decisions or initiate planning kept to the minimum level. Such a centralized mode of administration hardly leaves room for the participation of local residents in the process of decision-making concerning their own affairs (Ahn 2003:226).

By 1967, President Mobutu was ready to give institutional form to his new government. Sandra W. Meditz and Tim L. Merrill (1994) explains that in running parallel to the efforts of the state to control all autonomous sources of power, important administrative reforms were introduced in 1967 and 1973 to strengthen the hand of the central government in the provinces (Meditz and Merrill 1994:52). At the centre, effective power was concentrated in the office of the president. President Mobutu had undertaken to bring the peripheries (regions, sub-regions,

zones, sectors, chefferies³⁴ and villages) to the heel of the Central Government. For this reason the Constitution of June 24, 1967 drafted in the beginning of the era of Mobutu, reduced the number of the provinces inherited from the First Republic. Thus Article 1 stipulated that the Democratic Republic of Congo is a unitary, democratic and social state. The Republic includes the city of Kinshasa³⁵ (the capital) and the 8 administrative provinces: Bandundu, Equateur, Kasai Occidental, Kasai Oriental, Katanga, Kivu, Kongo central and Oriental Provinces (Constitution of June 24, 1967). The DRC was thus a centralized unitary state until 1982. The sub-section 5.4.1.4 indicates what happened after this period. Moreover, Article 3 mentioned that any act of racial, ethnic or religious, and propaganda liable to affect the internal security of the State or territorial integrity of the Republic are prohibited. All Congolese public authorities have a duty to safeguard the unity of the Republic and the integrity of its territory (Constitution of June 24, 1967, paragraph 2).

The representation below shows the hierarchical level of the territorial structure during the era of Mobutu.

Table 4: Administrative structure under the Second Republic

Centre located in the capital city Kinshasa (seat of the institutions)

Central Government



Peripheries located in the Régions (previously called Provinces)

Régions



Sous-régions



Zones



Secteurs



³⁴ Chefferie (chiefdom in English) is generally a set of homogeneous traditional communities organized on the basis of custom and headed by a chief appointed by custom, recognized and invested by the Government (Organic Law no. 08/16 of October 7, 2008, Article 7).

³⁵ In 1966 Leopoldville was renamed Kinshasa, after the name of an early village that occupied the site.

Chefferies



Villages

Source: Adapted from Pascal Nsundi Mbambi 2006:35

President Mobutu reverted to a form of strong centralized and oppressive administration that was reminiscent of the Belgian administration of the Congo. Thus Meditz and Merrill (1994) argues that the unitary centralized state system thus legislated into existence bore a striking resemblance to its colonial antecedent, except that from July 1972 provinces were called regions (Meditz and Merrill 1994:52). This oppression was particularly directed to dissidents and others who opposed his regime.

According to Meditz and Merrill (1994), once in power, Mobutu aimed at reversing the process of territorial fragmentation that had begun in 1960. From twenty-one provincettes in 1965, the number of administrative divisions was reduced first to twelve provinces (known as regions after 1972), then to eight, plus Kinshasa. These divisions represented a nearly complete restoration of the colonial boundaries³⁶. Under Mobutu 'the regions, once quasi-federal political units with their own governments, were reduced to administrative subdivisions of the unitary state' (Meditz and Merrill 1994: xli). The governors of the administrative divisions were no longer elected by provincial assemblies, but instead were named by the President. They were rotated frequently, and usually were assigned outside their home area to limit the risk of collusion between the Governor and the people in the peripheries. Thus, to prevent uprisings in the peripheries and possibility of secession, President Mobutu appointed his own supporters to the position of Governors of the provinces. The aim was the neutralization of any source of uncontrolled power. The principle of centralization was then extended to the Sous-régions and Zones, with public servants totally reliant on Kinshasa. Consequently, the influence of the central power (centre) on the provinces (now called régions) (peripheries) was increased. The 'only units of government that still retained a fair measure of autonomy but not for long were the so-called local collectivities, i.e., chiefdoms and sectors (the latter incorporating several chiefdoms)' (Meditz and Merrill 1994:52). The heads of the administrative sub-divisions (Régions, Sous-régions, Zones, Secteurs, chefferies and villages) all had essentially the role of representing the central state.

³⁶ In the early 1990s, the most populous region, Kivu, was divided into three regions – North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema, corresponding to the three provincettes of the 1960s.

The central objective of the 1967 reform was to abolish provincial governments and replace them with state functionaries appointed by the central government in Kinshasa. The principle of centralization was further extended to districts and territories, each headed by administrators, again, appointed by the central government. Mbambi (2006) argues that with the reforms of June 1973, an additional stage was reached in increasing the centralization of the state (Mbambi 2006:35). The power of traditional authorities at the local level was also curtailed and hereditary claims to authority no longer recognized. Instead, all chiefs were to be appointed and controlled by the state via the administrative hierarchy (Meditz and Merrill 1994:52). As a consequence, 'the reform seriously blocked the power of the traditional authorities at the local level. This authority was allocated only to persons put in charge by Kinshasa and controlled by official channels. Consequently, the process of centralization had formally eradicated any form of preexistent local autonomy' (Mbambi 2006:35). By then, the process of centralization had theoretically eliminated all preexisting centers of local autonomy (Meditz and Merrill 1994:52).

From a territorial management perspective, law no. 73-015 of January 5, 1973 instituted a very centralized and hierarchical unitary system. The objective was to carry out a complete fusion between the administrative and political structures by making each administrative leader the head of the corresponding section of the party³⁷.

Another major political measure to centralize power was the reduction in the number of political parties. Thus the following sub-section pays attention to the institutionalization of a single party in a country where 223 political parties had contested for power in the Central Government at the end of the first legislature in 1965.

5.3.1.3 Institutionalization of the one-party system and Mobutu's personal rule.

The focus in this sub-section is on the abolition of the multi-party system implemented during the First Republic in an attempt to centralize power in the DRC. The limitation of party membership to a single party in the DRC is of particular importance.

The initial appointment by President Mobutu, from among his own supporters ('militants'), governors and other territorial public servants in the peripheries, as well as at the centre implied the end of the struggle for the conquest of political positions through political parties. This logically led to the creation of a national political party. It also led to the exclusion of his enemies such as Moise Tshombe as a well-known example of the secessionist politicians in the DRC.

³⁷ For example the Governors of the provinces were at the same time presidents of the *section* of the party or the Chancellors of the Universities were presidents of the *sous-section* of the party.

With regard to the definition of the concept of one party system, Sartori (2005) explains that one party means, literally, what it says: 'Only one party exists and is allowed to exist. This is so because such a party vetoes, both *de jure* and *de facto*, any kind of party pluralism' (Sartori 2005:197).

In his quest for the territorial and national unity, President Mobutu had imposed a change in the political landscape of the DRC. Thus, one of the fervent supporters of the Mobutu's government, Sakombi Inongo (1987), mentioned that on December 12, 1965, Mobutu suspended all political activities, including Parliament, for five years because, he said, 'the politicians have been detrimental to the country during five years and we cannot allow them to be still harmful' (Inongo 1987:17, quoted by Ngoy-Kangoy 2006:20). In addition, Ngoy-Kangoy (2006) specifies that in the absence of political parties, Mobutu first sought support for his power from the Army and from the traditional chiefs (Ngoy-Kangoy 2006:20). This could also be interpreted as initial attempts at installing personal rule.

Constitutionally, the abolition of multi-partism is enshrined in Article 4 of the Constitution of June 24, 1967 that was submitted to a popular referendum in June 1967 and was approved by 98% of voters. It is stated that no more than two parties can be created in the Republic. These parties could be organized and operated freely, but they had to respect the principles of national sovereignty, democracy and the laws of the Republic (Constitution of June 24, 1967, paragraph 2). However, the reality on the ground was that there was a single party that worked with the purpose to gather people together behind President Mobutu as a national leader. President Mobutu created for this purpose the political party – *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* (MPR) – on May 20, 1967. It advocated national unity and opposed ethnicity.

To establish it as a national party the MPR, according to Crowder (1984), was generously endowed with government funds and vehicles. The party extended its structures throughout the country in the months that followed. Unions, youth and student organizations were converted into party organs, and cells were established in Catholic seminaries and army units (Crowder 1984:732). It was through the MPR that President Mobutu was able to reach the farthest corners of the country.

Multi-partism was in fact banned for a period of twenty five years during which the MPR was supposed to bring peace, national unity and democracy. At the closing of the MPR's first extraordinary Congress held on May 21-23, 1970, President Mobutu, became the sole party candidate for the November 1970 presidential election. A one-party system, or as Giovanni Sartori calls it a party-state, is by nature non-competitive. Sartori (2005) explains that a system is non-competitive if, and only if, it does not permit contested elections. 'What matters is, of course, the real, not the legal, ruling. Whatever the legal ruling, competition ends, and non-competition begins, wherever contestants and opponents are deprived of equal rights,

impeded, menaced, frightened, and eventually punished for daring to speak up' (Sartori 2005:193-194).

The institutionalization of the MPR as a state party constructed the omnipotence of President Mobutu which was even further institutionalized with the promulgation of yet another new constitution, on August 15, 1974. This Constitution was a redesign in a uniform text of the various changes made since the Constitution of June 24, 1967. The innovative nature of the Constitution of August 15, 1974 involved a number of substantive provisions that defined the duality between the party and the state. This was a consequence of the reform of 1973 mentioned above. Within each entity, the Supreme Leader featured prominently reaffirmed by the Constitution.

The text of the new Constitution made several provisions in favour of the Supreme Leader and granted full powers to the president of the MPR who was head of state and chaired the Legislative Council, the Executive Council and the Judicial Council. In fact, the Constitution of August 15, 1974 established the dictatorship of Mobutu. His power was unlimited and extended to all areas of national life.

Note paramount legal innovation: 'decision State' and laws were binding even before being gazetted (Article 45). The only similarity between the Constitution of 1967 (Article 22) and that of 1974 (Article 32) regarding the status of the head of state is the formula of the oath taken by the president before taking office, that is to say, 'he swears to observe the Constitution and laws of the Republic, to maintain national independence and territorial integrity' (Constitution of August 15, 1974, Art.32). As previously stressed in the rationale of this study, maintaining territorial integrity is paramount in the DRC. This is the outcome of various threats of downsizing that the DRC's territory had undergone at independence.

In the Constitution of 1974, the MPR was proclaimed as the only institution in the country. This proclamation is made in the first sentence of the preamble and is confirmed by Article 28 which states: 'In the Republic of Zaïre, there is only one institution, the MPR ...' Moreover, Article 29 states: 'The MPR is the Zaïrian nation politically organized.'

This implies that the political institutions of the state were reduced to organs of the MPR. The legislative, executive and judicial functions performed usually by Parliament, the Government and the Judiciary respectively were held by the same institutions that became party structures. Thus, the exercise of all power was vested in the party leader, the head of both government and the state, that is to say, President Mobutu. In Zaïre under Mobutu, the Judiciary functioned at the contentment of the executive and the judges were picked for their allegiance to the President himself. At the stage of the institutionalization of the MPR and the construction of the omnipotence of its president and founder, followed in 1978 by the 'phagocytosis' of the

MPR on the State, further confirmed the privileged and special status of the President-Founder of the MPR.

All citizens of Zaïre became members of the MPR at birth. Thus membership of the MPR was the business of all Zaïrian (Congolese) irrespective of age. Article 33 of the revised Constitution in 1988 stipulated that: 'Any Zaïrian is a member of the MPR'. Kirongozi B. Limbaya (1994) mentions that Mobutu stated in a public meeting, in the Lingala language: 'Olinga olingate, ozali kaka na MPR' (whether you like it or not, you are a member of the MPR) (Limbaya 1994:193). It was also said in the discourse of power that a Zaïrian is a member of the MPR from his mother's womb. At that time, the words of President Mobutu had the force of law (see Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002:152; Bernard Waites 2012:286).

The outcome of this process was the strengthening of the centre of the DRC and the establishment of the autocratic government. On the creation of the first opposition party the '*Union des Démocrates pour le Progrès Social*' (UDPS) on February 15, 1982 in Brussels by a group of National Deputies³⁸, Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko³⁹ stated publicly in the Lingala language by asking questions to a crowd of supporters, according to Sloj Silika Litofe (2001): '*Tolingi Zaïre, liboke Moko. Tata bo? Moko - Mama bo? Moko - Ekolo bo? Moko - Parti bo? Moko - Mokonzi bo? Moko*' (Litofe 2001:5). (In English, We want in Zaïre only one family. How many fathers? One - How many mothers? One - How many countries? One - How many parties? One - How many chiefs? One). The response 'one' summarizes Mobutu's political thoughts and his effort to unify the country at all costs.

With regard to the type of political party that the MPR was during the era of Mobutu by referring to Sartori (2005), there are the three following patterns according to an order of decreasing intensity of coercion, or repression: 1) one-party totalitarian, 2) one-party authoritarian, and 3) one-party pragmatic. The first two subtypes are pretty well established in the literature and their differences have long been under the rubric 'dictatorships' (Sartori 2005 :197). The political system under Mobutu is identified as totalitarian by a number of scholars of the politics of the DRC. For instance, Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana (2007) argues that Mobutu's regime tended towards totalitarianism in that its leaders were observed acting according to methods appropriate to a system that confines the totality of national life within a monolithic

³⁸Association des Chercheurs de Politique Africaine (1981) mentions that the founders of the UDPS are a group of parliamentarians who revolted against President Mobutu to the result of the decision of the latter to put back in the mold of a monolithic system a parliament (then called 'legislative Council') to which he had conceded in 1978 the prerogatives which provide him a certain degree of autonomy. This revolt was initiated by the parliamentarians from Kasai. The latter were in large number among the founders of the UDPS, even if the parliamentarians from other regions of the country were associated with a significant number to the initiative (my translation) (ACPA 1981:83). The personalities the most frequently cited are Etienne Tshisekedi and Marcel Lihau.

³⁹ President Mobutu was raised to the dignity of Marshal of Zaïre by the third ordinary congress of the MPR held on December 6 -11, 1982 in Kinshasa.

power style and vision of the world and fails to promote the interests and well-being of the African people of Zaïre (Ikambana 2007:4). Thus, it is sufficient to remember here, according to Sartori (2005), that totalitarian unipartism 'represents the highest degree of pervasiveness, mobilisation, and monopolistic control of the party upon the total life experience of the citizens. By definition, the totalitarian party is a strongly ideological party. Also by definition, the totalitarian party is a strong party' (Sartori 2005:197). This was the political situation of the MPR in Zaïre in the light of the classical literature on political parties. The MPR had successfully strengthened Mobutu's power as the main player at the centre. Within the framework of Party-State, the MPR had the role of promoting national unity. Thus, all Zaïrians found themselves in one body politic: The MPR.

It has been mentioned that public servants were assigned outside their home areas. Thus the following sub-section discusses this aspect in the administrative strategies.

5.3.2 Administrative strategies

Attention in this sub-section is paid to how President Mobutu integrated the population of the DRC in order to eliminate regionalism and tribalism and at the same time to strengthen the centre's control of the peripheries and their various ethnic groups. Thus, a look is done at the leadership by discussing the appointment policy especially in the direction of the provinces in particular. It mentions an effort of President Mobutu to integrate the minority in his recruitment policy at the higher institution of the country in an attempt to promote national unity.

In the sum total of his efforts, Mobutu's administrative strategies should be seen against the background of his attempts at nation-building, intimidation of the population and poor service delivery.

Nation-building was an important goal during Mobutu's first decade in power. Everyone could feel at home any place throughout the DRC under Mobutu regime. Cécile Porta (1998) mentions that to succeed in making the Zaïrians - this mosaic of ethnic groups - feel that they all belonged to one country; different ethnic groups were integrated in order for people to come in contact with cultures different from their own region (Porta 1998:2-3). In general, the will of the population was not taken into account in the integration process.

President Mobutu was successful in strengthening the administrative processes by severely punishing dissenters especially politicians. 'The Pentecost Hanging' of four prominent politicians is one example of political assassinations committed during the early years of President Mobutu in order to establish his authority at the centre and throughout the peripheries. Ikambana (2007) mentions that on June 2, 1966, Emmanuel Bamba (finance

minister), Alexandre Mahamba (foreign affairs minister), Evariste Kimba (former senator, foreign minister and prime minister appointed by Kasa-Vubu to replace Tshombe, and Jérôme Anany (defence minister) were found guilty of high treason by governmental decree 66-338 of May 30, 1966 and hanged in Kinshasa. The charges against them included: (a) planning to overthrow Mobutu's government and (b) attempting to assassinate President Mobutu and General Mulamba. They were found guilty by a martial court led by five high-ranking military officers close to Mobutu's regime. Before the trial, the government spokesman announced on national television that the four politicians were likely to receive capital punishment and could face public hanging. In short, the sentence was known before the trial, which was public and lasted only an hour and a half (Ikambana 2007:56). Thus the population was intimidated into obedience and loyalty to the guide of the revolution who represented the central authority, that is to say, President Mobutu.

Although he may have succeeded in forcing the population into obedience, in terms of service delivery, President Mobutu did not succeed in delivering better administrative services to the people and particularly not in the peripheries. The low level of development of the socioeconomic infrastructure of the country and the difficult access of the majority of people of both the centre and the peripheries to drinking water and electricity are striking examples. According to USAID's report (2012), after two decades in power in the mid-1980s, his personal authority and the authority of the state were rapidly declining. The government was unable to provide services and much of the country became increasingly isolated and fell outside the reach of the central state. Churches and other groups stepped in to provide many of the basic services generally expected of a state, from education to building roads to running markets. By passing the rules allowing the MPR a monopoly on social organizing, many new civil society groups formed, often to address practical economic issues. Mobutu was highly unpopular, and the population became increasingly outspoken in its criticisms of the regime (USAID 2012:6).

Unanimously, scholars of the Congolese administration are of the opinion that the public administration of Zaïre remained underdeveloped for a number of reasons. For example, the administrative staff were poorly paid and were working in difficult conditions as a result of the lack of work equipment and of adequate buildings to shelter the public services health and educational. Overall, the public administration of Zaïre was (is still) nagging insofar as users faced administrative slowness. They do not get quickly the services they sought. Moreover, the number of public services was by far insufficient to serve the needs of the citizens especially in the peripheries.

5.3.2.1 Leadership and recruitment policy in the official institutions

The purpose of this sub-section is to explain the strategies of the central power to create a feeling of national unity through the management of the provinces and a kind of solidarity through a policy that facilitated recruitment among the minority ethnic groups.

As already discussed in Chapter 3, Congolese people are made up of several ethnic groups. At the time of the First Republic, at the provincial level, Governors and other public servants originated from the provinces where they worked. The sense of a nation, or a sense of belonging beyond the local, was almost nonexistent.

Mobutu's government set out to build a modern public administration dependent on the centre, according to James Putzel, Stefan Lindemann and Claire Schouten (2008), by ensuring that officials did not serve in their own territories of origin. There was an effort to maintain an ethnic balance in appointments and those who held office served as officials of Zaïre, not of their locality. Significantly, Mobutu passed a radically inclusive citizenship law that provided a basis for the integration of communities in eastern Zaïre, but it also led to the further marginalization of traditional authorities who promoted exclusionary policies towards especially the peoples of Rwandan origin who had settled in the region over time (Putzel *et al.* 2008:v). Linking the action to the word, for example, Joseph-Barthelemy Bisengimana, a Rwandan Tutsi refugee, was appointed Director of the cabinet to the presidency of Zaïre in 1970. He remained in the position until as late as 1990.

Regarding the achievement of ethnic balance, Crawford Young and Thomas Edwin Turner (1985) explain that, to give symbolic content to the nationally integrated character of his regime, Mobutu relied from the outset upon a carefully distributed ethnic inclusive representation in top political offices. In the very first New Regime Council of Ministers there was one minister chosen from each of the then twenty-one provinces. The first two prime ministers of the era of Mobutu, General Mulamba Nyunyi wa Kadima (1965-1966) and Mpinga Kasenda (1977-1979) were Lulua and Luba respectively, although both were from Kasai (Crawford and Turner 1985:150). Furthermore, it was of particular importance not to exclude certain groups.

Nevertheless, with regard to the recruitment policy, especially in the official institutions, there was a deep gap between the intentions of President Mobutu and the actions of his collaborators on the ground. Tribalism and corruption on the part of public servants in charge of recruitment, as well as the practice of recommendation initiated by ruling elites in favor of their relatives, impacted negatively on ethnic representativeness. This contradiction has affected the centre-periphery relations in Zaïre. Thus, Dinavo's (1995) analysis reveals that exclusion is one of the very important ingredients that contributed to political and ethnic

conflicts in Zaïre and the increasing tension between the ruling elites and the masses (1995:104). According to the same source, the interests of the masses who lived in the countryside and provinces (peripheries), and who constituted over 80 percent of the population of Zaïre, were not represented at all in the political institutions. Notice that all of the most important ruling elites lived in the capital city of Zaïre (centre).

Porta (1998) points out that in the name of unification the central government tried to ensure as far as possible that all the tribes had equitable representation. This meant systems of quotas applied almost everywhere, in universities, the army and other official institutions. However, all these measures used to reduce the sense of belonging to a tribe were to fail. In fact, these measures had exactly the opposite effect and furthermore favoured the rebirth of tribal cultural associations. This actually encouraged a policy of favouritism among members of the same region or tribe, an attitude that was deeply felt, because in everyday life everything depended on tribal relations and tribal connections. The Ngbandis, originating from Equateur province, proved to be the most favoured in this regard since they came from the same tribe as Mobutu and his principal aides (Porta 1998:2-3).

In addition to the political strategies aimed at nation building and consolidating his power, President Mobutu was regularly visiting the peripheries. This strategy allowed him as the highest central authority to keep in touch with the people of the provinces of the DRC. He talked with representatives of various social strata about social problems. He was often willing to listen to the requests of the people, but the realization of these promises was lacking in most cases. He managed to win the sympathy of traditional chiefs in the peripheries by appointing some of them in the political institutions such as the Central Committee of the MPR. Norbert Mbu-Mputu (2012) indicates that the Central Committee of the MPR occupied the third place in the institutional hierarchy of the party after the Head of State and the Congress. The Members of the Central Committee were untouchable and inviolable political figures. Its General Secretary was the second most important person of the Republic, after the president (Mbu-Mputu 2012:206). Over the years, he bought the loyalty of the traditional chiefs around the peripheries so much so that he won their allegiance. Thus, their influence was significantly reduced during the era of Mobutu.

To end the leadership conflict between Lulua and Luba in Kasai Province and at the same time to remove one of the reasons that led to the attempted secession of South Kasai, President Mobutu decided in 1967⁴⁰ in the frame of the new territorial organization policy to divide Kasai region into two entities, namely Kasai Occidental and Kasai Oriental. The latter corresponds with secessionist South Kasai. The Lulua occupies Kasai Occidental whereas the Luba occupies Kasai Oriental.

⁴⁰ Ordinance Law of April 10, 1967

What's more, what once was inconceivable during the First Republic, the populations of the provinces have now agreed to be headed by governors originating from other provinces. This provides evidence of the obedience of the people of the peripheries to the authority of the Central Government. The policy of assigning officials outside their home province did contribute in eliminating the secessionist state of mind in the DRC insofar as the attempts at secession were usually arranged by local politicians of an ethnically and geographically coherent periphery.

The inhabitants of the provinces with a high rate of education enjoyed a good standard of living due to access to employment. The provinces of Equateur and Oriental were behind the provinces of Bas-Congo, Kasai Occidental, Kasai Oriental, Bandundu and Katanga with regard to education due to the inequality of the educational infrastructure inherited from the colonial era. In order to correct regional disparities, another strategy of Mobutu was to pacify segments of the population by aiming for equitable access to higher education.

James Samoot Coleman (1994) argues that the imposition of university admission quotas favouring the disadvantaged or underdeveloped groups has been among the devices used in several states such as India. In spite of the good intentions, evidence from Zaïre and India suggest that universities are ineffective instruments for solving problems of national integration. 'In Zaïre, the quota system not only failed to achieve its righting function, but it left a legacy of heightened ethnic consciousness' (Coleman 1994:345).

Furthermore, the granting of scholarships preferably to the people from Equateur and Oriental Provinces was also a means used by the Mobutu's government to address this imbalance. But some beneficiaries have not taken advantage of these favours. Once abroad they chose to lead a life that has nothing to do with academic training. Thus social disparities still persisted in spite of the government's strategies.

5.3.2.2 Unification of the unions, student movements and universities

The first years of the era of Mobutu generally were a period of national concord. This subsection intends to deal with this question by underlining Mobutu's strategies to control the organizations of civil society where protests against the central power could come from. These are in particular the unions and student movements. In a totalitarian state there is usually no room for civil society.

MyEtymology (2008) argues that apparently, the objective of the fusion of disparate rival unions, in the terms of the Manifesto of N'Sele, was the one to transform the unions of 'only one force of confrontation' in 'an organ of support to politics', anticipating therefore a

connection of communication between the working class and the State (MyEtymology 2008: no page).

In 1971, all unions in Zaïre were merged into one union called *Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Zaïre* (UNTZA), because of the policy of monopartism thus reflecting the concept of 'the nation politically organized' mentioned in sub-section 5.3.1.3 and which refers to Article 29 of the Constitution of 1974. UNTZA became part of the party-state through decrees and the Constitution of 1974. This implied a major expansion of state control over civil society. Kisangani and Bobb (2010) mentions that the National Union of Congolese Workers, formed in the early years of the Mobutu Sese Seko government, became the only such organization under the single-party state. It was originally formed as the *Union des Travailleurs Congolais* (UTC). In June 1967, it brought together disparate rival unions⁴¹ that existed under the First Republic. The move drew protests from some labour leaders, who feared it could become too closely aligned with the MPR and the government (Kisangani and Bobb 2010:523).

With regard to the student movements, International Business Publications (2007) mentions that in July 1967, the Political Bureau announced the creation of the Youth wing of the MPR (IBP 2007:78). In addition, President Mobutu had sought to unify the student movements. Accordingly, in 1968, he dissolved and integrated the Congolese grouping of Students into one association called *Union Générale des Etudiants Congolais* (UGEC) to Youth of the MPR (*Jeunesse du Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution*, - The JMPR).

There were three universities when Mobutu came to power, namely *Université de Lovanium* in Kinshasa, *Université Officielle du Congo* in Lubumbashi and *Université Libre du Congo* in Kisangani. In 1971, President Mobutu decided to merge the three geographically dispersed universities, together with some seventeen post-secondary institutions in the country into a single monolithic National University of Zaïre (UNAZA). This strategy enabled the infiltration of almost all aspects of university governance with elements of Central Government administration and Mobutu's political party apparatus. This resulted in the politicization and centralization of the universities and academic life.

The creation of a single national university was prompted by student unrest. Although President Mobutu was unquestionably popular at the beginning of his rule, the first protest against his regime came from students at the *Université de Lovanium*. This movement has affected students of the *Université Officielle du Congo* in the tumultuous Katanga Province. According to Kisangani and Bobb (2010), on June 4, 1969 students at the *Université de Lovanium* demonstrated against low stipends and what they considered to be extravagant

⁴¹*Union des Travailleurs Congolais* (UTC), *Fédération Générale du Travail du Congo* (FGTC) and *Confédération des Syndicats Libres du Congo* (CSLC). The Secretary-general of the National Union of Zaïrian Workers, André Bo-Boliko Lokonga has been appointed prime minister in March 6, 1979 and he served until August 27, 1980.

government spending. Hundreds marched from the campus into the downtown area, breaking through several police and military roadblocks. Troops opened fire. Estimates of the number of students killed varied from 40 to 100 although official figures were never published. Thirty-four students were arrested and charged with subversive activities. A number of them fled the country and were given asylum in Bulgaria. Many were tried and given sentences of up to 20 years in prison. They were amnestied on October 14, 1969. On June 4, 1971, students demonstrating at the campuses of the *Université de Lovanium* and *Université Officielle du Congo* in memory of the 1969 victims and again clashed with security forces (Kisangani and Bobb 2010:493). This new demonstration of the students resulted in the closure of the *Université de Lovanium* for two years as punishment. Moreover, all students of the *Université de Lovanium*, including the leaders of students of the *Université Officielle du Congo* were drafted into the military.

However, ten years after establishing a single national university in 1981, President Mobutu's government returned to the old system because of the administrative and financial burden. Thereafter each university functioned separately.

5.3.2.3 Appeal to authenticity

This sub-section looks at another measure taken on October 27, 1971 by President Mobutu that had a cultural essence coupled with administrative consequences. This is the 'appeal to authenticity', which was in essence another attempt at nation-building. It had largely contributed to the identity of Congolese people. The appeal to authenticity allowed them to be recognized worldwide for example through their names and their clothes.

According to Ikambana's (2007) definition, authenticity was an African-centered policy statement that aimed to reclaim the dignity of the African people of Zaïre by proclaiming them responsible for their own destiny. Zaïrian people had to reclaim their African identity from years of colonization and European influence (Ikambana 2007:24). The implementation of the appeal to authenticity in the whole country was important in Mobutu's attempt to create a sense of belonging to the same nation.

The Christian first names were abolished. Thus, Joseph-Désiré Mobutu became Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Waza Banga. This explains today why the names of Congolese people are generally long. Moreover, for men, the wearing of suits and ties was forbidden. That clothing was replaced by scarf around the neck and the abacost⁴² in place of ties and suits respectively. On the other hand, women could not wear pants and wigs, but rather loincloths and braided hair. The implementation of such a measure reflected the degree of obedience of the

⁴² Abacost is the acronym of 'à bas le costume', that is to say, 'down with the suit'.

population to the authority of the Central Government and attempts to consolidate the centre. People complied because of the oppressiveness of the Mobutu regime - people simply had to comply with the measures taken by the government.

In his comment on the philosophy of authenticity or extortion of African tradition, Ikambana (2007) argues that Mobutu's policy of authenticity assumed that the Zaïrian people should rebuild their own culture and erase the scars left by decades of colonial rule. In Mobutu's view, European rule completely destroyed the dignity of the African people of Zaïre by imposing assimilation⁴³ and alienation. Authenticity was cultural renaissance, a return to the wisdom of the African ancestors that would have allowed the Zaïrian people to rediscover themselves without foreign influence. The policy of authenticity allowed the Zaïrian people to regain their ancestral pride and cultural heritage. The most significant examples of cultural reconquest were seen in most areas of the Zaïrian way of life, namely returning to African names; renaming of the streets, cities (For example Leopoldville became Kinshasa, Stanleyville became Kisangani, Coquilhatville became Mbandaka, Banningville became Bandundu, Jadotville became Likasi, and Elisabethville became Lubumbashi), towns, and even of the country - the DRC became Zaïre. During colonial rule, every citizen of Zaïre was supposed to be baptized and received a Christian name as a consequence of being born again in the European Christian tradition. Each newly baptized person was then renamed, often after a saint of the Catholic Church. Christian names were taken as the first name, and the last name still belonged to the person's family. Under the policy of authenticity, Zaïrians went back to having names that had a cultural meaning or message rooted in African tradition. With regard to the change of names, President Mobutu Sese Seko's argument was as follows: 'A name must have meaning. For example, the names of parents and grandparents should remind Zaïrians of the exploits of a clan, the history of a tribe, and the character or personality of ancestor whom they wish to honor. The name should place its bearer in the line of succession of the tribe the ancestor represents' (Ikambana 2007: 24-25).

Mobutu's regime vigorously promoted the concept of culture as a resource for strengthening his political power. It should also be noted that in pre-colonial times the political culture could be typified as a subject culture in most cases. Obedience was often required within tribal systems. Thus he also exploited this cultural legacy bearing in mind that tribal obedience provided a far more positive experience to the Congolese than the oppressive and inhumane colonial system. It was thus the better of two systems that lacked individual freedom.

⁴³ Several scholars accept that assimilation is far more complex. In the context of this discussion, assimilation means the process by which Congolese people were forced to acquire European cultural or social characteristics under influence of Belgian settlers' administration.

Another means used by President Mobutu to strengthen his authority throughout the country was the political animation⁴⁴. It was an unbelievable instrument of the authenticity policy. The political animation was introduced into all official institutions such as public enterprises, schools and universities all over the country. They performed before starting the work day. The performance was devoted to the party (MPR) in a ritual called 'greeting to the flag' in which the public sang the anthem '*La Zaïroise*' and songs coupled with the dances dedicated to the 'guide of the revolution', that is to say, President Mobutu. A ministerial department called '*Mobilisation, Propagande et Animation Politique*' (MOPAP) was created for this purpose and was using public funds.

In order to strengthen the central power, President Mobutu needed to spread his name and image all over the country from the centre to even the remotest peripheries. David Van Reybrouck (2010) argues that, as a journalist, Mobutu very well understood the power of the media. Directly after his coup, he sent young Congolese to Paris to learn how to become television producers. A year later, on November 23rd, 1966 the first Zaïrian state channel was launched; in 1967 the first broadcasts in Lingala started. The country would have colour TV long before many parts of Eastern Europe (Van Reybrouck 2010:354f, quoted by Van den Bosh 2014: 17).

Several scholars of Congolese media such as Kasongo Mwema Y'ambayamba (2007) and Marie-Soleil Frère (2008) makes out that, during the era of Mobutu, there was only one national radio and television – *Office Zaïrois de Radiodiffusion et de Télévision* (OZRT) - for the whole country and programmes were broadcasted from Kinshasa towards the peripheries. Besides, there was in each region (periphery) a provincial chain of OZRT that broadcasted local programmes. The news either on television or on Radio started usually with the revolutionary songs devoted to President Mobutu.

With regard to the print media, in addition to '*Agence Zaïre Presse*' (AZAP), a state owned agency, *Elima* and *Salongo* were the two authorized newspapers that appeared during the Mobutu regime. Both newspapers were used for propaganda purposes as well. Mobutu's photos and activities were always on the front page. Furthermore, the national currency was engraved only with president Mobutu's effigy for the same purposes.

⁴⁴ Each province (région) had its own political animation group. This is a group of men and women singing and dancing political slogans and messages and songs of praise to thank President Mobutu and to support his regime. This has been presented as a strategy by which the centre was strengthened by the popular mass in spite of economical crises and other challenges. Jean-Jacques Malu-Malu (2014) mentions that very often, these groups met in Kinshasa to participate in the 'national competitions for the best revolutionary song', which are richly endowed. Driven by an excess of zeal, governors of provinces appointed by Mobutu sometimes took the direction of animation groups of their provinces and participate, without the slightest embarrassment, as singers and dancers in these competitions (Malu-Malu 2014:167).

The liberalization law of the media passed by the Parliament on June 22, 1996 during the transition period discussed in sub-section 5.4.2.1 broke the monopoly of the state in the media sector. This led to the emergence of commercial and religious private channels as well as the print media all over especially in Kinshasa (centre). Since everyone now had the freedom to listen to programmes broadcasted by any radio station or watch programmes offered by other television channels, this also led to the weakening of the communication of the Mobutu regime towards the populations especially those living in the peripheries in particular because of their distance from Kinshasa.

President Mobutu Sese Seko focused on unifying the people of the DRC by engineering nation-building. It was during his reign that there has been progress in terms of ethnic relations. For example, exogamous or interregional weddings became possible. Congolese people have begun to accept each other and transcend cultural differences. Administratively and linguistically, apart from its use in the Congolese popular music, Lingala which was Mobutu's language of address to the nation during the popular meetings and especially in the armed forces is actually used by the majority of Congolese people. Lingala has proven to be a cement of the nation. Through the use of Lingala, President Mobutu Sese Seko also fairly welded various ethnic groups that were previously enemies.

Furthermore, the Congolese were starting to behave as a nation by forming national teams in sport. According to Sean Fraser (2009) and Les-Sports.info (2007-2015), they even won as a nation some African trophies in soccer (CAN 1968 and 1974) and basketball (African Women's Championship of Nations 1983, 1986 and 1994) (Fraser 2009:23; Les-Sports.info 2007-2015) respectively. They represented the country as a nation in world sporting such as the FIFA world cup in 1974. The various national teams, whatever the sport, benefited from the support of the whole population of the centre as well as the peripheries, including the former restive peripheries.

The discussion in chapter 4 mentioned that the sentiment of the internal colonialism had sustained the creation of the secessionist movements in the wealthiest restive peripheries, especially in Katanga. In his early years in power, President Mobutu sought to control the economy of the peripheries. Thus the following section looks at the economic measures.

5.3.3 Economic strategies

The focus in this sub-section is on the major economic measures, namely nationalization and Zaïrianization, taken during the era of Mobutu with the purpose of strengthening the centre in line with Mobutist thought, as well as the radicalization measure he announced in the 1970s.

5.3.3.1 Nationalization

It has been mentioned in sub-section 4.2.2.2 that the largest mining companies of the DRC were located in the restive peripheries and managed by Belgian owners. Thus this sub-section discusses the measures of nationalisation taken by President Mobutu in 1967 with a special look at the company *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK) as a prominent example.

The concept of nationalization can be defined as, ‘the transfer to the State, by a legislative act and in the public interest, of property or private rights of a designated character, with a view to their exploitation or control by the State, or to their direction to a new objective by the State’⁴⁵ (Newcombe and Paradell 2009:324). As such nationalization was an important strategy Mobutu followed in order to achieve the strengthening of the centre. The takeover of the mining companies was also regarded as a means of eliminating the influence of the foreign powers on the restive peripheries of the DRC that had encouraged the birth of secessionist movements discussed in sub-section 4.4.4 especially about attempts at secession in Katanga and South Kasai.

Thus the Zaïrian policies under Mobutu proceeded to nationalize the ‘concessionary companies’ (for example UMHK later known as GECAMINES, and FORMINIÈRE later known as MIBA), for strategic reasons of control of the assets of the peripheries. The most important nationalization of the DRC’s mining industry was that of *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK) which was an important source of Central Government revenues.

In the management of nationalized companies care was taken not to favour particular ethnic groups as the board of GECAMINES demonstrates in Table 5.

Table 5: Board of directors of GECAMINES as for 1967

Board Members	Ethnic Groups	Position
Jean-Baptist Kibwe	Lunda(Shaba ⁴⁶)	President
Emmanuel Kini	Kongo (Bas-Zaïre)	Member
Raphaël Bintou	Luba (Shaba)	Member
André Bo-Boliko	Sakata (Bandundu)	Member

⁴⁵ According to Andrew Paul Newcombe and Lluís Paradell (2009:324) this was the definition of the Institut de Droit International in 1952.

⁴⁶ Katanga was renamed Shaba when Mobutu implemented the authenticity policy.

Roger Kithima	Kusu (Kivu)	Member
Radolphe Yav	Lunda (Shaba)	Member
André Mukendi	Luba (Shaba)	Member
Jean-Pierre Dericoyard	Lokele (Haut-Zaïre)	Member

Source: This table compiled by Dinavo 1984:168 with the help of Archives, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Kinshasa. Ordinance no. 68-366. September 4, 1967, Issued by President of Zaïre

The subsequent revolts of the periphery against Mobutu's regime have partly occurred in relation with the management of GECAMINES. Dinavo (1984) points out that the Lunda held the most important position of President of the Board of directors of the copper industry located in Shaba province in the Lunda heartland. However, during the entire Second Republic, the Lunda lost the key positions within the industry. They were displaced from 1968 on in the leadership position by the ruling elites (Dinavo 1984:168). All these aspects would be discussed in section 5.4 about the conduct of the former restive peripheries during the era of Mobutu.

Significantly, according to Kisangani and Bobb (2010), under agreements signed later, Belgian companies continued to provide technical assistance and marketed some of the mineral products. Many minerals continued to go to Belgium for refining. In the late 1960s, relations improved. Mobutu visited Belgium in June 1968 and was received as a houseguest by king Baudouin (Kisangani and Bobb 2010:47). This resulted in changes to the board of directors of GECAMINES that now included two Belgian representatives.

Table 6: Board of directors of GECAMINES as for 1968

Board Members	Ethnic Groups	Position
Mobutu Sese Seko	Ngbandi (Equateur)	Fondé de pouvoir
Damien Kandolo	Luba (Kasai Oriental)	Président
Robert Cayron	Belgian	Director General and Member
Pierre de Merre	Belgian	Assistant Director and Member
Jean Tshimpund-Bako	Luba (Shaba)	Member
André Bo-Boliko	Sakata (Bandundu)	Member

André Mukendi	Luba (Shaba)	Member
Jean-Pierre Dericoyard	Lokele (Oriental Province)	Member

Source: This table compiled by Dinavo 1984:169 with the help of Archives, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Kinshasa. Ordonnance no. 68-376. September 11, 1968, Issued by President of Zaïre

President Mobutu's presence in the board of directors of GECAMINES illustrates his will to manage the DRC's largest mining companies and the attention he paid to the economic resources of his regime. This seizure on GECAMINES allowed him to strengthen economically the core power and to keep Katanga Province in particular under authority of the Central Government. By definition, as *Fondé de pouvoir*, President Mobutu has received the mandate to negotiate and to conclude important transactions. His signature committed the company. In all probability, this position permitted him to guarantee the source of funding for his government and at the same time to strengthen his power.

Later, on July 20, 1973, with the same objective of the control of the natural resources of the peripheries by the Central Government, the Congolese parliament reinforced Mobutu's government decision. It passed the law no. 73-021 known as the Bakajika Law which provides the state full rights to all lands, forests and mines. By virtue of this law, the Zaïrian State is owner of soil and sub-soil of the country, that is to say, it has the right to take back the properties or goods whose control escaped him thus far.

The above law has somehow opened the way to President Mobutu to draw up the strategy of Zaïrianization discussed in the following sub-section.

5.3.3.2 Zaïrianization

The focus in this sub-section is on the withdrawal of assets located in the peripheries to the benefit of the centre as well as on the process of weakening of the peripheries.

The quest of President Mobutu for strengthening the centre led him to use Zaïrianization as strategic resource during the first decade of his coming to power. Thus to understand another source of power of the centre in Zaïre, that would have maintained the peripheries under control, requires paying attention to Zaïrianization which is part of the thought of President Mobutu in the economic sphere.

President Mobutu announced the measures for Zaïrianization in his speech of November 30, 1973 which entailed, according to Putzel, Lindemann and Schouten (2008), the distribution of the property of the old colonial bourgeoisie to selected 'beneficiaries' – a policy that provided the Mobutu regime with a new clientelist base (Putzel *et al* 2008:23). Kisangani and Bobb (2010) make it clear that, under Zaïrianization, foreign-owned businesses were taken over by

Zaïrians, and companies were urged to replace expatriate personnel with Zaïrian trainees (Kisangani and Bobb 2010:35).

In order to avoid misunderstanding of the economic strategies implemented by President Mobutu, it is important to stress their dissimilarity. In the light of the sub-section 5.3.3.1, nationalization in Zaïre was a direct transfer of the ownership of businesses belonging to foreigners, to President Mobutu's government; by contrast, 'Zaïreanization' (*sic*), according to Nancy Birdsall, Millan Vaishnav and Robert L. Ayres (2006), was an episode in which the state seized the assets of foreigners to redistribute them to cronies of President Mobutu (who mostly plundered them for the benefit of their own short-term consumption) (Birdsall *et al.* 2006:55). The new owners – also called *acquéreurs* - managed the Zaïrianized assets in the name of Mobutu's government.

Important for this discussion is that most businesses that were Zaïrianized were located in the peripheries. Their distribution to selected people close to President Mobutu and who were not necessarily natives from those areas gave rise to discontent among local populations⁴⁷. This policy resulted in the impoverishment of the people and reduced services in the peripheries. Thus, President Mobutu has strengthened the centre and subjected the peripheries to the centre in order to eliminate any independence tendencies.

Ronald C. Thompson (2008)'s writings illustrate what the Mobutu government precisely did. He points out that wanting to enrich himself beyond measure Mobutu ordered the seizure of about 2,000 foreign owned enterprises, such as farms, ranches, plantations, factories, wholesale businesses, and retail shops – all without compensation, and on the pretext that his newly named Zaïre required greater economic independence. Mobutu also acquired without cost a large agricultural empire that included fourteen plantations merged into a conglomerate. In 1974 he extended his economic empire by ordering further expropriation of foreign-owned businesses. The main beneficiaries of these enterprises were Mobutu, family members and political supporters. Mobutu personally profited from the sale of Zaïre's mineral riches. By the 1980s Mobutu's fortune was estimated in the range of 5 billion dollars, making him one of the richest men in the world (Thompson 2008:131). The effect of the centralization, and particularly the centralized control located in one person (Mobutu, and his confidants), was the lack of accountability in the management of the public resources. In building a highly centralized state, it was easy for the President to commit embezzlement and to enrich himself at the expense of

⁴⁷ For example, according to Kisangani (1997), Bisengimana, a Tutsi and chief of staff in the office of president, received several coffee plantations in Kivu; Deni Paluku - member of political Bureau from North Kivu - also got plantations and drugstores; Kithima bin Ramazani received most of the holdings in South Kivu; Nendaka – an old member of the political establishment close to Mobutu – also received several plantations in Haut-Zaïre and Equateur. Some foreigners, if married to Zaïrian women, managed to save their business (Kisangani 1997:13).

the nation. The squandering of public money by the elites at the centre has generated the underdevelopment of the peripheries as well as the impoverishment of their populations.

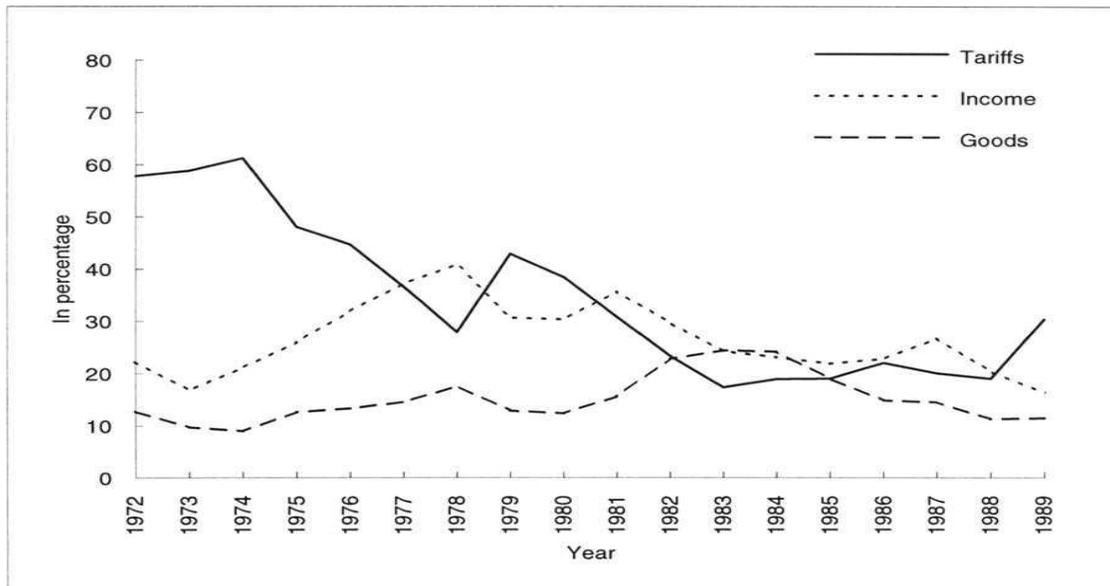
Consequently, from this period the rural exodus to urban centres particularly in Kinshasa has increased. By moving in search of work and better life, the young people that represent the work force left the peripheries thus leading to agricultural underproduction of the farms. Unable to absorb this surplus of population, the centres have started to deal with the increase in juvenile delinquency.

Zaïrianization resulted in increasing the national economic chaos. It was disastrous for the economy because new Zaïrian owners lacked managerial expertise and used these businesses for their own private enrichment. The wealth that President Mobutu, from a privileged political position, acquired partly through the implementation of this policy made him so powerful that he managed to subject Congolese officials from the centre, as well as in the peripheries. He used this policy to reward his supporters with the purpose to govern indefinitely.

According to Kisangani (1997), the Zaïrianization policy also caused a sharp decline in tax revenues on trade. Table 7 indicates the distribution of the sources of state revenues. In 1974, taxes on trade declined drastically and never recovered from the nationalization policy. Despite an increase in taxes on income to compensate for the fall in foreign trade taxes, the increase was inadequate to pay for the spending by the Mobutu government. Therefore, to compensate for declining taxes on foreign trade, the state had to rely on other forms of taxation such as fixed prices to producers and overvaluation (Kisangani 1997:16).

Again, the peripheries paid a price for Zaïrianization. The reason is that the sacrifice that the Mobutu's government required from the people as a result of the slowdown of the national economy was made by the peripheries. For example, the salary was lower in the provinces than in Kinshasa due to the cost of living. By contrast, the centre, especially the political class, continued to engulf the country's income because of high wages and other advantages such as free water, housing and electricity.

Table 7: Distribution of government revenue in 1974



Source: Data sources (36; 37; 38; 39; 40) in Appendix; see Kisangani 1997:15

5.3.3.3 Radicalization

The third economic strategy that President Mobutu implemented was the radicalization in an attempt to strengthen the centre and its leadership of Zaïre.

The connection here between nationalization and Zaïrianization is that towards the end of 1974, Mobutu announced 'radicalization measures' requesting all beneficiaries of the 1973 measures to turn their businesses over to the state. Three weeks later, Mobutu reversed his decision, stating that radicalization concerned only the businesses that had not been nationalized in 1973. More than 100 foreign companies were nationalized under the radicalization measures and placed under state ownership to be headed by *délégués généraux* (general delegates). Most of the delegates were their relatives. This new wave of nationalization met with strong foreign opposition from Belgium when its major companies operating in Zaïre were taken over by the state (Kisangani 1997:16).

To summarize the economic measures taken under Mobutu's regime did not contribute to the development of the DRC and to the well-being of the Congolese people. President Mobutu's economic strategies seemed like a double-edged knife. They helped him to maintain himself in power by strengthening the centre and by weakening the peripheries. The systems of clientelism and nepotism have determined the distribution of resources in the country. Despite having received businesses located in the provinces, the vast majority of recipients were living

in Kinshasa. This created discontent and sentiment of internal colonialism on the part of local people of which the majority is poor.

The concept of the nation in comparison to the family such as taught by the president referring to the MPR as family politically organised was defeated in the practice of everyday life, because within the family there was only a small number of family members who were well fattened by the father of the nation. For example, the socio-economic crisis that plagued Zaïre during the era of Mobutu destroyed the family as the basic unit of the nation. Most fathers of families had become unable to provide for the needs of their household. Phenomena such as street children rejected by their families and dilapidated school infrastructure appeared.

By contrast, President Mobutu's supporters and relatives were much better served financially and materially. All in all, this implied exploitation or internal colonialism of the peripheries by the centre and consequently had implications for nation-building. Importantly, during the first decade of his rule (in the 1970s), the reality on the ground was that the shared suffering and hardship did not unite the people against President Mobutu and his inner circle. His power remained intact and even strengthened. Thus in spite of the gradual failures of the Zaïrian State, no province, especially the former restive peripheries, requested self-governing.

Previous analyses in sub-section 4.4.1.1 established that the territorial unity was also threatened from the exterior due to superpowers' geostrategic interests in the DRC. As said before, Mobutu's coming to power took place against an internal environment of turmoil and high international concern. Thus the following discussion is about foreign policies with the West and African countries from which President Mobutu received significant support for the centre.

5.3.4 Diplomatic strategies

Attention in this sub-section is paid to the foreign policy President Mobutu put in place in order to stay in power for as long as possible. Those strategies were helpful to strengthen the centre and to keep together the peripheries of the DRC.

President Mobutu managed to acquire international support from the West and Arab nations thanks to his skills in diplomacy. Of particular importance is the support he gained for his cause from France and the USA. He served as a CIA informant as mentioned in sub-section 5.2.1. In fact state leaders who are agents for foreign states are a perennial problem in Africa and also in the Middle East and becoming so in Eastern Europe.

The support granted to President Mobutu in particular in order to strengthen the centre of Zaïre in its relationship with the periphery and at the same time to maintain him in power was conditioned to the protection of the interests of the donor countries. For example, in a 1975 letter to French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's principal African affairs advisor, René

Journiac, the French Ambassador to Zaïre at the time, André Ross, specified France's principal interests in Zaïre:

Our interests are not situated in the short-term, but rather in the medium and long-terms. It is essential to insure the future of our direct supply in copper and minerals in which this country contains an abundant supply. Our interests also consist in France's participation in the construction and exploitation of the Grand Inga Dam which constitutes the largest source of hydro-electric energy in the world. For us, that is Zaïre, but it is also the second largest francophone country in the world which, through its size, necessarily exercises an attractive force on the countries of our former Black Africa. We thus must look to our position. The Americans who helped Zaïre during a difficult period have preserved an essential position there. Our action must today aim at profiting from the current situation to place us there in a comparable way (Letter from André Ross to René Journiac, 16.5.1975, quoted by Nathaniel Kinsey Powell no date: 2).

Thus, over decades, the reinforcement of Mobutu's position in Zaïre was openly with the support of the West although he made efforts internally to strengthen the centre at the expense of the peripheries. Harvey J. Langholtz and Chris E. Stout (2004) states that Zaïre was accorded top priority by the West due to its natural resources and regional positioning within the context of the Cold War, consequently allowing Mobutu to assume the status of being 'untouchable' (Langholtz and Stout 2004:208). By gaining the support of France and the USA, President Mobutu prevented them from exploiting possible separatist tendencies in the peripheries. Furthermore, he used the Cold War context of international politics at the time by presenting himself as an anti-communist and making Zaïre a stronghold against the spread of communism. He was successful in seducing the West with the intention to strengthen his authority over the whole country and to keep the peripheries together and connected to the Central Government.

According to Ellen Ray (2000), the era of Mobutu began with ardent, financial and military support from the USA. From 1965 to 1991, Zaïre received more than \$1.5 billion in economic and military aid from the USA. In return, US multinationals increased their share of the ownership of Zaïre's fabulous mineral wealth. 'On the foreign policy front, Zaïre was a bastion of anti-communism during the Cold War, in the center of a continent Washington saw as perilously close to Moscow's influence. As the State Department put it, "Zaïre has been a stabilizing force and a staunch supporter of US and western policies ..."' (Ray 2000:1). The anti-communist stance is not the only gain the USA made. They also have access to the resources of the DRC.

Whether it is about the diplomatic relationship with France or the USA, President Mobutu's goal was firstly the stability and permanence of his regime. His allies, in turn, had their eyes on the supply of natural resources and the reinforcement of their hegemony all over the world and especially in Africa. During the Cold War, President Mobutu was to a certain extent used by the

USA as a CIA representative in central Africa with the purpose of preventing Soviet influence as previously mentioned in sub-section 4.4.1.1. The discussion below demonstrates that Mobutu was acting as such. However, the withdrawal of support by the USA to the government of President Mobutu has coincided with the end of the Cold War in 1991.

President Mobutu was a shrewd politician. He developed talents which allowed him to rule even beyond the end of the Cold War. Manipulation was a weapon that he knew how to use to his benefit. For example, Van den Bosch (2014) argues that US and French interests in Africa only seemed complementary during the Cold War. The USA aimed to keep Soviet and Cuban leverage at bay and even tried to 'roll back' advancement by the Soviet Union. On the other hand, France was not preoccupied with ideological issues, but first of all sought to consolidate, promote and extend their influence in their former colonies and other French-speaking African countries. France was very protective of its former colonies and more lenient towards leftist regimes in its *chasse gardée* as long as their loyalty to Paris was guaranteed (Van den Bosch 2014:20-21). Thus John P. Schraeder (2000) states that while this led to a direct clash of French and US policies in Africa at times, Mobutu found it easy to use this tension to convince Paris to establish better ties with Zaïre, especially as France had perceived Mobutu to be a puppet of the USA and a potential threat to its influence in central Africa (Schraeder 2000:398-400, quoted by Van den Bosch 2014:21). During the Angolan Crisis⁴⁸ in 1974, a pivotal moment in Cold War strategies, Mobutu was still able to bully the United States for more support and aid:

In an effort to shock the White House into reassessing the value of American-Zaïrian ties and making policy more consistent throughout the executive branch, Mobutu on June 19, 1975, accused Washington of plotting his overthrow, declared Ambassador Dean Hinton persona non grata, and arrested the majority of the CIA's contract Zaïrian agents. [...] Ford and Kissinger quickly sought to repair the breach with Mobutu (Schraeder 1994:58, quoted by Van den Bosch 2014:21).

In addition, President Mobutu managed to transform the DRC's chaos of the first half of the 1960s into a positive feature for the survival of his government. Guy Vanthemsch (2012) argues that Western leaders saw him as a man who, despite personal shortcomings and excesses, could guarantee the unity of the country. The choice was simple: Mobutu or chaos. In the

⁴⁸ Three revolutionary movements were fighting for the independence of Angola since the 1960s. The *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) was a Marxist organization centered in the capital, Luanda, and led by Agostinho Neto. The *Frente Nacional para a Libertação de Angola* (FNLA), led by Holden Roberto, was in the north of the country and had strong ties to US ally, Mobutu Sese Seko, in neighbouring Zaïre, including the *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA) led by Jonas Savimbi. On January 15, 1975 Alvor Accords between Portuguese representatives and these three main armed groups were signed for the formation of a transitional coalition government that should lead to independence. At independence of Angola in November 11, 1975, however, trust quickly broke down among the three groups. As a result of this, Angola descended into civil war as each group vied for power. Angola crisis of 1974-1975 gave rise therefore to straining relations between the USA and Soviet Union. Finally MPLA won militarily. Insofar as it was already established in the capital city, it was successfully in defending its position until the end of the Cold War.

1970s, Europe and the USA would fail to acknowledge the ultimate reality of this choice: initially Mobutu and chaos but eventually, only chaos. Still, we should not underestimate the complexity of the situation. The Congolese (Zaïrian) president was a master tactician and not just a puppet on the string of the foreign powers. He understood the art of manipulation and pleasing, and was fully aware of the power of image and word, as Belgian diplomats would repeatedly discover to their shame and regret. Mobutu succeeded perfectly in playing Belgium, France, the USA, and the Soviet Union, one against the other in order to entrench his position and to stay in power (Vanthemsch 2012:206).

While receiving support from the USA, Mobutu still wanted to enjoy a degree of autonomy in the foreign policy of Zaïre. This explains why, for example, he broke off diplomatic relations with Israel, despite the special relationship that Israel had with the USA. On October 4, 1973, two days before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur Arab-Israeli war, President Mobutu announced his decision to break relations with Israel during a long speech delivered at the UN General Assembly:

Zaïre must choose between a friendly country, Israel, and a brother country, Egypt. Now, between a friend and a brother, the choice is clear. And our decisions are taken in complete independence and outside all pressures (Kitchen 1983:1).

This decision earned him the sympathy of the Arab countries. Thus Constantine Panos Danopoulos and Cynthia Ann Watson (1996) argue that Mobutu's anti-Israel policy, including the break in diplomatic relations following the Arab-Israel war of 1973, also brought him support from Arab states such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Sudan (Danopoulos and Watson 1996:451). The support from Arab countries would become useful to quell rebellions in the peripheries against Mobutu's regime notably in 1977. This issue is discussed in detail in section 5.4 devoted to the reaction of the restive peripheries against the strategies of President Mobutu.

Furthermore, President Mobutu also utilized the relations between Zaïre and neighbouring countries such as Angola as a resource in order to strengthen the centre. In line with his allegiance to the USA, President Mobutu was determined to overthrow the pro-communist government of the newly independent Angola under its first president, Agostinho Neto⁴⁹. President Mobutu continued to support the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA) during the 1970s, but later switched its support to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Mobutu allowed the Congolese territory to be used for guerilla bases and arms shipments to the UNITA guerillas (Kasangani and Bobb 2010:26). The support provided to UNITA angered the Angolan government, which in retaliation gave military support to the

⁴⁹ President Neto installed a marxist-leninist regime after the independence of Angola in November 11, 1974.

Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo (AFDL)'s rebellion led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila against President Mobutu as mentioned in Chapter 6.

President Mobutu succeeded in taking advantage of the geostrategic location of the DRC for protecting his power by integrating a number of regional organizations such as the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS/CEEAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (ECGLC/CEPGL)⁵⁰. One of the reasons for the longevity of President Mobutu's political career, in terms of foreign policy, is also the strategy of good neighbourhood he put in place. With the purpose of strengthening the centre, he tried usually to influence his neighbours to establish friendly relations with Zaïre. One approach of doing this was by sustaining the Hutu in Rwanda during the era of Habyarimana as a prominent example. President Mobutu's strategy thus consisted of an effort to increase alliances with the objective to prevent subversive activities against his regime from the neighbouring countries.

Another strategy is that President Mobutu utilized his personal relationships with several heads of state as resource when the centre's survival was at stake in Zaïre. For example, King Hassan II of Morocco became a valuable ally of President Mobutu, who opposed admission of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)⁵¹ to the Organization for African Unity (OAU) in 1984 and later to the African Union (AU).

In summary, this section dealt with the diplomatic strategies during the era of Mobutu. The focus was on the way Mobutu used the relations with other countries in order to strengthen the centre. Manipulation was central to President Mobutu's foreign policy. If today's DRC remains Africa's 'heart of darkness', according to Götz Bechtolsheimer (2012), it is largely due to the legacy of the Mobutu regime, a regime that was fostered and sustained by the USA (Bechtolsheimer 2012:215).

The following sub-section deals with the strategies he employed to protect the territory and himself in order to strengthen the centre.

⁵⁰ For example, according to Morisho Mwana Biningo Nene (2012), many scholars estimated that the creation of CEPGL was driven by political reasons rather than economic ones. The creation of this institution, and its future functioning, has revealed that it was a tool at the disposal of Mobutu to keep and expand power and domination over the central and eastern parts of the continent. The initial objective of the organization was to enhance cross-border trade and co-operation, and ensure peace and stability in the region. However, evidence shows that CEPGL was used by the presidents of the three countries (Zaïre, Rwanda and Burundi) to prevent their opponents from using either of the countries as a rear base to destabilize their respective regimes (Nene 2012:17).

⁵¹ The government of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic controls a thin strip of land in Western Sahara a former Spanish colony. It is a partially recognized state which was admitted to the OAU in 1984 but is not recognized by the UN. The SADR, however, claims sovereignty over the entire territory of the former Western Sahara. Morocco, however, controls and administers the rest of the disputed territory and calls these lands its Southern Provinces.

5.3.5 Military and security strategies

One of the reasons the centre in the DRC was unable to control its peripheries at the time of independence was because of the weakness of the national army. This sub-section looks at the military strategies put in place during the era of Mobutu after the various attempted secessions were quelled with the assistance of the international community. President Mobutu's strengthening of the military was aimed at utilizing security forces as instruments for the reinforcement of the centre.

His background as soldier and informant helped him a lot in the organization of his own security. Besides the military, he created other security forces as instruments of strengthening the centre in particular. The security forces together with the intelligence services allowed the President to maintain Zaïre's territorial unity and to prevent any conspiracy against his regime. To prevent a coup d'état, the people of President Mobutu's home region of Equateur, especially those of his Ngbandi ethnic group, dominated the security.

5.3.5.1 Protection of the territory

Threats against the territorial integrity of a state may affect the survival of the central government. In the context of the DRC, given the centre's dependency vis-à-vis the peripheries, this was a possibility. The armed forces, as instrument of coercion of the Central Government, are of particular importance in this regard since they could force the peripheries to stay under control of the centre.

In their valued research on the military under Mobutu, Meditz and Merrill (1994) mentions that throughout the first five years of independence, the armed forces - military and security services - were fragmented into several competing power centres, working for various ethnic political leaders (for example Moïse Tshombe and Albert Kalonji) as well as their own interests. As discussed previously in sub-section 4.3.4 at the time of independence the leadership of the armed forces was relatively inexperienced. The armed forces lacked professionalism due to a combination of ineffective national leadership and a chaotic political and social environment. This affected their ability to protect the territorial integrity of the DRC and at times even constituted a threat to its existence. Only with the assistance of the UN forces the ANC was able to quell the secessionist movements as discussed in chapter 4 and the DRC was kept intact (Meditz and Merrill 1994:278).

However, the military as well as the security forces were unquestionably one of the backbones of Mobutu's strengthening of the centre. Marshal Mobutu has used the military to take power twice during the constitutional crises mentioned in sub-section 5.2.1, and he used it likewise to

stay in power for several years. In this regard the use of force was an important instrument to consolidate his position.

Several scholars, such as Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002), have found that Mobutu relied heavily on the military forces to repress dissent and to intimidate the population, throughout his tenure. 'These forces ranged from heavily armed military units to more or less civilian intelligence and immigration services' (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002:154). The military units were generally autonomous of the armed force's chief of staff, whose official title was chief of the general staff (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002:154). From the outset, the commitment of Mobutu's government was to protect the legacy of the huge size of the country. Thus, the mission of the ANC, which in October 1971 was renamed the *Forces Armées Zaïroises* (FAZ), was primarily the protection of the integrity of Zaïre's territory against external aggression. Internally, the FAZ was tasked with surveillance against attempts at downsizing the territory. But in practice, according to Meditz and Merrill (1994), the primary task was the suppression of perceived internal threats to the Mobutu regime (Meditz and Tim Merrill 1994: xxxiii).

After the strengthening of his position as national leader, President Mobutu sought to be in charge of the centre of command of the military and to put under his sole authority soldiers all over the national territory. According to the law no. 77-012 of July 1977, President Mobutu personally promoted and dismissed officers, ordered equipment and directed military operations. His posts included Supreme Commander, Commander-in-Chief, President of the Superior Council of Defence and Minister of Defence (Law no. 77-012, Articles 17-18). This implied that the peripheries were unable to organize their own militia as in the early years of independence.

Structurally, in order to control all the peripheral areas, the army general staff was - and still is - located in the centre (Kinshasa) and administers its forces through three regional headquarters (also called military regions) located at Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Kisangani. According to Baudouin Wikha Tshibinda (2006), the boundaries of the military region correspond with those of one or more of the administrative provinces. The commander of a military region is appointed and relieved of his duties by the head of state. A military region is subdivided into one or more brigades that control effectively the battalions. The battalions are in turn subdivided into companies. The brigade is under order from a superior officer or general named commander of the brigade. It meets the Commander of Land Forces of the operation of units under its authority. Other structures are organized as specialized units throughout the Republic (Tshibinda 2006:11).

Hierarchically, in order to have effective control of the troops both at the centre and in the peripheries, there were few lines of authority below Mobutu. Thus the organizational structures of the military strengthened Mobutu's position and led to the officers and soldiers'

subordination, in accordance with the principle of the unity of command everywhere and even in remote areas in the peripheries. Furthermore, as Ciment (2015) indicates, President Mobutu constantly shifted his army commanders from one part of the country to another, in order to prevent them from developing a rapport with local opposition forces that could foment a coup (Ciment 2015:138). This was particularly the situation towards the end of the 1980s when the people began to express dissatisfaction following the abuses of the regime.

Zaire has also, since independence, benefited from various forms of foreign military assistance. Likewise, during the era of Mobutu, the strengthening of the centre required assistance from Zaire's partners, but he strategically avoided becoming dependent on a limited number of sources in this regard. By expanding and diversifying the sources of military assistance, according to Glickson and Sinai (1994), Mobutu hoped to reduce Zaire's reliance on any one source of aid. This process would give him greater flexibility and could also provide more assistance as the various donors competed for access (Glickson and Sinai 1994:275). With regard to the centre-periphery relations in the sphere of national defence, everything was organized in such a manner that the centre controls the peripheries powerfully. However, motivated by the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, Mobutu's Western allies put a stop to military assistance partly due to human rights abuses. This has indeed weakened Zaire's centre of power.

One way or another, each military strategy mentioned above had contributed to control the whole of the peripheries and to connect them with the centre except the eastern part of Zaire as discussed in sub-section 5.4.2.2.

5.3.5.2 Safe-guarding the central authority

The weakness of the centre during the first legislature after independence was also caused by the powerlessness and vulnerability of the leaders at the centre. Thus, in the process of strengthening the centre, President Mobutu organized his own security, because he was of the opinion that there must be a strong man at the centre capable of maintaining the territorial unity.

President Mobutu maintained his hold on power by using repression as a strategy. As stated by International Business Publications (IBP) (2011) the limitations placed on all forms of organized opposition, together with the diffuse fear instilled among the masses by the security forces, are the most obvious explanation for Mobutu's extraordinary record of political longevity (IBP 2011:83).

Thus, strengthening the centre also required the organization of the personal security of the Head of State at the centre. Most of the safety precautions referred to below had been lacking

during the First Republic. President Mobutu ensured that this close guard was made up of reliable soldiers who were dedicated to his cause. With regard to the ethnic composition of the soldiers in charge of his protection, Peter Rosenblum (1997) points out that the armed forces of Zaïre were composed of overlapping and competitive units that included individuals close to Mobutu and particularly members from his ethnic group, the Ngbandi, and neighbouring groups in the region of Equateur, primarily the Ngbaka (Rosenblum 1997:31). Due to his mixed ethnic ancestry he favoured to some extent other ethnic groups within his home province. At the same time the remaining and largest segment of the military was comprised of many other ethnic groups.

In 1986, with the help of US military aid and advisers in particular, he built up his faction of the army, *Division Spéciale Présidentielle* (DSP), into the strongest military force. Most importantly, according to Gondola (2002), the DSP was an elite military unit entrusted with President Mobutu's personal security. It included mostly Ngbandi soldiers, drawn from Mobutu's home region as mentioned above. They received military training from Israeli officers, the most sophisticated military equipment, and enjoyed high pay. All of this came at the expense of the FAZ and was a deliberate effort to reduce the risk of a coup by the regular army (Gondola 2002:153). The DSP was responsible for the safety of the President and his family. The criterion for recruitment into DSP was loyalty to Marshal Mobutu and the DSP commander General Nzimbi (President Mobutu's cousin).

In addition to the above changes, Marshal Mobutu reorganized the intelligence services primarily for his personal interest. The most important intelligence services were the *Service d'Action et des Renseignements Militaires* (SARM), in charge of military intelligence; and SARM's civilian counterpart, the *Agence Nationale de Documentation* (AND) (IBP 2011:83). He also relied on various personally established networks to provide him with alternative intelligence and assessments. These operatives were also used to spy on the intelligence services themselves. Little is known about these networks, but they were reported to be large and well funded, given the president's tremendous personal wealth and unusual access to the Zaïrian treasury.

Because Mobutu established an unprecedented sense of national unity and political stability, the military's role in keeping domestic order has been increasingly handed over to civilian security forces and a growing intelligence apparatus. Thus, it is not surprising that the US Intelligence assessment of the military under Mobutu (1988) found that, while the armed forces have remained an important base of political support for Mobutu, his need for military backing to maintain internal security has decreased as a result of his grip on power. Mobutu's mastery of army politics and his shrewd manipulation of personal and ethnic loyalties were successful in preventing military unhappiness and potential challengers to his authority. At the

same time, his absolute control of all military, paramilitary, and security forces continued to ensure that civilian authority was always subject to the consent of Commander in Chief Mobutu (US Intelligence assessment 1988:3).

President Mobutu became increasingly separated from the people because of the excess of repression by the security services at the centre, as well as in the peripheries. Detention conditions were often degrading in the prisons and human rights abuses continued in these facilities. According to Human Rights Watch (1994), President Mobutu prided himself on the claim that he had built no new prisons⁵² (Human Rights Watch 1994:7). However, as mentioned by the same source, all of the acknowledged prisons under the authority of the Ministry of Justice were indeed built by the Belgians, but under President Mobutu prisons and interrogation facilities proliferated in the major cities and the interior (peripheries). Unfortunately, the number of such facilities has never been fully documented (Human Rights Watch 1994:7). The abuse of human rights was detrimental to the centre, as the main international supporters of President Mobutu's power deprived him of their support when he had to overcome the rebellion of the AFDL led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

The centre-periphery relations were not always harmonious during the era of Mobutu. Thus for the purpose of this study, the last sub-section seeks to look at the restive peripheries of the 1960s.

5.4 IMPLICATION OF MOBUTU'S STRATEGIES FOR THE RESTIVE PERIPHERIES

The focus in this sub-section is on the feelings of the restive peripheries in relation to President Mobutu's strategies for strengthening the centre.

Attention is first paid to the rebellions that occurred in Shaba Province (formerly Katanga) in the second half of the 1970s. Second, with respect to national unity, it deals with the noncompliance of the Luba from Kasai of the decisions by the central authority following the expulsion of the Luba from Kasai in Katanga in the first half of the 1990s. Third, it looks at Haut-Zaïre (formely Oriental Province) and Kivu region by discussing the request for the administration of the territory by the indigenous people from Haut-Zaïre and the organization of the Nande ethnic group from Kivu on account of their marginalization in the politics of Zaïre.

Joseph Lapalombara (1974) warned that it is useful to think about nation-building as an ongoing process that continually tests the ability of national leaders to deal with internal problems. Within the context of the DRC some of these problems were fundamental in nature. They often

⁵² Zaïre Press Agency 1980, reprinted in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts June 26, 1980.

reached crisis proportions in the sense that a failure to deal adequately with them caused violence, paralysis in policy making, reinforcement of old divisions and the creation of new ones, the overthrow of political leaders, and even greater difficulties in making national power a reality. The nation-building crises themselves tend to be universal; that is, they tend to be associated with the evolution of every nation (Lapalombara 1974:46).

5.4.1 Katanga (Shaba)

The vulnerability of the centre was demonstrated when Shaba Province (formerly Katanga) was invaded twice by the ex-Katangese secessionist gendarmes of the early 1960s to quell rebellions, namely what has become known as Shaba I (March 8 - May 8, 1977) and Shaba II (May 13 - June 3, 1978). Although the era of Mobutu brought generally peace in the DRC, both rebellions were significant challenges the centre was confronted with.

5.4.1.1 Causes of rebellions in Shaba

There were grievances underlying the Shaba I and Shaba II rebellions in which ethnic groups played a role. Discontent among the Lunda was important and was due to a number of reasons. It was already mentioned in sub-section 5.2 that Moise Tshombe, who was prime minister in a coalition government of the DRC from July 1964 to October 1965, was forced into exile at the end of 1965 by Mobutu. Furthermore, as seen in sub-section 5.3.3.1, Table 5 shows that one of the two representatives on the board of directors of GECAMINES in 1967 was from the Lunda ethnic group. The position of president was filled by a Lunda. In contrast Table 6 indicates that the Lunda ethnic group was excluded from the running of GECAMINES though it was located in their homeland.

Other causes of these two rebellions are exposed in the conclusion of the thesis of Dinavo (1984). He states that economic causes, particularly nationalization and Zaïrianization measures taken by the new ruling class certainly disenchanting the Lunda. These measures caused economic grievances among the Lunda by displacing them from the key positions within the copper industry and also by denying them acquisitions in businesses, industries and plantations that the new elites ruling Zaïrianized.

While the Lunda lost the economic and political power they once held during the colonial administration and during the First Republic, the new ruling elites of the Second Republic consolidated their power through the formation of a new class structure, which excluded the participation of the Lunda in the decision-making process of the state. The formation of this new class structure downgraded the Lunda, who were the elites during the colonial period and the First Republic, to the lower classes - that is, to the petty bourgeoisie and peasants and migratory workers. This understandably led to political grievances among the Lunda.

The establishment of a one-party state, the *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* as discussed in the political strategies of President Mobutu, also caused unhappiness among the Lunda because they were excluded from the Political Bureau of the party, which was responsible for all the policies, as well as the political orientation of the country. All of these changes forced the Lunda, at home and abroad, to form their own party, the National Front for the Liberation of the Congo, which claimed responsibility for the Shaba I and Shaba II rebellions (Dinavo 1984:285-286).

This required the invasion of Shaba Province in 1977 and 1978 by the Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (FNLC), whose armed forces invaded Zaïre's Shaba Region in 1977 and 1978, from bases in Angola (Coutsoukis 2004: no page). This put Mobutu's regime to the test and to some extent violated Zaïre's territory.

5.4.1.2 Front pour la Libération Nationale du Congo (FLNC)

The rebellions in Shaba were planned by the FLNC of which most members belonged to the Lunda ethnic group and the ex-Katangan gendarmes who were exiled in Angola and who fought for Tshombe's secessionist movement (CONAKAT) from July 11, 1960 to January 14, 1963. Nevertheless, Timothy J. Stapleton (2013) and Photius Coutsoukis (2004) are of the opinion that the goal of the invader was primarily the overthrow of Mobutu's regime and not the secession of Shaba Province (Stapleton 2013:164; Coutsoukis 2004: no page). This is an indication that the problem of the DRC's territorial unity of the 1960s was no longer of importance during the era of Mobutu. Despite recruiting largely from Lunda and other ethnic communities of southwestern Shaba Region, there was no sign of Shaba separatism in its pronouncements or actions (Coutsoukis 2004: no page).

5.4.1.3 Failure of Shaba I and Shaba II rebellions

Despite the strategies regarding the military seen in sub-section 5.3.5, the *Forces Armées Zaïroises* (FAZ) were unable to defeat the FLNC rebels during the Shaba I rebellion, which was also called the Eighty Day War. Stapleton (2013) argues that Mobutu, appealed to his old allies by portraying himself the victim of a communist attack. However, Belgium was displeased with him for nationalizing businesses, and Jimmy Carter's administration in the USA, with its emphasis on human rights, was hesitant to help an oppressive government. However, the anticommunist King of Morocco (Hassan II) provided Mobutu with a 1,500-strong parachute brigade flown to Shaba by the French, who had recently become Zaïre's main external sponsor⁵³. In addition, Egypt assisted by providing pilots and mechanics for Zaïre's French-built

⁵³ It is important to mention why France in particular became a sponsor of Zaïre. According to Alain Rouvez, Michael Coco and Jean-Paul Paddock (1994), many French citizens worked in the Shaba region, and France was

Mirage jets, while Saudi Arabia sent money. The Belgians and Americans eventually contributed supplies. Between mid-April and the end of May, Zaïrean and Moroccan troops with air, artillery and arms support, launched a two-pronged offensive that gradually pushed the FLNC back into Angola. Although the local Shaba population did not provide support to the rebels, Mobutu's forces conducted brutal reprisals, particularly against the Lunda ethnic group from which most of the FLNC had originated. About 200,000 people fled across the border to Angola (Stapleton 2013:164-165).

The Eighty Day War was a true test of the capacity of the FAZ to defend the territorial integrity of the country, as well as the power of Mobutu. The reality on the ground showed that Mobutu had not yet succeeded in forming a sufficiently powerful army. It was the commitment of the allies that he made in his diplomatic strategies which allowed him to overcome the Shaba I rebellion within the economic lung of Zaïre (DRC).

According to Kisangani and Ndikumana (2003), after the first Shaba war, Mobutu embarked on a mission of repression. Dozens of military officers were hastily tried and received sentences ranging from several years in prison to execution⁵⁴. These actions exacerbated political tensions. In this context of political tensions and economic distress, the former Katangan gendarmes launched the second Shaba invasion on May 3, 1978. Again, the FNLC declared that its aim was mainly to remove Mobutu from power and not to conquer Shaba. The rebels captured the mining town of Kolwezi on May 13, 1978. Mobutu was saved by a contingent of 700 French troops and 1,700 Belgian soldiers with logistical support from the American Air Force (Young and Turner 1985, quoted by Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:19). But the rest of the DRC remained relatively calm during the rebellion. The USA accused the Soviet Union and Cuba of sponsoring the rebellion, but the evidence did not corroborate the accusation (Kisangani and Ndikumana 2003:19).

eager to keep the mineral resources there away from superpower rivalry. President Giscard d'Estaing had favoured a drastic improvement in Franco-Zaïrian relations and wanted to signal to President Mobutu that French authorities supported him during times of instability. France, under President Pompidou, had signed a General Agreement of Technical Military Cooperation. This agreement included the dispatch to Kinshasa of a French military advisor. France's interest in Zaïre was motivated by commercial considerations and Zaïre's tremendous reservoir of minerals, but also by the shared language. France could not allow Soviet proxies to destabilize its newly consolidated interests (Rouvez *et al.* 1994:170).

⁵⁴ Most military officers tried were from Kasai and the eastern part of Zaïre especially Shaba. The reason is the same as Amnesty International (1980) has mentioned in the case of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Nguz a Karl-I-Bond. He was dismissed and arrested in July 1977 for undermining Zaïre's external security, failing to reveal his knowledge of FNLC plans to invade Shaba and offending the Head of State. He was tried by the State Security Court in September 1977 and condemned to death. His dismissal and arrest occurred after the Western press had cited him as a possible successor to President Mobutu. He was, moreover, the only member of the government who belonged to the Lunda ethnic group, the same group as most of the FLNC rebels, and was closely related to the Lunda Paramount Chief, the Mwant Yav, who was also arrested in mid-1977 (Amnesty International 1980:10).

5.4.1.4 Implications of the Shaba wars for centre-periphery relations in Zaïre

President Mobutu learned some lessons from the Shaba rebellions. He realized that over centralization was problematic and he therefore decided to move away from centralized management of the territory in favour of territorial decentralization as an alternative for strengthening the centre. Thus, Zaïre became a decentralized unitary state since the implementation of Ordinance-Law no. 82/006 of February 25, 1982 (also called Law on decentralization).

Vunduawe Te Pemako (1982), the author of the law on decentralization in Zaïre was a member of the Ngbandi ethnic group and an important thinker of the Mobutu government. He stressed that, politically, decentralization is the participation of the population of the peripheries in the discussion and management of public affairs in the matters concerning them directly. In a legal and administrative context, decentralization is the transformation of the peripheries into places of initiative, decision-making and responsibility. From an economic perspective, decentralization is the granting of new impetus to economic development of the peripheries (my translation) (Pemako 1982:328). As one can see, decentralization was used as a means to improve the centre-periphery relations, but with the only objective of strengthening the centre.

The functioning of the decentralization in Zaïre is highlighted by Kankonde Mbuyi (1991) as follows:

When a national entity is decentralized, the local areas should be acknowledged to have the right to administer certain affairs themselves, and have some autonomy, although still subject to some central government control. In the case of Zaïre, the law on decentralization, which has clearly divided the area of responsibility between the national Government (centre) and the decentralized entity (peripheries), recognizes, above all, that each decentralized entity has, in principle, general authority over local affairs; then, it establishes a list of items in each area which affect the capacity of the decentralized entity but which are administered by the Central Government. The same law established the organic structures of decentralized entities (Mbuyi 1991:120).

However, with the intention to show his authority over the peripheries and their subordination to the centre, President Mobutu continued to appoint the Governors of the provinces from outside of their home areas. But, he gave more responsibilities to the territorial officers of the peripheries to enable them to deal with emergencies instead of having to wait for instructions from the centre.

The centre weakened as a result of the crises that were provoked by a number of Mobutu's strategies. The next sub-section shows the utilization of ethnic sentiments by President Mobutu as a resource for the survival of his regime.

5.4.2 South Kasai (Kasai Oriental)

The situation of the relations between the centre and the periphery in Zaïre were exacerbated by the expulsion of the Lubas from Kasai who lived in Katanga Province.

5.4.2.1 Background to the disobedience of the Lubas from Kasai

In the late 1980s, following internal socio-political crises, a popular consultation initiated by President Mobutu was organized all over the country, including the centre and the peripheries. All things began with the end of the Cold War which materialized with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the breakup of the Soviet Union. The consequence of both world events was the snowball effect of the implementation of democracy in Eastern Europe. This had implications for the states of Africa, including Zaïre.

In the 1990s Zaïre experienced a deepening economic crisis. Economic, social and international pressure on the government intensified. Zaïre remained a one-party state until the beginning of 1990. Political space for other political parties opened when, in a speech of April 24, 1990, President Mobutu announced the end of the one-party system. This meant the opening of the period of transition towards democratic, free and transparent elections. The international pressure on the Mobutu government together with the internal opposition, which included civil society movements for democracy, but particularly the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) – a political party of a Luba from Kasai, Etienne Tshisekedi (once an ardent adversary of Mobutu) had strong support from the Kasaian community. A number of political parties have been created mostly in Kinshasa. Some political parties of the 1960s, namely ABAKO, PALU and MNC-Lumumba, re-entered the political scene.

On February 28, 1991 at N'Sele, 53 opposition parties held a dialogue with President Mobutu in order to reach consensus and to form a government of national unity. Tshisekedi was appointed Prime Minister by President Mobutu in October 1991⁵⁵ in accordance with the political agreement reached between the opposition and the *mouvance présidentielle* to attenuate the political tension in the country. Tshisekedi was removed from office by Mobutu soon after. Later in October 1991, the pro-Mobutu Bernadin Mungul Diaka - the leader of the *Rassemblement Démocratique pour la République* (RDR) (registered as an opposition party) was appointed Prime Minister by President Mobutu to replace Tshisekedi. In turn, Diaka was soon replaced by Nguza Karl-I-Bond. There was a succession of short-lived governments until the fall of Mobutu in 1997, with Tshisekedi, for example, serving an additional two brief periods as prime minister.

⁵⁵ The precision of the dates of appointment of the prime ministers come from the list of Governments of Zaïre from 1990 to 1997 found on <<http://www.metafro.be/grandslacs/grandslacsdlr500/0618.pdf/download/>> [Accessed on August 09, 2015].

However, after Tshisekedi's dismissal in 1991, President Mobutu appealed to an old ethno-regional grievance between Kasaians and Katangans. He used the Lunda ethnic group, which he previously discriminated against and violently oppressed in the wake of the two Shaba rebellions, for this purpose. He persuaded the Lunda that their hardships were due to the Luba-Kasaians dominating the economy in Katanga Province.

Given the struggle for power in Zaïre that came with the announcement of the return to multipartism and the emergence of ethnicity as a means to access political positions at the centre, Putzel, Lindemann and Schouten (2008) argue that the 1990 return to multi-party politics facilitated a large scale reactivation of ethno-regional mobilisation. Ethnicity, regionalism and tribalism were, subsequently, important in the emergence of new political parties that competed for power. More than 200 new political parties were acknowledged by mid-1991. 'Essentially socio-economic problems like unemployment and land access were recast in tribal terms, as in Katanga and the Kivus. Mobutu continued to attempt to pit one tribal group against another. In an effort to weaken his then strongest political opponent, Etienne Tshisekedi, Mobutu's supporters in Katanga, where unemployment was rife due to the implosion of GECAMINES, blamed the urban Luba population for stealing jobs, leading to ethnic conflict resulting in some 5,000 dead and 1.3 million people displaced in 1992-93' (Putzel et al. 2008: xxii).

With regard to this context, Dieudonné Tshiyoyo (2002) explains that the single-handed approach used by Mobutu to control and delay the democratic transition compelled the opposition and civil society to demand the convening of a Sovereign National Conference (CNS) through which all parties could have the opportunity to express themselves and decide on the transition process towards democracy (Tshiyoyo 2002:4).

Opened on August 7, 1991, the CNS established a parliamentary government. This decision did not please President Mobutu who had acquired the habit of ordering people around. Although Etienne Tshisekedi was elected Prime Minister by the CNS participants and appointed by President Mobutu in August 1992, he could not stay in office for long (see the reason in second part of the footnote no.56). After that, on April 2, 1993, President Mobutu appointed Faustin Birindwa, a member of UDPS, to replace Tshisekedi. Mobutu, however, through all these 'reforms' remained in control of most key institutions, such as the military, security services and the central bank. He was also able to divide the population along ethnic lines in order to dilute any strong opposition. It can therefore be concluded that the centre was increasingly becoming weak, but was only able to hold onto power, because of Mobutu's personalized strategies to remain in power.

5.4.2.2 Implication on the centre-periphery relations

That painful episode of the expulsion of Lubas from Kasai led them to be disobedient towards the central authority. Thus local populations of Kasai Oriental undertook to reorganize themselves next to the rest of Zaïre. Callaghy (2001) argues that Tshisekedi and many of his followers were Lubas. With Mbuji-Mayi (formerly Bakwanga) as its capital, Kasai Oriental in particular acquired considerable autonomy as its informal governors - Jonas Mukamba, head of MIBA, the local state diamond parastatal, and Monsignor Tharcisse Tshibangu, Bishop of Mbuji-Mayi - walked a political tightrope with Mobutu. The region maintained its own currency⁵⁶, refusing to use 'pro-state' bills from Kinshasa, formed its own university, and lived off the diamond wealth not controlled by Mobutu. This process of 'creeping independence' began with the 1992 expulsions of Lubas from Katanga. As one Luba intellectual put it, 'The kinds of secessionist movements that we have seen in the past are simply outmoded. Kasaians are as much a part of Zaïre as anyone else. But that Zaïre is not functional, and we realize that in order to survive we have to take responsibility for ourselves' (Callaghy 2001:119). Finally, autonomy was not formally sought by the former South Kasai which represents a great part of Kasai Oriental of the present time as previously discussed in section 4.2.2.2.

This episode suggests that in terms of President Mobutu's priorities, his concern with national unity was secondary to his quest for power. Moreover, conflict among the leaders at the central level affected the peripheries by exploiting ethnic differences and sentiment - as was the case with regard to the post of prime minister between Tshisekedi and Nguz that Mobutu managed to oppose. The seriousness of ethno-regional conflict discussed in this sub-section is similar in nature to that which has given rise to the attempted secession of South Kasai after the independence of the DRC. Although the violence in 1992-1993 against the Lubas from Kasai in Katanga was provoked by the centre, various factors played a role in the change of Lubas' attitude regarding secessionism. Some of these factors are: the absence of a secessionist leader in the peripheral area who could push them towards seceding from the DRC; the integration of the Lubas with the populations of the other provinces; the involvement of members of the Luba elites in various institutions of the country; and the nationalist vocation of their charismatic leader Etienne Tshisekedi.

⁵⁶Lubas from Kasai refused to use the new bank notes of 5 million Zaïre launched by President Mobutu in protest against the dismissal of their leader from the post of prime minister of the transitional government. When Tshisekedi was elected Prime Minister by the Conférence Nationale Souveraine (CNS), he has demonetized the new bank notes of 5 million Zaïre because of their potential inflationary impact on the economy. These bank notes were printed and put into circulation by the central bank under President Mobutu's order. The bank note of 5 million Zaïre was called 'pro-state' (*prostata*) with derision by the population by referring to sickness of Mobutu.

Paradoxically, although he promoted national unity from the outset of his coming to power and during his political career, on the ground President Mobutu was able to divide the inhabitants of the peripheries in order to protect his power.

5.4.3 Oriental and Kivu Provinces

The emergence of ethno-regionalism in Haut-Zaïre (previously Oriental Province) and the inadequateness of the transport infrastructure to connect the region of Kivu with Kinshasa have weakened the centre-periphery relations between Kinshasa and those entities during the era of Mobutu. First, this sub-section focusses primarily on the relations of Haut-Zaïre with the centre and the expulsion of non-indigenous in Haut-Zaïre. Second, it deals with the consequences of the distance in terms of physical space between Kinshasa and Kivu.

5.4.3.1 Oriental Province (Haut-Zaïre)

The Boyomais⁵⁷ have given the nickname, 'martyr city,' to Kisangani and sometimes the Province of Haut-Zaïre is also referred to as the 'martyr province' following the bloody events of the 1960s in Kisangani mentioned in sub-section 4.4.2.3.

Conflict during the early 1960s assisted in facilitating the process of strengthening the relations between the centre (particularly President Mobutu) and Kisangani (periphery), because Mobutu was perceived by the Boyomais as the peacemaker. His strategy of promising peace and stability to the war-torn country allowed him to gain the support of the populations of Haut-Zaïre, in particular, as a result of the suffering they endured during the First Republic. After his home province, Haut-Zaïre was a favoured destination because he enjoyed the trip on the Congo River aboard his presidential ship '*Kamanyola*'.

In addition, the allegiance of Haut-Zaïre provided President Mobutu with a second source for the recruitment of soldiers – that is after his own home province. It should be noted that the administration of the national security forces was for long in the hands of his comrade, Victor Nendaka, who originated from Haut-Zaïre in the Ituri District. The latter was also a member of the Binza group⁵⁸. This reinforced the link between the centre and the Province of Haut Zaïre.

⁵⁷ Inhabitants of Kisangani are called Boyomais.

⁵⁸ Binza is a suburb in Kinshasa. The Binza group was a 'laboratory' of political strategies to guide the future of the country in the direction of the interest of the group and mainly of the person who was the brain, namely Marshal Mobutu. The members of this group were Jean-Marie Bomboko, Victor Nendaka, Albert Ndele, Cyril Adoula and Joseph-Désiré Mobutu. It is from this lobby that once back home - the independence of DRC was proclaimed - Mobutu already in service of the CIA, had established a core from which main members, active in the political field controlled key sectors of the nation, namely: Security (Nendaka), diplomacy (Bomboko), economy and finance (Ndele), employment (Adoula) and Army, Chief of Army Staff (Mobutu).

Politically, the most important grievance against Mobutu's government was the fact that no Haut-Zaïrian was prime minister during the era of Mobutu. This happened on the eve of the collapse of the centre when President Mobutu attempted desperately to strengthen the centre against the progress of the AFDL's rebellion led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila. He has appointed General Likulia Bolongo, a member of the Basoko ethnic group from Haut-Zaïre.

At the validation of the mandate of the participants at the CNS discussed in sub-section 5.3.2.1, the delegates of Haut-Zaïre claimed a fair representation of each province due to the fact that Haut-Zaïre is the largest province of the DRC. In spite of its size and great number of inhabitants, Haut-Zaïre was under-represented compared to certain provinces such as Kasai Occidental and Kasai Oriental from where many opponents to the Mobutu government came. This led to an excess of representation of Kasaians (all ethnic groups gathered) at the CNS. The delegates of Haut-Zaïre employed the concept of '*géopolitique*' in order to support their claim.

The true motivation of the delegates of Haut-Zaïre's claim was the support of Haut-Zaïre for President Mobutu. The reduced number of delegates from Kasai gave President Mobutu an opportunity to benefit from the CNS. The concept of *géopolitique* was more referred to for the establishment of the principle of the management of the provinces by the indigenous people of each province – also called *territorial des originaires*.

This implied the return to the former situation of regionalism that President Mobutu tried to eliminate during his rule. According to Le Phare (1992), the introduction of this new concept in the political debate raised the enthusiasm of many political actors and led the latter to invent and to increase ethno-regional representation to the point of bringing the people to talk about ethnicity instead of talking about the nation (Le Phare 1992:4). The organizations of the civil society and politicians from Haut-Zaïre sustained the idea of recruiting for posts of responsibility only indigenous people. Moreover, since no sanction has been imposed on the perpetrators of the massacre of the Lubas from Kasai in Katanga, the pro- Mobutist Governor of Haut-Zaïre, Eugène Lombeya Bosongo, also instigated its populations against nationals from other provinces, especially Lubas from Kasai. This resulted in the exodus of Lubas and other ethnic groups for Kinshasa. The public institutions such as the University of Kisangani and the courts had suffered from the departure of the university lecturers and judges respectively.

The implication of these events on the centre-periphery relations in Zaïre was that President Mobutu was still appointing the governors of the provinces, but they no longer came from outside of the provinces. This was identical with the chancellors of the universities as prominent examples.

On the whole, the Province of Haut-Zaïre was supportive of the Mobutu regime. Of all restive peripheries, Haut-Zaïre was the quietest during the era of Mobutu.

5.4.3.2 Kivu (North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema)

Attention in this sub-section is paid to the impact of President Mobutu's policy of transport infrastructure on the centre-periphery relations regarding Kinshasa and Kivu region by focusing on the reaction of the Nande ethnic group as a prominent example.

In accordance with the ideas of several other scholars, James Ciment (2015) mentions that Mobutu simply did not believe in highways or railways; 'their absence, he once said, prevented rebel movements from growing too big or marching on the capital' (Ciment 2015:138). As a result of this, the problematical weakness of the connection between the centre and the peripheries in term of transport infrastructure was never sorted out even during the era of Mobutu. This aspect of development was strategically neglected with the purpose of preventing a possible insurrection in the peripheries to reach the centre.

The implication of the critical situation of the transport infrastructure for the centre-periphery relations regarding the Kivu region was the isolation of this area and the marginalization of its population. For example: according to Janet MacGaffey (1987), the 'Nande region was neglected by the Central Government in the allocation of state resources for development. Indeed, the distance from the Central Government in Kinshasa had a marginalization effect. However, it also put the Nande beyond the control of the centre, and this gave them a degree of autonomy which made it easier to organize their own affairs in response to government neglect'(MacGaffey 1987:146). In the Kivu region, the political positions were occupied mainly by the Tutsis. For example, as previously mentioned in sub-section 5.3.3.2, Joseph-Barthelemy Bisengimana has served as Director of President Mobutu's cabinet. This position allowed him to promote other Tutsis. Moreover, the economy of Kivu was held by the cronies and supporters of President Mobutu since the implementation of Zaïrianization.

Thus, this isolation led the peripheral populations such as the Nande ethnic group of North Kivu to organize their area themselves, instead of waiting for the Central Government. For example, the Nande took over multiple functions previously assigned to the state; they fixed and maintained roads leading in and out of Butembo. Patience Kabamba (2010) argues that:

The case of the Nande is very interesting because Nande traders have managed to build and protect self-sustaining, prosperous, transnational economic enterprises in eastern Zaïre. They are successful, notwithstanding (or because of) the bad political and economic environments. Each trader is for example personally responsible for 50 km of road to repair. They organize tollgates where cars pay according to weight. They also build bridges, pay militias (for example Mai-Mai⁵⁹), feed them and house them. The

⁵⁹ Mai-Mai is the term for armed community groups. According to Africa Report (2006), the Mai-Mai phenomenon dates back at least to when Pierre Mulele and Gaston Soumialot, with the help of young Laurent-Désiré Kabila, led the first Mai-Mai rebellions against the government after Patrice-Émery Lumumba's 1961 assassination (Africa Report 2006:7).

Federation of Traders of Butembo (*Fédération des Entrepreneurs du Congo* - FEC) even has its own court where disputes are settled. Many litigations concerning succession and land ownership are solved in the traders' court rather than the state court. Nande traders have built what is now the biggest mayoral office in the country (Kabamba 2010:272).

The condition of the transport infrastructure in Zaïre made it impossible to govern the peripheries efficiently from what is now Kinshasa as previously argued in sub-section 4.3.1.1. As Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) (2007) mentions, the loss of major internal infrastructure has in some areas encouraged the development and greater reliance on cross-border infrastructure and trade between isolated regions of Zaïre and neighbouring countries for example North Kivu-Rwanda and South Kivu-Burundi (IRIN 2007: no page).

However, this 'gap' between Kinshasa and the Kivu region in terms of physical space, which was reinforced by the deliberate deficiency of the transport infrastructure, had security implication for Mobutu and his government. This allowed easily the invasion of Zaïre's territory by the armies of neighbouring countries. Nowadays, in terms of centre-periphery relations, this situation is a serious issue for the Central Government, because its absence has promoted the organization of the militias in eastern DRC and contributed to the suffering of the populations. This point will receive more attention in the next chapter.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The strategies employed by President Mobutu for strengthening the centre in order to eliminate secessionism in the peripheries and to create feelings of national unity received attention in this chapter. Those strategies also contributed to connect the whole of the periphery with the centre. Some of them have even played the role of strengthening president Mobutu's grip on power.

In the first half of the 1960s, the intervention of the ANC and Colonel Joseph-Désiré Mobutu in the political affairs of the DRC was motivated by two constitutional crises. On September 13, 1960, Mobutu neutralized political institutions as soon as President Kasa-Vubu dismissed Prime Minister Lumumba and the latter dismissed, in turn, President Kasa-Vubu. This was followed by setting up the provisional government called '*Collège des commissaires généraux.*' Finally Kasa-Vubu was reinstated as head of state, whereas Lumumba was rejected for good. Second, the intervention in the politics of the DRC by the ANC was a military coup d'état that led to the coming to power of General Joseph-Désiré Mobutu on November 24, 1965 when President Kasa-Vubu and Prime Minister Tshombe were in a power struggle which threatened to paralyze the Central Government.

President Mobutu was very popular when he came to power because he promised peace and stability to the country. From the outset of his reign, he advocated Mobutism as the system of his government. Mobutism provided the ideology for organizing and governing the state; it encompassed and glorified President Mobutu's thoughts, visions and policies.

President Mobutu's strategies for strengthening his authority over the whole country and to submit the peripheries to the Central Government included foreign policy and the internal politics within Zaïre.

First, with regard to diplomatic strategies, President Mobutu gained the sympathy of the USA and France. He made a resource of the Cold War in his strengthening of the centre by presenting himself as an anti-communist. At that time Zaïre was regarded by the West as a stronghold against the spread of communism. In this regard, Zaïre supported two Angolan movements of liberation - FNLA and UNITA – with the intention of overthrowing the communist regime established at independence by the MPLA's leader, the Angolan President Agostinho Neto, with the support of the Soviet Union. This policy allowed President Mobutu to acquire the fundamental support from the USA in particular. The anti-communist stance is not the only gain the USA made. They also secured access to the resources of Zaïre.

Likewise, by supporting Mobutu's regime, France pursued its own interests due to the geostrategic position of Zaïre within the African continent. Linguistically, President Mobutu took advantage from the fact that, by the number of its inhabitants, Zaïre is the second largest French speaking country in the world after France. From this perspective, France regarded Zaïre's location as an alluring influence on the ex-French colonies in Black Africa. The exploitation of Zaïre's natural resources also played a determinant role in the support that France granted President Mobutu. By gaining the support of France and the USA, President Mobutu prevented them from exploiting possible separatist tendencies in the peripheries.

Furthermore, one of President Mobutu's strategies in foreign policy with African states consisted of an effort to increase alliances with the objective to prevent subversive activities against his regime from the neighbouring countries especially in the Great Lakes region. He also used foreign policy in order to ensure foreign support for the Central Government, should it become necessary. For this purpose he created the CEPGL/ECGLC of which Rwanda and Burundi were members. Moreover, he gained the sympathy of Arab nations such as Egypt and Morocco by breaking diplomatic relations with Israel in 1973. He had a good relationship especially with Morocco by opposing the admission of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic to the Organization for African Unity (OAU) in 1984. Those Arab allies fought at the side of the Zaïrian military in 1977 and 1978 during the invasion of Shaba by the ex-Katangan secessionist gendarmes exiled in Angola.

With respect to politics within Zaïre, President Mobutu's government had made efforts to integrate Congolese people all over the country. The experience of a one-party system in which all Congolese were compulsorily members would to an extent suppress the separatist trend of the peripheries over the years. The public servants were assigned outside of their home provinces and committed to work for the nation and not for their own ethnic groups. The centralization of power as well as the one-party system effectively gave to President Mobutu complete political control over the peripheries, including the city of Kinshasa. Both strategies would also politically reinforce the connection between the centre and the peripheries insofar as there was only one political centre realized by only one legislative and executive organ for the whole country. Such a centralization of power and the dependence of the peripheral sub-structures upon the centre would explain, to some extent, the territorial unity during the era of Mobutu.

From an administrative and linguistic perspective, apart from its use in the Congolese popular music, Lingala which was Mobutu's language of address to the nation and especially in the armed forces is actually used by the majority of Congolese people. Lingala has proven to be a cement of the nation. Through the use of Lingala, President Mobutu Sese Seko also welded various ethnic groups that each has a particular dialect. It was during the era of Mobutu that there has been progress in terms of ethnic relations. For example, exogamous or interregional weddings became possible. Congolese people have begun to accept each other and transcend cultural differences.

An attempt at integrating the various Congolese people was also made through the recruitment policy in political institutions and in particular by providing opportunities to minorities. Moreover, the implementation of a quota system allowed the enrolment of more students from provinces that were behind in their education. In spite of the good intentions, according to Coleman's (1994) conclusion, evidence from Zaïre 'suggests that universities are not effective instruments for solving problems of national integration. In Zaïre, the quota system not only failed to achieve its righting function, but it left a legacy of heightened ethnic consciousness.'

The population was also integrated through the fusion of the organizations of civil society such as unions, universities and student movements. This probably allowed the DRC's people to develop a sense of belonging to the same country and sharing a common citizenship.

From a cultural perspective, the policy on the appeal to authenticity shaped the look of the Congolese people over the years. They had become identifiable worldwide by their names and dress code.

As a result, for example, the Congolese have started to behave in unity by forming national teams in sport. They even won as a 'nation' some African trophies in soccer (CAN 1968 and

1974) and basketball (African Women's Championship of Nations 1983, 1986 and 1994) as prominent examples. They also represented the country as a nation in world sporting events such as the FIFA world cup in 1974 and the Olympic Games. The various national teams, whatever the sport, benefited from the support of the whole population of the centre as well as of the peripheries, including the former restive peripheries.

The measures of nationalization and Zaïrianization, including radicalization, implemented at the coming to power of Mobutu with the purpose to strengthen Mobutu's government were in reality the economic side of the authenticity. Both strategies facilitated the internal colonialism of the peripheries by the centre. The measure of Zaïrianization in particular had harmful implications for nation-building; it had produced clientelism and nepotism in that it consistently rewarded President Mobutu's cronies and relatives. This resulted in a socio-economic crisis that plagued Zaïre due to mismanagement that destroyed the family as the basic unit of the nation. For example, most of those responsible for households and families became unable to provide for the needs of their household. Thus, the phenomenon of street children appeared in most cities.

President Mobutu's supporters and relatives were financially and materially much better off. All in all, this implied the exploitation or internal colonialism of the peripheries by the centre and consequently had negative consequences for nation-building. Importantly, in the 1970s, the reality on the ground was that the shared suffering and hardship as such did not unite the people against President Mobutu and his inner circle. President Mobutu was so deeply rooted in the peripheries that he succeeded in gaining supporters and admirers during this decade and even to some extent throughout his long-lasting rule. However, things changed during the 1980s and early 1990s. Initially, his power remained intact and even strengthened, but eventually began to decline as more and more people began to resent his totalitarian, coercive and corrupt style of government. In spite of the gradual failures of the Zaïrian State and feelings of internal colonialism, there was no formal attempt at secession during Mobutu's rule. The involvement of former secessionist movements in some of the political upheavals of Zaïre did not mobilize them for secessionist purposes but rather for a change in regime.

When Mobutu came to power, he was aware of the need to protect himself and to strengthen his position at the centre of power in order to be successful in keeping the peripheries under his fold. In the centre-periphery relations, the DRC clearly demonstrates a dependency of the centre on the peripheries. The survival of the centre is linked to the peripheries since its resources derive in large part from the peripheries as argued in sub-section 4.2.2.2. Thus, the internal colonialism of the peripheries by the Central Government is crucial from this point of view. That is why the centre must be powerful enough to maintain the peripheries under its control. In this regard, one of President Mobutu's priorities was the reorganization of the army

in order to keep the peripheries and the centre connected. Consequently, he attempted to remedy the powerlessness of the military, including the security forces.

The military as well as the security forces were unquestionably one of the backbones in strengthening the centre during the era of Mobutu. President Mobutu's background as soldier and informant helped him tremendously in the organization of his own security. After the strengthening of his position as national leader in the political arena, President Mobutu sought to be in charge of the centre of command of the military and to put under his sole authority soldiers all over the national territory. Various positions in favour of President Mobutu in the military as well as the administrative organization of the military led to the officers and soldiers' subordination even in remote areas everywhere in the peripheries in accordance with the principle of the unity of command.

Strengthening the centre involved also the organization of the personal security of the head of state at the centre. President Mobutu ensured carefully that his personal guard was made up of reliable soldiers dedicated to its cause. The soldiers in charge of his protection came primarily from his own ethnic group, the Ngbandi, and neighbouring groups in the region of Equateur, primarily the Ngbaka. Furthermore, he relied heavily on the military and security apparatus to repress dissent and to intimidate the population.

President Mobutu gradually became distant from the Congolese people because of the excessive repression by the security services at the centre as well as in the peripheries. The failure of President Mobutu was so deep-rooted in the peripheries that he succeeded in gaining supporters and admirers throughout his long-lasting rule.

By contrast to the situation at the time of independence, the peripheries were somewhat connected with the centre thanks to President Mobutu's strategies except for the transport infrastructure, which he deliberately neglected in order to prevent rebels from marching directly to the centre. Though the *Forces Armées Zairoises* failed to protect Zaïre's territory when Katanga has been invaded twice in 1977 and 1978, President Mobutu was rescued by his allies. The invaders' goal was not secession of Shaba but the overthrow of the Mobutu regime. This is an indication that the problem of the DRC's territorial unity – so prominent in the early 1960s - was not important during the era of Mobutu.

In the episode of the double invasion of Shaba in 1977 and 1978 and the disobedience of the Luba from Kasai following their expulsion from Katanga in 1992 and 1993, the evidence was given that secessionist movements to which Zaïre has been confronted in the past are simply outmoded. As former restive provinces, Kasai oriental, Shaba, Haut-Zaïre and the Kivu became as much parts of Zaïre as any other province.

On the whole, the Province of Haut-Zaïre was favourable to the Mobutu regime. Of all restive peripheries, Haut-Zaïre was the quietest during the era of Mobutu. His strategy of promising peace and stability to the war-torn country allowed him to gain the support of the populations of Haut-Zaïre in particular as a result of the suffering they endured during the First Republic. The allegiance of Haut-Zaïre provided President Mobutu with a second source for the recruitment of soldiers – that is after his own home province.

Even if the nationalist vocation of Haut-Zaïre was denied by politicians, this martyr province in search for peace was mostly loyal to Mobutu and Kinshasa, that is to the President's authority who was perceived as a peacemaker. Although the population in Kivu province was isolated and marginalized as a result of poor transport and other communications infrastructure, its population did not disconnect sentimentally from the rest of Zaïre in spite of their marginalization and the inadequateness of transport infrastructure to connect Kivu and Kinshasa and also the fact that they turned towards neighbouring countries for trade or supplies of scarce commodities.

By reviewing the multiple efforts made during the era of Mobutu to eliminate secessionism in the peripheries in all parts of the DRC, this study reveals that President Mobutu initially had some success but that his excesses defeated the purpose of his own strategies.

CHAPTER 6

THE CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS AT THE TIME OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE CENTRE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus in this chapter is on the events in the DRC that followed the collapse of the centre on May 17, 1997 and the end of the reign of President Mobutu. Instrumental in these events were the rebellion of *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) led initially by Ernest Wamba dia Wamba which threatened to downsize the territory of the DRC as well as the birth of the secessionist movement the 'Bakata Katanga' in Katanga Province. The analysis takes into account the relations between the centre and periphery, as well as the lack of actual secession during this phase in the DRC's history. Of particular importance are the reasons why the peripheries did not breakaway in spite of the collapse of the centre.

The end of the Cold War in 1989 and the genocide of Rwandan Hutu in 1993 are international events that cornered the Mobutu government. It is, furthermore, alleged that the overthrow of President Mobutu was a plot arranged from outside of Zaïre and particularly in the neighbouring countries of the Great Lakes region with the major players being Uganda and Rwanda headed by Yoweri Museveni and Paul Kagame respectively, Laurent-Désiré Kabila as leader of the rebellion of *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (AFDL), and behind the scenes the USA.

The collapse of the centre and the actions taken by the new government in an attempt to strengthen its authority receive attention in this chapter, including the various policies implemented by Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government and how these affected the centre-periphery relations. These are for example the expulsion of the Rwandan people, the abolition of political activities, the constitutional Decree-Law no. 003 of May 28, 1997 by which he established personal rule for the transitional period, as well as the foreign policies with Western and African states. The reactions of the peripheries with regard to the above policies are important and particular attention is paid to the restive peripheries of the 1960s in order to examine the challenges regarding the territorial unity that has threatened the survival of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government and how he tried to overcome them. The phase of the collapse of the centre is important in this study, since the collapse of the centre in the former Yugoslavia led to the creation of several states through secessionism as a prominent example.

This chapter is thus divided into three main sections. The first section provides a background of the events surrounding the ousting of Mobutu and the coming to power of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. As indicated above, those events include notably the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda and the rebellion of the AFDL. The second section discusses the era of President Kabila by analysing Kabilism as the continuation of Mobutism as well as the political measures taken by President Laurent-Désiré Kabila during his ephemeral reign (May 17, 1997- January 16, 2001). The third section focuses on the centre-periphery relations regarding the Central Government and the restive peripheries. It mentions essentially the rebellions of the RCD in Oriental Province and Kivu which gave rise to the coming to power of Joseph Kabila and who was the one that was able to stabilize the DRC to some extent. It also takes an interest in the emergence of the secessionist movement the 'Bakata Katanga' in Katanga Province.

A conclusion is provided at the end in order to summarize the phase of the collapse of the centre of the DRC. In addition, it gives some indications regarding the paradoxical attachment of the peripheries to the Central Government in spite of the failure of the DRC as state.

6.2 BACKGROUND TO THE END OF MOBUTU AND THE RISE OF LAURENT-DÉSIRÉ KABILA

This section looks at the change that occurred in the presidency of Zaïre with the coming to power of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. Thus, attention in this sub-section is paid to the collapse of the centre and the end of the reign of President Mobutu. Furthermore, it provides an analysis of the fall of President Mobutu who was one of the powerful leaders in Africa.

6.2.1 Collapse of the centre

Apart from the end of the Cold War, the events that took place in Zaïre (DRC) in the second half of the 1990s are strongly connected to the genocide of Rwandan Tutsis that followed the assassination of Rwandan President, Juvenal Habyarimana.

The Rwandan Hutu President, Habyarimana, was an ally of President Mobutu as mentioned in sub-section 5.2.5. On several occasions the FAZ have rescued the regular army of Rwanda, the *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (FAR). An example of such an intervention of the FAZ was when the *Front Patriotique Rwandais* (FPR) led by the Tutsi Paul Kagame had threatened to penetrate into Kigali during the Rwanda civil war of 1990-1994. According to Peter Uvin (1999), the plane carrying Habyarimana from one more peace negotiation in Arusha was downed on April 6, 1994 (Uvin 1999:261). The killing of Habyarimana unleashed the genocide of a million Rwandan Tutsis and moderate Hutus by the Rwandan Hutu militia named *Interhamwe* in mid-1994. The massacres did not stop, as Joan Kakwenzire and Dixon Kamukama (1999) confirm, until after

the FPR had taken over the government in Rwanda in July 1994 with the support of Uganda pro-Tutsi President Yoweri Museveni (Kakwenzire and Kamukama 1999:81).

In addition, Aimable Twagilimana (2007) explains that, after Habyarimana's death and the defeat of the FAR, at least 2 million Rwandans, mostly Hutu, fled to the eastern part of Zaïre, establishing mammoth refugee camps, which led to one of the severest refugee crises of modern times. The international community intervened, although it had failed to intervene to stop the genocide inside Rwanda. Within the camps, the defeated FAR and the *Interahamwe* militia were preventing refugees from returning back home, promising them that they will soon attack and reclaim power in Rwanda (Twagilimana 2007:37-38). Winsom J. Leslie (1998) is of the opinion that this unprecedented influx of refugees into eastern Zaïre provided Mobutu with an unexpected opportunity. Cooperation with France on the refugee problem brought him some legitimacy and provided the leverage needed to solidify Franco-Zaïrian ties once again (Leslie 1998:114).

The proximity of the refugee camps in eastern Zaïre along the border with Rwanda was regarded as a threat by the new Rwandan political elites. However, the pro-Hutu regime in Kinshasa was opposed to helping Rwanda in arresting the *Interhamwe* charged with the crime of genocide. Likewise, Uganda and Angola had concerns about their own rebels. In Uganda there were two rebel groups opposed to the Museveni government that used eastern Zaïre as a rear base, namely the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU). As earlier discussed in sub-section 5.2.5, President Mobutu granted support to UNITA in order to overthrow the Angolan government and there were rear bases of UNITA in Zaïre.

As a result, in early 1996, with the initiative of Rwanda and Uganda, a coalition of political movements⁶⁰ named *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (AFDL) was formed with the objective of overthrowing President Mobutu. By referring to this alliance, Kai Kaiser and Stephanie Wolters (2012) wrote:

The AFDL's fighting forces were composed essentially of deserting FAZ soldiers and young boys and men recruited during its military campaign; on its own, the AFDL never had sufficient military might to achieve the military victories that it so rapidly did. The real fighting power came from a coalition of African countries: Rwanda, Uganda, and Angola, which had the tacit approval of key members of the international community, especially the United States, to overthrow the Mobutu regime. Without them, the AFDL and Laurent-Désiré Kabila could never have seized power. [...] In choosing the AFDL as the Congolese vehicle for their objectives, the three regional allies expected to be able to exercise their military and political

⁶⁰ These are *Parti pour la Révolution Populaire* (PRP) led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, the *Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie* (CNRD) led by André Kisase Ngandu, the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre* (MRLZ) led by Anselme Masasu Nindanga, and the *Alliance Démocratique des Peuples* (ADP) led by Deogratias Bugera.

influence over the AFDL. Their belief was based on the bargain they had struck with Kabila: to provide him with the military strength to go all the way to Kinshasa in exchange for the right to pursue their own security agenda in the Congo (Kaiser and Wolters 2012: 80-81).

On November 30, 1996, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, rebel leader of the AFDL, backed by Uganda and Rwanda, invaded Zaïre. Mobutu's letter of May 11, 1997 to His Excellency Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic, confirms the facts mentioned above.

Sir President,

First of all, I want to present my sincere greetings, to you, as much as to your spouse. On behalf of the long friendship that links us for over a decade.

Today the situation is painful for me given the gravity of the moment. First, I lost effective power over the population. Then, at the military level, it is impossible to halt the rebel advance towards Kinshasa which they can reach at any time.

With regard to Kinshasa, I cannot promote an unnecessary bloodbath. Because in any case the rebels will reach it well. Everything is a matter of time.

Need I remind you that I face an unjust war? Today, the United States and Great Britain via South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda and Angola use the gang leader Laurent-Désiré Kabila to stab me in the back enjoying my illness.

In the past, the United States were my allies, remember the Angolan episode. I reserve the right to publish in the coming days my memoirs. So the world finally will know the unsuspected truth.

My friend, you know as well as I do that the gang leader Laurent-Désiré Kabila is a questionable personality, genocidal and inappropriate to direct Zaïre as head of state. I tried everything to prevent this. But his Western masters, the United States in this case support him and encourage him in that direction.

Given the US stubbornness and the continued deterioration of my health, I have to announce my intention to transfer power to Kabila at our next meeting on the SAS Outeniqua⁶¹ on May 14.

God help Zaïre!

(My translation) (Lettre de Mobutu à Chirac, quoted by Calixte Baniafouna 2009:207).

Victoria Brittain and Augusta Conchiglia (2006) argue that Mobutu's Western allies might have suggested that he play his last card - that is appointing Etienne Tshisekedi as Prime Minister, which he eventually did. But it was too little too late to open a dialogue with the members of the rebellion led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila (Brittain and Conchiglia 2006:76).

⁶¹ SAS Outeniqua is a South African warship where President Mandela has organized the meeting, in neutral waters of the Atlantic Ocean, between Laurent-Désiré Kabila and Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko in order to find a compromise about the future of Zaïre.

President Mobutu fled Zaïre and went into exile in Togo and then in Morocco on the eve of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's victory. The failure of FAZ to overcome the rebellion initiated in the periphery by the hostile neighbouring countries led to the collapse of the centre in Zaïre on May 17, 1997 without much resistance. According to a description by Edgard O'Balance (2000), an AFDL column, about 10,000 strong and well armed with mortars, antitank missiles, rockets and automatic weapons, entered Kinshasa. The troops were welcomed as liberators by thousands of citizens, and made rapid progress in mopping up the few pockets of FAZ resistance. The AFDL was even formally welcomed by Tshisekedi's UDPS, and on May 19 it was recognized by several African countries, including Angola, Rwanda and Uganda. Certain Western countries, including Belgium, Britain and France gave cautious support, indicating that full diplomatic recognition would depend upon the actions of the new regime. On May 20 Kabila flew into Kinshasa, and was sworn in as President of the DRC on May 29, assuming full executive, legislative and military powers (O'Balance 2000:175).

6.2.2 Analysis of the end of the reign of President Mobutu

This sub-section focuses on the fall of President Mobutu. It seems that the centre in the DRC collapsed only because of the security threats created by Mobutu's foreign policy towards his neighbours and the coalition that was formed against his regime. However, by looking closely, the combination of a number of internal and external factors have contributed to the fall of President Mobutu.

In addition to the factors that prevented the breakup of the DRC analyzing the reasons of the attachment of the peripheries to the country as a whole are important. The factors that contributed to the fall of President Mobutu also played a partial role in preventing the DRC from breaking up like the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). The reasons are that the historical background of the formation of Yugoslavia by its constituent republics in 1943 is different from that of the formation of the DRC's territory. The internal economic issues within Yugoslavia between richest and poorest regions did not exist as such at the collapse of the centre in the DRC. Politically and economically, the nature of the centre-periphery relations (relations between Serbia and other republics) that threatened the unity of Yugoslavia was not identical to those that prevailed in the DRC in 1997. Thus, Andrès Rodríguez-Pose and Marko Stermšek (2015) mention, for example, that in the midst of the financial crisis in Yugoslavia, the fall of the Berlin Wall brought further division to Yugoslavia's politics, 'as non-communist governments gained power in Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, and Macedonia. As Serbia strove to maintain its power as Yugoslavia's biggest and most influential republic, the wealthier republics sought greater autonomy in order to stabilise their economies. Devoid of a foreseeable consensus under Yugoslavia's joint presidency, the republics began ignoring legal and constitutional procedures, boycotting federal institutions (including taxes), issuing illegal loans

under the Constitution, and erecting trade barriers within the country itself' (Rodríguez-Pose and Stermšek (2015:82)⁶².

In contrast, with regard to the DRC, since the 1990s the departure of President Mobutu was wished for by a large majority of Congolese people due to the failure of his government to improve the standard of living of the population in the centre as well as in the peripheries during his long rule. The increasing internal opposition marked by several protests against the regime of Kinshasa forced President Mobutu to move to Gbadolite in Equateur Province where he built himself a palace from where he ruled the country, but the presidency of the Republic of Zaïre remained theoretically in Kinshasa. The Congolese people also rejected the political dispensation established during the era of Mobutu because of its totalitarian nature and by the unceasing bullying and violation of human rights by President Mobutu's security forces. Thus, a significant number of Congolese were united in their opposition to Mobutu.

Consequently, the population had provided support to the AFDL's troops along its campaign and thus facilitated its arrival in Kinshasa. From a military perspective, the FAZ was unable to defend the government of Mobutu. The weakness of the military to defend the DRC can be traced to the secessionist wars after independence. The weakness of the FAZ in particular dates back to the episode of the Shaba I and Shaba II rebellions that were defeated thanks to the military intervention of President Mobutu's allies as previously discussed in sub-section 5.3.1.3. Tom Cooper (2013) remarks that, like in so many other countries in Africa, the FAZ officers' corps was completely unprofessional, to the degree where the pursuit of a career was merely seen as a path to economic gain and political influence, and not imbued with the patriotism of serving one's country (Cooper 2013:58). The AFDL's troops took therefore advantage of this hostile internal environment to President Mobutu to move forward quickly from the eastern border of the DRC's territory in Kivu region and to take over the city of Kinshasa.

The end of the Cold War was also an important factor that played against President Mobutu by cornering the central power in Zaïre. The role as an anti-communist stronghold that Zaïre played at that time was simply outdated. President Mobutu's anti-communism posture was, as discussed in sub-section 5.3.4, the main reason for the financial and military support from the USA. There was, therefore, no longer any justification to maintain him in power.

The attitude of the USA towards President Mobutu had changed significantly. For example, Richard Snyder (1998) argues that in terms of the role of foreign powers, Mobutu's foreign patrons have shifted their support to the moderate opposition (Snyder 1998:67). The main

⁶² The SFRY was divided into six constituent republics (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovania, Montenegro, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia), with the largest republic, Serbia, containing two autonomous provinces, splitting it into Kosovo, Vojvodina and Serbia Proper (Rodriguez-Pose and Stermšek 2015:81).

reason for the change of US policy in Zaïre is according to Leslie (1998) and Snyder (1998), the decline in the strategic importance of Zaïre after the end of the Cold War. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in September 1991 also had negative repercussions for the power of President Mobutu, which impacted in various ways on the Zaïrian government. First, the country's traditional allies began to insist that Mobutu implement democratic reforms. Second, the winding down of the Angolan civil war and the disappearance of Soviet influence in Africa with the end of the Cold War encouraged the USA, France and Belgium collectively to end aid to Zaïre and lead international efforts to force his ousting (Leslie 1998:113; Snyder 1998:67). This is in line with the findings of Astri Suhrke and Aristide R. Zolberg (2002), namely that the end of the Cold War had a severe impact on countries whose strong men had been closely tied to superpower rivalry. Local clients whose principal strength was derived from external patrons found their power base eroded and internal challenges mounting. In some cases disintegration proceeded as if in slow motion (Suhrke and Zolberg 2002:168). This meant that the USA, during the Cold War, used Mobutu as an agent of the CIA in central Africa primarily for their own interests, especially for their hegemony over other nations.

The international environment thus largely affected politics within Zaïre. Since Mobutu was largely a creation of the Cold War, it is, therefore, not surprising that Mobutu's control over the state waned after 1989. In fact it is quite remarkable that he survived the end of the Cold War as long as he did. The survival of Mobutu's government until 1997 suggests, however, that internal factors in addition to external pressures were important in his government's survival. He was able to maintain a 'transitional' strategic importance for his foreign allies. Furthermore, he was quite capable of deploying charismatic even 'esoteric', and domestic economic instruments in support of his power (Clark 2002:3). He had exploited all the available internal resources, such as money and his position as supreme chief of the military, to maintain himself in power. He used them to get everything he wanted, but unfortunately those resources eventually proved insufficient against the international 'conspiracy' under the aegis of his former allies who created and backed him for so long.

To summarize, the quick collapse of the centre and the ousting of President Mobutu by the rebellion of the AFDL reveals how President Mobutu was weakened by: first, relying on Western allies; second, neglecting the discipline among his own soldiers; third, failing to establish friendly relations with neighbouring states; and finally neglecting the needs and goodwill of the Zaïrian people – including the soldiers. He invested more in his personal safety than in the defence of the territory as such by providing better equipment and treatment to his DSP. During the war his soldiers hung up and provided the enemy with an opportunity to advance. As palliative, he desperately recruited mercenaries to prevent the AFDL from overthrowing his regime. However, they were unable to secure his position.

Nevertheless, in the literature, the credit for the ousting of President Mobutu went to Laurent-Désiré Kabila whose actions, examined in the next section, have influenced the centre-periphery relations at the time of the collapse of the centre.

6.3 THE ERA OF LAURENT-DÉSIRÉ KABILA

The discussion of the collapse of the centre showed that the DRC opened a new chapter in the history of the DRC. Contrary to all expectations, President Mobutu's successor was Laurent-Désiré Kabila even though there were around him a large number of collaborators who were skilled in politics. Although Mobutu's ouster aimed to dismantle the system of government he put in place, the ideology that gave rise to the Mobutist type of leadership did not disappear during Laurent-Désiré Kabila's tenure as President. Thus, attention in this sub-section is paid to the new government's policies which affected the centre-periphery relations after the critical moment of the collapse of the centre. This leads this study to look firstly at the personality and skills of Laurent-Désiré Kabila, and at the continuation of Mobutism as a legacy of President Mobutu to the new government.

6.3.1 Laurent-Désiré Kabila's skills and personality

The life story of Laurent-Désiré Kabila receives attention in this sub-section in order to highlight his personality as well as his talents. The approach of looking at the past is constructive because the style of leadership and actions of a leader is often influenced by his background. This is also the case of Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

Laurent-Désiré Kabila was born on November 27, 1939 in Moba (formerly Baudouinville) in Southern Katanga. Kwame Antonny Appiah and Henry Louis Gates (2010) mention that little else is known about Kabila's childhood, except that he attended university in France where he studied political philosophy and became Marxist. He also studied in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where he met and formed a friendship with Yoweri Museveni, the future president of Uganda. He returned to the then Belgian Congo - shortly before independence in 1960. Upon his return, Kabila became a member of the North Katanga Assembly and a staunch supporter of the DRC's first Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba (Appiah and Gates 2010:623). Lumumba's dismissal and tragic death caused him to revolt against the West. During Kabila's travels in Eastern Europe in 1964 and later during several trips to China in the late 1960s he progressively became more familiar with Marxism (Prunier 2008:397). This explains his communist activities during the Congo Crises in the 1960s.

As leftist, Kabila sought to be a revolutionary. However, according to the BBC News (2001), in the early 1960s, Che Guevara, the South American revolutionary, supported him briefly when he came to fight in eastern Congo, but then dismissed him as a serious force. 'Nothing leads me to believe he is the man of the hour,' Che Guevara wrote (BBC News 2001: no page). After Kabila seized power, in May 1997, he visited as a priority China and Cuba. With regard to his military skills, Kabila was a small-time Marxist revolutionary who once held Westerners for ransom, while his avoidance of the front line had prompted his own soldiers to call him a 'tourist' (Flynn 2011:96).

As President of the DRC, he said in his address to the public: 'I am a rebel, I will remain a rebel.' Thus, as mentioned above, according to the BBC News (2001), Laurent-Désiré Kabila joined a rebellion in 1965⁶³ which was quelled by General Joseph-Désiré Mobutu. He waged what many regarded a half-hearted war against Mobutu in the eastern part of the country, spending much of his time in neighbouring Tanzania. In the Encyclopaedia Britannica (2015) it is stated that, in 1967, Kabila founded the *Parti pour la Révolution Populaire* (PRP), which established a Marxist territory – the *maquis* of Fizi and Baraka, which he managed to keep out of Mobutu's reach - in the Kivu region of eastern Congo. This region had a long history of being self-determining and it managed to sustain itself through gold mining and ivory trading. When the enterprise came to an end during the 1980s, Kabila ran a business selling gold in Dar es Salaam (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2015). Best known for having built a business empire by smuggling gold and diamonds out of the DRC, Laurent-Désiré Kabila operated from Uganda for years. When Museveni frowned on his drinking and womanizing, he moved to Tanzania to continue living the high life while lavishing gold on Tanzania's president (Flynn 2011:96). Furthermore, he was a talented public speaker who spoke French, English and Swahili fluently. But during the whole era of Mobutu, he was an opponent and exiled in neighbouring countries, especially in Tanzania.

In the course of the AFDL's military campaign against Mobutu's government and later, as head of state, Kabila quickly understood the profit he could make from the DRC's mineral riches. He soon paid attention to the exploitation of natural resources and concluded contracts with businessmen of the mining sector - investors of various reputation, friends and allies. These were, however, mainly *Accords Préliminaires* (Preliminary Agreements), which lacked a sound legal basis. All of them had to be regularized later, or were cancelled (André-Dumond 2011:18).

⁶³ This refers to the Simba rebellion in 1964 in eastern DRC led by Lumumba's followers such as Gaston Soumaliot and Anicet Kashamura. This rebellion was contemporary with another uprising, the Kwilu's rebellion, in Bandundu Province, led by Pierre Mulele, a former Minister of Education in Lumumba's government. Both rebellions were supported by China. They were connected because they advocated the implementation of communism in the DRC. The Kwilu rebellion, in particular, was an attempt to adapt Chinese practice to African conditions by using peasants as the mainstay of a revolution (see Alaba Ogunsanwo 1974:175).

However, several scholars have found in the presidency of Laurent-Désiré Kabila a continuation of Mobutism that is discussed in the following sub-section.

6.3.2 Kabilism

This sub-section is a continuation of arguments developed in sub-section 5.2.2.1 devoted to Mobutism. It briefly discusses Kabilism as a continuation of Mobutism. The BBC mentions that when Laurent-Désiré Kabila finally achieved his goal of toppling President Mobutu after more than 30 years of armed conflict, he told Reuters, 'My long years of struggle were like spreading fertilizer on a field. But now it is time to harvest' (BBC News 2001: no page).

There are several similarities between Mobutism and Kabilism according to several scholars. Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, the Congolese philosopher of history, mentioned by Sanya Osha (2005) argues that Mobutism extended beyond Mobutu and those within his clique. Thus, Mobutism became entrenched as a mode of sociopolitical interaction and government, albeit misgovernment (Osha 2005:28-32). By referring to Wadada D. Nabudere (2004), Mammo Mushie, Sanya Osha and Matlotleng P. Matiou (2012) are of the opinion that this argument was confirmed by the events following the downfall and death of Mobutu and the assumption of power by Laurent-Désiré Kabila. Kabila's reign turned out to be a continuation of Mobutism. Nepotism was rife, governmental accountability and transparency nonexistent, and Kabila spent his days scheming transnational mineral prospecting interests (Mushie et al 2012:185). Moreover, Joseph Hobbs (2013) argues that, like his predecessor Mobutu, Laurent-Désiré Kabila funneled much of the country's wealth and power into the hands of his family and friends (Hobbs 2013:340).

Mobutism clearly impacted on Kabila's style of government and control over the people – including the peripheries. The sub-section below focuses in this regard on some of the acts of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government in order to look further at the centre-periphery relations at the critical moment of the collapse of the centre.

6.3.3 Actions of the new government

President Laurent-Désiré Kabila sought to strengthen the central authority weakened by the war led against Mobutu's government and the eventual collapse of the centre. He aimed at re-establishing the authority of the state all over the national territory. Thus, he implemented a number of policies to that effect. But for the purpose of this study, attention is paid to the policies which had implications for the centre-periphery relations. Those policies are grouped according to their implementation within the DRC or in the relations between the DRC and other countries or international organizations.

6.3.3.1 Policies of Laurent-Désiré Kabila within the DRC

President Laurent-Désiré Kabila embarked on the task of rebuilding the DRC. Overall, he inherited a weakened centre, an impoverished population in the centre, as well as in all parts of the peripheries, and in general an underdeveloped country.

This sub-section looks at the actions of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government: The constitutional Decree-Law no. 003 of May 28, 1997; the establishment of the Popular Power Committees; the expulsion of Rwandan and Ugandan; and the discrimination in favour of the nationals from the eastern part of the DRC.

The Kabila government also implemented other actions which are not discussed in this sub-section, for example, the launch of a new currency - the *Franc Congolais* (FC) - and the arrest and the trial of the senior officers of the armed forces for the misappropriation of public assets during the era of Mobutu (for example the case of General Kikunda).

(a) Constitutional Decree no. 003 of May 28, 1997

Laurent-Désiré Kabila suspended, on May 28, 1997, the Transitional Act drafted by the CNS and which played a constitutional role in Zaïre before the collapse of the centre. This suspension concerned all official institutions, including those of the CNS.

According to Gregory Mthembu-Salter (2003), on May 28, 1997, a day before stepping into his new function as head of state, Laurent-Désiré Kabila issued a constitutional decree (Decree no. 003). This decree provided for the organization and exercise of power until the adoption of a constitution by the constituent assembly. The Decree came into effect on the same day. The three chapters of the Decree cite the ADFL's 'Takeover Declaration' of May 17, 1997 as its frame of reference. The Decree afforded the President legislative and executive power as well as control over the armed forces and the Treasury. Of the previously existing institutions, only the judiciary was not disbanded. The international community expressed concern at the almost absolute power granted to the President (Mthembu-Salter 2003:251).

This constitutional decree was heavily criticized for putting President Laurent-Désiré Kabila in a position to dictate political as well as military affairs. It established personal rule and abolished public freedoms such as political demonstrations. These policies were perceived as a reversal of the progress made at the end of the era of Mobutu. George Klay Kieh and Pita Ogaba Agbese (2013), for example, mention that, in March 1998, the work of a newly established Constitutional Commission with Anicet Kashamura⁶⁴, a member of the old generation of the

⁶⁴ President Kabila likely chose Anicet Kashamura, because he was a communist and Kabila's comrade during the struggle against the alleged pro-Western central government established in Leopoldville after the fall of Lumumba.

Congolese political elite as its president, began. In November 1998, Kabila approved a new draft constitution. It awaited ratification by a national referendum (Kieh and Agbese 2013:92). The revolts that occurred thereafter in the peripheries prevented the holding of a referendum on account of the security conditions.

The country was officially renamed as the 'Democratic Republic of Congo' (DRC) on May 17, 1997 in Lubumbashi at the announcement of the seizure of power by the AFDL and the self-proclamation of Kabila as Head of State. Although this was the preference of several delegates at the CNS to replace the name of Zaïre with that of the Democratic Republic of Congo as decided in the Constitution of Luluabourg (see section 5.2), Laurent-Désiré Kabila did so unilaterally. However, during the era of Mobutu, this change could not be effected because of the Mobutu government that was still in place. The decision made by Kabila to rename the country caused unhappiness among Mobutu's followers especially in Equateur region (periphery) even in Kinshasa.

(b) Establishment of the Popular Power Committees

At the onset of the era of Kabila the power was concentrated in the office of the President to the detriment of the peripheries. Yet, the latter already enjoyed autonomy of management in accordance with the measure of decentralization implemented in 1982 that improved the nature of the centre-periphery relations in Zaïre. Following criticism of the establishment of personal rule, President Kabila mandated the Popular Power Committees (*Comités du Pouvoir Populaire* - CPPs) to exercise local government powers throughout the country.

Since elected by local residents, the CPPs were the expression of the transfer of power to the people. But with the establishment of the CPPs, President Kabila *also* sought to be represented in the peripheries in an attempt to control the whole territory exactly as President Mobutu did with the MPR. Both the CPPs and the MPR were established to ensure the omnipresence of the President throughout the country. A CPP was therefore a public institution receiving support from the state budget. Thus, the political parties and various organizations of civil society established at the end of the era of Mobutu had no authority to carry on with the democratic process launched by the CNS.

According to the Historical Dictionary of the DRC, Anicet Kashamura was a clerk in the colonial administration and co-founded the *Centre du Regroupement Africain* (CEREA) as a political party in August 1958. He became one of the four members of the Executive College established by Belgium to oversee the transition to independence. The CEREA became part of the coalition of nationalist movements that provided Lumumba with enough votes to become prime minister. Kashamura was minister of information in the Lumumba government. He was dismissed along with Lumumba and Antoine Gizenga by President Kasa-Vubu on September 5, 1960. In early 1961, Kashamura took power in Kivu Province in the name of Gizenga's central government in Stanleyville. He was a minister in the rival Stanleyville government in 1961 but was driven into exile when Gizenga accepted a part in the Cyrille Adoula's government of national reconciliation (Kisangani and Bobb 2010:266).

The circumstances that led to the creation of CPPs are as follows: First, President Kabila formed on May 23, 1997 a new government that placed most powers in his hands. It was dominated by members of the AFDL. It also included the members of the *Front Patriotique Rwandais* and two members of the UDPS. President Kabila abolished the post of prime minister. Even the post of vice-president was not scheduled. This decision broke Tshisekedi's chances of holding the position of prime minister he demanded as a right for having been elected as such for the transitional period. Thus, the political dispensation set the stage for confrontation with opposition supporters.

Mthembu-Salter (2003) argues that Etienne Tshisekedi refused to recognize the new Government and advocated public protest against the administration because he was not offered a cabinet post. He, however, failed to raise the mass support that he had previously enjoyed. Following several demonstrations, on May 26 President Kabila issued a decree banning all political parties and public demonstrations. A public gathering on May 28 in support of Tshisekedi was dispersed by the army⁶⁵ (Mthembu-Salter 2003:251).

Second, motivated by the dissolution of the AFDL as a result of disagreement (see point (c) below) between President Kabila and his comrades, he created the CPPs on January 21, 1999 that were to function as a political party. Thus, the DRC became *de facto*, as in the era of Mobutu, a one-party system with personal rule exercised by Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

According to Proletarian (2008), President Kabila's truly unforgivable sin, in the eyes of the imperial powers (USA, England, Belgium and France) was the establishment of these CPPs as the new state organs of power. They were building from the bottom up, from the street, the locality, the commune, the village, right up to the provincial and the national levels. The committees 'set themselves the task of opposing all imperialist domination and all Congolese forces that put themselves at the service of foreign interests' (Proletarian 2008: no page). The idea was that the new 'popular democratic' state would be under the control of the people, who would ensure it remained in their service. This was similar to the role the Communist Party cells played in the former Soviet Union. It was argued that the CPPs would prevent the new state functionaries and officials from re-establishing neo-colonial habits. It was also argued that only through the CPPs could 'the 55 million Congolese people ensure that the national economy was rebuilt to be strong and independent, serving the interests of workers, peasants and

⁶⁵ Etienne Tshisekedi was arrested without a warrant by members of the *Forces Armées Congolaises* (FAC). He was accused of violating the ban on political activities imposed by President Laurent-Désiré Kabila. The UDPS had announced its intention to celebrate the 16th anniversary of the party on February 15, 1998. Subsequently he was relegated to his home village of Kabeya Kamwanga, in Kasai Oriental. Government officials announced that Etienne Tshisekedi had been relegated to his home to carry out agricultural work to help with the reconstruction of DRC, while the accusation against him is investigated (see Amnesty International Urgent Action Bulletin, AI. Index AFR 62/10/98).

intellectuals alike' (Proletarian 2008: no page). Kabila advocated the idea that the only way to root out corruption permanently, and to place national resources at the disposal of its people in perpetuity, was to 'Sovietize' the Democratic Republic of Congo (Proletarian 2008: no page). The CPPs were also useful in bringing the peripheries in line with the rest of the country.

The creation of the CPPs, thus, reflected the Marxist design of President Kabila for the organization of the political sphere and to exercise control over the peripheries.

(c) Expulsion of Rwandan and Ugandan

Kabila's expulsion of his allies from the DRC was a factor in triggering the revolts in the peripheries against the authority of the Central Government. It is identified as the main cause of the outbreak of the civil war in August 1998 (also named the Second Congo War) that aimed at overthrowing Kabila.

After the collapse of the centre, Tutsi soldiers behaved like true conquerors. They extorted vehicles and other belongings from civilians and the Congolese State and they sent them to Rwanda. Their behavior caused the Congolese people to resent their presence in the DRC and particularly because the Tutsis received many advantages and rewards from the Kabila government. Langholtz and Stout (2004) mention that Kabila rewarded his allies with senior administrative positions in return for their loyalty. Among these were some Tutsis. For example, his chief of staff, James Kabarebe, was a Rwandan Tutsi. But the Congolese people despised the elevation of the minority Tutsi (Langholtz and Stout 2004:209).

A major concern among the Congolese population, especially the inhabitants of the Kivu region, was the suspicion of a *Tutsiland* project in Kivu, or even the annexation of the eastern part of the DRC by Rwanda in accordance with the pre-colonial political entity of King Rwabugiri from Rwanda in the Kivu region (see sub-section 3.2.2). André-Dumond (2011) and Aimable Twagilimana (2007) mention the possibility that the Rwandan leader, Kagame, was aiming to expand his country and annex Kivu by concluding an agreement thereto with President Kabila. Thus, Kagame's use of the *Interahamwe* as an excuse to invade the DRC had as a goal the annexation of the eastern DRC and to make it part of a Greater Rwanda which would form part of the Anglo-East African Community (Nabudere 2003:47). More and more criticism arose from the Congolese population concerning the interference of the Rwandan in Congolese matters. Kabila felt trapped by the Rwandan Tutsis, who wanted to exercise their influence on the administration of the DRC and he also suspected his Rwandan and Ugandan allies of eyeing the mineral riches of the country. Realizing that he was perceived as a puppet of Kagame, and wanting to have more control over the government, Kabila began to embrace nation-building. For this purpose he refused to give more autonomy to the groups in the east which had assisted him (André-Dumond 2011:18; Twagilimana 2007:38).

In addition, Nabudere (2003) mentions that according to some sources associated with a Congolese network called New Congo Net (NCN), President Museveni of Uganda (whom, as mentioned, Kabila befriended) in turn had as objective to annex the northern DRC and reach westwards toward the Atlantic. This was the real mission of the 'Motherland' (Uganda) and not just the removal of Ugandan rebels from the eastern DRC (Nabudere 2003:47).

The support that Rwanda and Uganda gave to the rebellion by the AFDL was, thus, not without implications. It proved to be a threat to the territorial unity of the DRC. It was for these reasons that, according to André-Dumond (2011), President Kabila announced on July 26, 1998 in a radio broadcast that he had decided to terminate the presence of the Rwandan and Ugandan troops who had assisted in the liberation of the country. He also expelled the Tutsis from his government. The day after, he fired his Rwandan Tutsi chief of staff, James Kabarebe who became Rwanda's new chief of staff (André-Dumond 2011:18). At that time the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DRC was headed by Bizima Karaha, another Tutsi also called Banyamulenge, who was forced from Kabila's government.

Nation-building and centre-periphery relations were affected by the determination of Kabila's government to exclude Tutsis from the DRC while they were integrated during the era of Mobutu through official institutions (see the case of Joseph-Barthelemy Bisengimana in sub-section 5.3.2.1). For example, the final draft of the constitution initiated by President Laurent-Désiré Kabila proposed that a Congolese citizen is one who had at least one parent who is, or was, a member of one of the tribes of the Congo at the time of independence. The Tutsis, victimized by political marginalization and denied full Congolese citizenship, rebelled again in order to protect their rights and to overthrow a regime they helped put in place (Ngolet 2011:17). Bizima Karaha, a powerful Banyamulenge closely tied to Kagame and the Rwandan regime, eventually joined the rebellion of the RCD discussed in sub-section 6.4.2.1. He played, as member of the RCD, the role of commissioner for Foreign Affairs through which he struggled for the rights of Congolese citizenship in favour of Tutsis.

(d) Discrimination in favour of DRC nationals from eastern DRC

As already alluded to above, discrimination in favour of DRC nationals from the eastern DRC had important implications for centre-periphery relations. Together with the establishment of an autocratic regime, this discrimination gave rise to the rebellion in Equateur Province in 1998 by the *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC), which was led by Jean-Pierre Bemba. It was backed by Uganda as reprisal for the expulsion of Ugandan troops from eastern DRC.

The western part of the DRC consists of the Province of Equateur, Bandundu, Bas-Congo and the City-Province of Kinshasa. However, the Province of North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema,

Katanga and Oriental Province make up the eastern part of the DRC. The Provinces of Kasai Occidental and Kasai Oriental are located at the centre.

This geographical division is often referred to by the voters, for example in the presidential elections held in 2006 and 2011. The central authorities, mostly in the beginning of the era of Mobutu, took also account of this division in the appointment or recruitment in the national public institutions to balance the representation of the different parts of the DRC and to promote national integration (see sub-section 5.3.2.1). However, the coming to power of Kabila has led to favouritism of the regions comprising the east of the DRC. For example, Christian P. Scherrer (2002) points out that in the final analysis it was disturbing to see that the small power elite that surrounded Kabila became more and more monoethnic (mainly Luba from Katanga and a few Lunda from Katanga), ethnochauvinist and narrow-minded (Scherrer 2002:272). Thus, President Kabila's favouritism for the people from eastern DRC in the appointments he made jeopardized nation-building.

What was not yet mentioned is the fact that historically there has been a tacit competition between the eastern and western parts of the DRC. Since independence the presidency of the DRC was occupied by people from the western part, but the presidency of the DRC was transferred to the east with the seizure of power by President Kabila. The people from Equateur Province in particular resented the end of the reign by their home province. This was exacerbated by the exclusion from the new government of most opposition politicians, especially the members of MPR, the party of former President Mobutu, and the failure of President Kabila to reconcile and unite people by introducing more members of his indigenous tribe in the government. This discrimination did not attract people from other areas of the country, especially those of the western peripheries, to support Kabila's government.

Furthermore, for a better understanding of the centre-periphery relations during the era of Laurent-Désiré Kabila, the linguistic factor is not to be overlooked in the establishment of the autocratic regime of Kabila, as well as in the emergence of the rebellion in Equateur Province - the cradle of the Lingala language. This had implications for the centre of the DRC. The population disrespected the preference of the new central authority for the Swahili that is spoken in the eastern DRC. The people from the west of the DRC, including Kinshasa, did not support this linguistic discrimination aggravated by the preeminence of Swahili in the public institutions notably in the military where Lingala was used for a long time during the era of Mobutu. The dominance by Swahili of other Congolese national languages was noticeable. Examples are President Kabila's unilateral decision to write Swahili on the new bank notes, (the *Franc Congolais*) launched in 1998 to replace the *Nouveau Zaïre*) and in the Congolese passport. Before his coming to power, French was the only language used in the national currency and passport which is also a symbol of national unity. Other indigenous languages felt left out.

6.3.3.2 The foreign policies of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government

President Kabila has implemented a series of foreign policies in an attempt to strengthen the fragile centre of the DRC. Their aim was the prevention of revolts in the peripheries and the possible disintegration of the DRC. Moreover, he sought through some of those policies to address the socio-economic crisis that he inherited from President Mobutu and for which the peripheries paid a heavy price (see sub-section 5.3.3.2). However, most of his foreign policies contributed rather to attract the antipathy of the western democracies towards his government due to their revolutionary character.

Various foreign policies of Kabila's government had either a negative or a positive impact on the peripheries. In this regard, attention in this sub-section is paid to the DRC's membership of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 1997 and the relations of the DRC with the People's Republic of China as prominent examples. There are other actions which are not discussed here, for example, the boycott of the Hanoi summit of *La Francophonie* in 1997 and its refusal to cooperate with the UN Human Rights Commission.

(a) Membership of SADC

The centre-periphery relations have been affected by the admission of the DRC into SADC. Membership of SADC contributed in stopping the advancement of the subsequent rebellions in Equateur Province and the Kivu regions (peripheries) towards Kinshasa (centre).

The DRC was not a member of SADC during the era of Mobutu in spite of its geostrategic location in Africa. However, as soon as President Kabila seized power, the DRC became a member of SADC in 1997 at the SADC summit held in Blantyre, Malawi, on August 8. The sequence of events that took place in the DRC after its admission into SADC has proved that this membership provided a refuge for President Kabila. This significantly strengthened the central government of the DRC in its confrontation with Rwanda and Uganda on the one hand, and with the Congolese rebellions on the other hand. Some of the SADC member states have played a leading role in the centre-peripheries relations in the DRC by preventing once again the collapse of the centre. In this regard, everything suggests that President Laurent-Désiré Kabila prepared his move to break away from the Tutsi influence that brought him to power.

Three SADC members, Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, rescued Kabila at the outbreak of the Second Congo War in August 1998. Nabudere (2003) argues that these states justified their intervention under international law and particularly chapters seven and eight of the United Nations Charter. Articles 51 and 52 provide that nothing in the Charter shall impair the right of countries either individually or collectively to engage in self-defense 'if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations'. Furthermore, Article 52 provides that the Charter

does not preclude the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters. It was clear that SADC was such a regional agency for the purpose of collective self-defense (Nabudere 2003:55).

On account of the fragility of the political institutions of the DRC and in light of the SADC Treaty, according to Venter (2001), the admission of the DRC into SADC was a monumental blunder by all SADC member states collectively. He argues that politically the DRC was a collapsed state – an ungovernable pseudo-entity – that has become a liability for the rest of southern Africa (Venter 2001:176). But the DRC was admitted to the regional body because of factors relating to the external logic of SADC, namely regional stability, the DRC's mineral wealth, water and other natural resources, as well as its potential for hydroelectric power and infrastructural projects (SouthScan. 1997:258, quoted by Nathan 2012:105).

Of particular significance, in spite of the criticism from the nonviolent opposition (for example from political parties such as UDPS, MPR and PALU), President Kabila persisted in the pursuit of his authoritarian rule in part because of the 'safety' that the admission of the DRC into SADC offered him. But, his uncompromising attitude has led to the organization of armed rebellions in the peripheries. In contrast, SADC membership has, to a large extent, helped to strengthen the centre of the DRC and the survival of Kabila's government against the attempt to oust him at the beginning of the rebellion.

(b) Relations with the People's Republic of China

As mentioned the government's policy favouring communism is in line with Kabila's Marxist background, had implications for the centre-periphery relations in the DRC after the collapse of the centre.

The ideology and the political project of President Kabila are of Maoist inspiration. He proposed to make the DRC a socialist society. According to Garth Shelton and Claude Kabemba (2012), President Laurent-Désiré Kabila was among the first African presidents to promote relations with China in what became known as the 'look East policy'. Soon after assuming power in 1997, President Kabila turned to China for economic and military assistance. He expanded and intensified relations between the DRC and China by buying most of his armaments from China in exchange for minerals. Although not doing anything that threatened Western interests in the DRC, his intention to shift the source of development away from the West was seen as a threat. Consequently, his 'Go East' policy attracted the animosity from the West. He, for example, refused to accept financial assistance from the IMF and the World Bank and turned to China for development assistance, especially military and agricultural equipment (Shelton and Kabemba 2012:97). On this point, there was a total break with his predecessor whose foreign policy was based on cooperation with the USA and its Western allies. In spite of the inauguration of a new

era in international relations with the end of the Cold War, President Kabila did not keep up with developments in the world. He acted as whether he was still in the 1960s.

The relations between the centre and the peripheries were affected by the implementation of a more socialist oriented economic policy. The establishment of the CPPs as discussed in sub-section 6.3.2.1 contributed in this regard. From an economic perspective, President Kabila's idea was to supply food to the population at the lowest possible prices through popular canteens similar to a collectivist economy. This system was first implemented in the *communes* of Kinshasa (centre) by using the money produced by the peripheries. Elder Kitapanda Luzau (2006) argues that in order to stop the DRC's reliance on imports of basics foodstuffs, he established several farming centres in the peripheries just like the kolkhoz (collective farms) and sovkhoz (state farms) in the former Soviet Union. The most famous of these was the centre of Kanyama Kasese in Katanga (my translation) (Luzau 2006: no page).

As seen previously in sub-section 4.2.2.2, the essence of the DRC's wealth came mainly from the mining sector with little from the agricultural sector. Most companies that produce wealth in the DRC are located in the peripheries and work in accordance with the principles of the market economy namely the pursuit of profit. The gradual implementation of collectivism through the CPPs, the popular canteens, the socialized farms, as well as the privileges given to Kinshasa as an experimental centre created discontent among the entrepreneurs in the peripheries. In addition to the causes of the above-mentioned rebellion by the MLC, the most violent anger came from Mobutu's capitalist followers. They subsequently supported the rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba in Equateur Province, who ran his family's businesses⁶⁶ which were acquired by his father Jannot Bemba Saolona during the Zaïrianization of the economy in 1973, and the alleged embezzlement of public assets.

The centre was weakened due to the rejection of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's policies by the former Western allies of President Mobutu such as the USA and France following his ties with China. President Kabila therefore lost his initial charisma both within the DRC as well as among the Western nations when he modeled his style of governing on the Chinese model. Consequently, he needed to strengthen urgently the centre as the Congolese armed forces were still powerless to protect the DRC's territory. The history of the revolts of the peripheries since independence brings to light that the centre-periphery relations in the DRC are critical when the peripheries are aware that the centre does not have the strength required to defend itself. Thus, later, in order to add force to the centre and to counter the challenge of revolts in the peripheries, International Crisis Group (1999) mentions that President Kabila has mustered three circles of international support. The first circle included Angola, Namibia, Chad, Sudan and Zimbabwe. The second circle was made up of the Francophone states of Central Africa,

⁶⁶ This refers mainly to SCIBE-Zaire (Société Commerciale et Industrielle Bemba - Zaire) and GB (Groupe Bemba).

whose support was mainly diplomatic rather than military. The third circle included what might be called 'radical' states namely Sudan, Libya and possibly Cuba. The motivations of these states varied but one rule seems to apply: the enemy of my enemy is my friend (ICG 1999:4).

Thus the next sub-section focuses on the reactions of the restive peripheries after the collapse of the centre and following the policies implemented by Laurent-Désiré Kabila government and subsequently in the aftermath of President Kabila's demise.

6.4 REACTIONS OF THE RESTIVE PERIPHERIES

Thirty seven years after the wave of attempts at secession in the aftermath of independence, the collapse of the centre did not provoke the withdrawal of the restive peripheries from the territory of the DRC in spite of the presence of several factors identified in this study that could have encouraged the disintegration of this country. Principally Katanga, the wealthiest of the provinces which sought to establish self-government at independence of the DRC in 1960, stayed quiet during this critical phase.

This sub-section discusses mainly the reactions of the restive peripheries towards the policies of the new government led by President Laurent-Désiré Kabila. Attention is paid to the rebellion of the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD), the secessionist movement Bakata Katanga. The order of the discussion of the restive peripheries of the 1960s is inverted for reasons of chronology of the sequence of events. Prior to this discussion, it looks at the relations between the centre and the peripheries during this phase.

6.4.1 The situation of the centre-periphery relations during this period

This sub-section briefly looks at the centre-periphery relations that prevailed at the end of the 1990s after what has been previously discussed in section 4.3 at independence. The purpose is to investigate whether there was an improvement in the ties of Kinshasa with its peripheries that may also explain the lack of secessionism during the phase of the collapse of the centre.

A prominent characteristic of the centre-periphery relations at the end of the 1990s, as mentioned before, is the situation where the peripheries usually received less from the Central Government compared to their contribution to the national revenue. Kinshasa as the capital city is referred to as the mirror of the whole DRC, but Theodore Treffon (2004), for example, described Kinshasa as a capital city with practically no formal economy and an ecologically devastated hinterland. The remainder of its administration provided little in terms of social services or infrastructure. The population referred to basic public services as 'memories'. The

people were poor, sick, hungry, unschooled, underinformed and disillusioned by decades of political oppression, economic crisis and war. The toll of marginalization, exclusion and social stratification was heavy and it is understandable that the people felt neglected and marginalized. Outbreaks of violence reached frightening proportions (Treffon 2004:1). But, what was happening in Kinshasa in terms of communication infrastructure and telecommunication, administration and economy was even worse in the peripheries.

Thus, the following sub-section provides indications of the nature of the relations between the centre and the peripheries in terms of transport and telecommunication infrastructure, politico-administrative relations, and economic relations at the time of the collapse of the centre.

6.4.1.1 Transport and telecommunication infrastructure

This sub-section deals with the connection in terms of transport infrastructure with a particular look at the general state of the *Voie Nationale* and the telecommunication infrastructure which linked the whole country at the time of the collapse of the centre and the rise of Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

At the end of the 1990s, the state of transport infrastructure of the DRC was marked by a compromised traffic system between the centre and the peripheries, even within the centre, between the peripheries as well as within the peripheries themselves. George J. Coakley (1997) argues that even prior to the outbreak of the civil war in 1998 much of the DRC's transport network was in varying degrees of disrepair (Coakley 1997:5). Air transport was the only quick way which connected Kinshasa with its peripheries. But, the high number of air crashes did not encourage the population to travel by air. Thus transport was largely deferred to roads which were largely decrepit. This lack of a reliable transport network threatened Kinshasa with asphyxiation during the years of Mobutu's totalitarian regime and the advent of Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

However, in terms of telecommunication infrastructure, the connection between the centre and the peripheries improved with the introduction of the private agencies of radiophony into Kinshasa, the capitals of the provinces and towns throughout the peripheries to address the lack of a land line telephone network. According to the OECD (2009), the *Office Congolais des Postes et Télécommunications* (OCPT) land line network practically no longer existed. Growth in the telecommunications sector was mainly due to mobile telephony operators⁶⁷ which cover more than 288 towns and villages in the DRC (OECD 2009:189). Eventually, the advent of these companies facilitated contact among the population throughout the DRC's territory. Cellular

⁶⁷ These are Vodacom, Celtel (now Zain), Tigo (former Oasis) and Congo-Chine Telecom.

phones are instrumental in breaking the isolation of remote peripheries and it also played the role of rapprochement of people within the DRC.

The transport and telecommunication infrastructure remains important in ensuring a state presence across the national territory. However, the government of Kabila faced serious challenges in this regard. Thus the next sub-section looks at the politico-administrative relations.

6.4.1.2 Politico-administrative relations

Attention in this sub-section is paid to the authority of the central authority in the provinces and the access of the population of the peripheries to the central administration. In addition, this sub-section investigates whether the administration was able to reach the remote peripheries and the peripheries located near the borders as well as the impact of the territorial management of the initiative to develop the peripheries.

The governors of provinces were still appointed among the nationals from each province by the Head of State during the era of Laurent-Désiré Kabila just as at the end of the era of Mobutu in 1997. For example, at the arrival of Kabila in Kisangani in 1997, he appointed Jean Yagi Sitolo and Noël Obotela Rashidi as Governor and Vice-Governor of Oriental Province respectively during a popular rally at the Lumumba stadium to replace the last pro-Mobutist Governor, Eugène Lombeya Bosongo. All three personalities were nationals from Oriental Province. Subsequently, he also appointed governors and vice-governors of the other provinces from within the provinces.

The Central Government located in Kinshasa remained too distant to control efficiently the remote peripheries. Although the administration's facilities are present in the peripheries through for example health care centres, schools, court and police service, some villagers are still far away from the central administration not only because of the natural obstacles such as rivers and forests within the peripheries, but also because the capital city itself is not located in the centre position of the DRC. This location is a source of discrimination since some inhabitants of the peripheries are more disadvantaged in terms of access to the centre. While some Congolese live in the peripheries near Kinshasa the majority lives far away.

Poorly connected to the capital, the populations of the peripheries located in the border areas of the DRC are often better connected with the nine neighbouring countries in order to do business or to protect themselves in the events of natural catastrophes or armed conflicts. To illustrate the connection of some of the peripheries in the DRC with neighbouring countries, Opportuna Leo Kweka (2007), mentions that Tanzania received over 900,000 Congolese refugees in 1997 following the ousting of the late President Mobutu (Kweka 2007:6). The

inhabitants of the city of Goma were refugees in Rwanda during the eruption of the Nyragongo Volcano on January 17, 2002. Chris Huggins (2010) confirms the fact that the DRC is characterised by a very weak state presence outside of the main urban centres (Huggins 2010:6). The weak representation of the authority of the State in the distant peripheries has fostered the proliferation of armed groups in eastern DRC and the incursion of the rebel movements fighting the governments of neighbouring countries. The control of the DRC's borders by the Congolese armed forces was not efficient and the rebels from neighbouring countries, especially Ugandan rebels, created insecurity in the north-east of the DRC.

With regard to the huge size of the territory of the DRC which also entailed the huge size of some provinces, Murru and Pavignani (2012) argue that the Kinshasa-based government did not seem to be greatly disturbed by the unmanageability of the enormous provinces of Oriental, Equateur and Katanga. The centralist culture that coloured the perceptions of the government and their increasing neglect of their ruling duties coupled with the unsuccessful territorial decentralization implemented during the era of Mobutu (see sub-sections 5.3.1.2 and 5.4.1.4) placed restrictions on the internal dynamics of the peripheries and their development (Murru and Pavignani 2012:14).

The centre-periphery relations are also viewed under economic aspect which depends partially on the politico-administrative relations as well as the transport and telecommunication infrastructure. The following sub-section deals therefore with the economic relations.

6.4.1.3 Economic relations

This sub-section gives an indication of how the centre and the peripheries were supplied with food products; and how the centre depended on the mining in the peripheries at the time of the collapse of the centre.

Kinshasa has always depended for its food supplies mainly on its connection with Bandundu and the Bas-Congo Provinces, especially with the city of Matadi, its opening on the Atlantic Ocean. According to Eric Tollens (2004), since the beginning of the Second Congo War in August 1998 in the DRC, food import from Equateur and Oriental Provinces virtually ceased. To avoid catastrophic food shortages Kinshasa managed to create new supply routes from Bandundu (Tollens 2004:53). The major private companies that supplied food to Kinshasa and the peripheries were the Belgian companies, Orgaman and Beltexco, and the Lebanese Congo Futur and Socimex. More than 200,000 tons of food per year, particularly wheat, rice, frozen fish and meat were imported in the late 1990s. Some of these imports were re-exported to Brazzaville and to the interior (periphery) of both Congos (Tollens 2004:56).

With the advent of Laurent-Désiré Kabila, the DRC's economy was still reliant on the mining in the peripheries (Katanga, Kasai Oriental and Kivu) as previously discussed at independence in 1960. The reliance of the Central Government on the restive peripheries did not change according to indications provided by Coakley (1997). He states that in 1997 the Central Government maintained at least part ownership and generally majority ownership, of nearly all the productive and service sectors of the economy. GECAMINES, the principal parastatal⁶⁸ company, produced essentially all of the country's coal, cobalt, and copper. GECAMINES also operated subsidiaries that produced cement and other materials required for its primary mineral interests. Coakley (1997) also mentions that MIBA which was 80% owned by the Government produced about 25% of the industrial diamond production with the remainder coming from small artisanal operators. SOMINKI and OKIMO were the other principal parastatal mining companies (Coakley 1997:2). Thus, in terms of right-sizing the state, the Central Government of the DRC remained dependent on the resources of the peripheries and therefore made an effort in keeping the wealthy restive peripheries under control and, in a sense, even the remainder of the peripheries. The other provinces also provided a non-negligible income for example from timber and petrol in Equateur and Bas-Congo Provinces respectively.

Thus, little progress has been made in connecting the city of Kinshasa with its peripheries especially in terms of transport infrastructure since the 1960s. Apart from the contact between the inhabitants of the centre and those of the peripheries since the advent of mobile phones, there is no real improvement in the connection between the centre and the peripheries even in terms of administrative penetration, especially outside of urban centres. Consequently, the lack of attempts at secession in the DRC at this phase does, however, not suggest that the connection between the centre and periphery was excellent. The lack of actual secession seems to be far more complex.

The next sub-section is about the discussion of the way in which the restive peripheries behaved following the establishment of the new government in the DRC and the implementation of various policies as mentioned above in sub-section 6.3.3.

6.4.2 Oriental Province and Kivu region

The reaction of these restive peripheries towards the policies of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government gave rise to an unprecedented civil war due to the rebellion of the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) which nearly led to the partitioning of the DRC's territory.

⁶⁸ The concept 'parastatal' meant that an organization or industry, especially in some African countries, has some political authority and serves the state indirectly.

6.4.2.1 Rebellion of the RCD

A look at the rebellion of the RCD is important for this study because it constituted a major threat to the DRC's territorial unity. This occurred after the attempt at the creation of a new state named 'People's Republic of the Congo' in the 1960s in Oriental Province and Kivu region (see sub-section 4.4.2.3). The rebellion of the RCD is also important because it has given rise to what is called in the literature the 'Second Congo War' (1998-2003) also referred to as 'Africa's First World War' due to the involvement of a number of African countries in the armed conflict either in support of President Kabila's government or with the objective of ousting President Kabila.

(a) Causes and creation of the RCD

This new rebel movement was created and introduced in the peripheries, initially in the Kivu region and gradually in Oriental Province, by Rwanda and Uganda when President Kabila expelled their troops from the eastern part of the DRC and kicked out Rwandan representatives from the government of the DRC (see sub-section 6.3.3.1).

President Kabila, as already indicated, acted in this way because he came under pressure from the majority of the Congolese to put an end to the presence of the Rwandan soldiers in the country. He therefore made the choice to assert the sovereignty of the DRC instead of complying with the demands of his 'former' allies. Langholtz and Stout (2004) point out that the Rwandan and Ugandan governments did not accept the removal of foreign troops by Kabila from the DRC. They believed that their national borders were only secured by their presence in the DRC. The Congolese Tutsis, or Banyamulenge, meanwhile, felt that the presence of these foreign troops was their only guarantee against their continued persecution in the DRC and were against their withdrawal (Langholtz and Stout 2004:209).

Furthermore, the unhappiness of some Congolese politicians such as Vicent de Paul Lunda Bululu, Alexis Thambwe Mwamba, Tryphon Kin-Kiey Mulumba, José Endundo Bononge and Lambert Mende Omalanga with the authoritarian regime established by President Kabila was a resource for Rwanda and Uganda in order to promote their own agendas in the DRC. For example, during the campaign in Kisangani in 1998 on the justification of the rebellion against Kabila's government, Congolese General Jean-Pierre Ondekane stated that one of Kabila's girlfriends was the cashier of the state's money at home and that Kabila was not worthy of being the head of state because of his repeated drunkenness⁶⁹. Kabila's personal lifestyle weakened the safe-guarding of the central authority. This was in contrast to the strategy of

⁶⁹ Meeting at the *Grande Poste* of Kisangani in 1998 held by General Jean-Pierre Ondekane

former President Mobutu regarding his personal security (see sub-section 5.3.5.2). This failure to secure the central authority also encouraged the restive peripheries to consider revolt.

Thus, Nabudere (2003) argues that it is clear that in order to wage this second 'rebellion' both Uganda and Rwanda needed a Congolese 'cover' or 'face'. The use of a Banyamulenge 'rebellion' alone as justification for the new offensive was seen to be problematic as a propaganda ploy. What was required was a 'broad alliance' of all Congolese groups which wanted to fight for 'democracy' against the Kabila 'dictatorship' which they were responsible for installing. Having moved very quickly to occupy the biggest cities in the Kivu region, namely Goma, Bukavu and Uvira, they declared a rebellion in the name of the Banyamulenge and other disgruntled Congolese groups on August 2, 1998. What they wanted was a well-structured organization that could take over the propaganda work while the Banyamulenge, Rwandan and Ugandan fought on their behalf. This is what led to the creation of the 'rebel movement' named *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie*. The reason given for the new 'rebellion' was that Kabila was a dictator just like Mobutu, and that he was supporting the *Interhamwe* who had committed genocide in Rwanda. The other reason was that Kabila had failed to dislodge the Ugandan rebels who were still operating from inside the DRC. All these were lame excuses for launching the rebellion since the Ugandan and Rwandan armies were controlling the Eastern parts of the DRC from which the *Interhamwe* and Ugandan rebels were operating (Nabudere 2003:54).

This second rebellion for the liberation of the DRC was not welcomed by the Congolese people because they were tired of recurrent wars after the rebellion of the AFDL, but mostly because of the involvement of Rwanda in the conflict.

(b) Civil War and Africa's First World War (1998-2003)

President Kabila took great pains to demonstrate to both the national and international opinion that the war that broke out on August 2, 1998 was not a rebellion, but rather an aggression perpetrated by Rwanda and Uganda against the DRC and its people.

The RCD started the war. By using Rwandan aircraft, the armed wing of the RCD quickly arrived in Bas-Congo Province in the south-west of the DRC and took control of strategic sites such as the Inga dam and the Kitona military base. The rebels were near to Kinshasa when the Angolan army powerfully intervened to rescue the FAC. The war would have been shorter, and probably with a different outcome, if Angola had not broken the offensive of the RCD. This early military intervention of Angola led to a long civil war unforeseen by the rebels and their allies. At least four other African states became extensively involved in the war, namely Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and Chad. At one point in time, Sudan was also said to be involved in support of the Kabila government.

Nabudere (2003) argues that the second invasion of the DRC by Rwanda and Uganda in 1998 immediately drew a challenge from a number of states, which came to the assistance of the DRC, leading to 'Africa's First World War'. In addition to the names of states already mentioned, the names of Cameroon, Gabon and Libya have been mentioned as having had a role in the conflict in one way or another (Nabudere 2003:55).

The military intervention of the allies of the DRC helped to strengthen the centre and made it possible to retain under its control the peripheries which had not yet fallen into the hands of the rebels. The intervention by these allies was beneficial to the survival of President Kabila's government.

President Kabila also lobbied the OAU with a measure of success. He obtained recognition for his government, as well as the territorial sovereignty and integrity of the DRC. In an effort to draw international support for his cause he constantly referred to international law and the OAU charter and the violation of the territorial integrity of the DRC. He exploited international concerns that the breakup of the DRC could have a snowball effect that could lead to a conflict engulfing the whole African continent, which could signal the end of the colonial boundaries as recognized by the OAU. The USA was clear on the need to respect the territorial sovereignty of the DRC (International Business Publications 2014:259). This opinion of the USA encouraged President Kabila to pursue the reunification of the DRC.

(c) Partitioning threat to the DRC and the death of Laurent-Désiré Kabila

Secession and the partitioning of the DRC were real possibilities during the era of Laurent-Désiré Kabila specifically in the context of the armed rebellions.

Due to the growing division within the RCD caused by the discontent among non-Tutsi Congolese members in response to a number of posts attributed in the movement to Banyamulenge members, this rebel movement split into three factions: RCD-Goma, RCD-*Mouvement de Libération* (RCD-ML) and RCD-National. Koen Vlassenroot (2004) explains that the first split to emerge was in May 1999, after the RCD leader Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba had fallen out with the original RCD-leadership. Wamba-dia-Wamba created a rival-faction, the 'RCD-*mouvement de Libération*' (RCD-ML). Nevertheless, an internal power struggle soon erupted within the RCD-ML. This led to the removal of Wamba dia Wamba and the consolidation of the power-position of Mbusa Nyamwisi⁷⁰. The fragmentation of the politico-military landscape in eastern DRC, however, was also the consequence of a growing conflict between Rwanda and Uganda and the manipulation by both countries of their Congolese proxies. The factional split within the RCD was one of the effects of the rivalry between Rwanda

⁷⁰ Mbusa Nyamwisi is a member of the Nande ethnic group that has been marginalized for a long time (see subsection 5.4.3.2).

and Uganda for control over Kisangani and its diamond market.⁷¹ The internal crisis of the RCD-ML can also be explained as a consequence of Uganda's divide-and-rule tactics. Another reason for the complex politico-military landscape was the emergence of new actors and the formation of new (local and regional) coalitions. There was for example growing urban resistance by civil society and church leaders. The RCD-rebellion also gave a new breath to the formation of rural militias, also known as the Mai-Mai. Hostilities between the RCD's sponsors, Rwanda and Uganda, had led to a reconfiguration of the rebellion between a Rwanda-controlled section (RCD-Goma) and a Uganda-controlled offshoot (RCD-ML). This led to the carving up of the Congolese territory into four separate politico-military regions, each controlled by a different rebel group. This resulted in the total fragmentation of the politico-military landscape (Vlassenroot 2004:51).

Roger Lumbala was the head of the RCD-National. It was regarded as a proxy force created by the MLC which was led by Jean-Pierre Bemba. Backed by Uganda, the MLC, the RCD-National, and the RCD-ML controlled the northern part of the DRC. With the support of Rwanda, the RCD-Goma controlled the eastern part of the DRC. The Ugandan and Rwandan armies clashed in the martyr city of Kisangani on two occasions on August 14-16, 1999 and on June 5-6, 2000 causing material damages and losses in lives among Congolese civilians.

The proliferation of armed groups threatened the territorial unity of the DRC. A further complicating factor was that Laurent-Désiré Kabila's autocratic rule legitimized the existence of the rebel movements. However, he was assassinated on January 16, 2001 by one of his bodyguards and replaced by his son, Joseph Kabila, and a more internationally acceptable government came into power, but only after the rebels' legitimacy was secured. As a result external interests that benefited from the rebellion against Laurent-Désiré Kabila could not nullify the rebels' existence. Consequently, the rebels retained their recognition as legitimate opposition forces having equal status with the DRC government. This concretized the *de facto* but not the *de jure* partitioning or 'balkanization' of the DRC. This balkanization was, however, not to the dismay of foreign governments that had vested interests in the Congo (Naidoo 2003:9).

The rebellion by the RCD-Goma endangered the DRC's territorial unity⁷². The rebel leaders' behaviour during the Second Congo War suggested that the occupied peripheries (Oriental

⁷¹ According to Kisangani and Bobb (2010), on April 12, 2001, a UN Panel of Experts published its first report on the exploitation of resources in the DRC, concluding that the governments of Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda were profiting from the conflict by looting gold and other precious metals, diamonds, columbite-tantalite (coltan), timber, ivory and tax revenues (Kisangani and Bobb 2010: xlv).

⁷² The Central Government faced at the same time the rebellion by the MLC which occupied much of the Equateur Province (see sub-section 6.3.3.1 point [b]).

Province and Kivu) became *de facto* a state. There were in the structure of the RCD-Goma a president, a government, an assembly (parliament), a military (armed branch) and the support of some neighbouring countries. The RCD-Goma organized the administration of the peripheries under its control and appointed public servants. As discussed in sub-section 6.3.3.1 (c), the Rwandan and Ugandan objectives in eastern DRC, especially in Kivu, went beyond a self-governing entity for the RCD. However, the annexation of these territories did not materialize and probably because of the anti-Tutsi sentiment within the Kivu region as demonstrated by the resistance of the Congolese local communities through the Mai-Mai militia. The latter was one of the valued allies of the DRC government during the conflict with Rwanda and Uganda. Furthermore, the annexation was opposed by the RCD's Congolese leaders in Kivu⁷³ and other provinces⁷⁴ who supported the unity of the DRC. The role played by the Roman Catholic Church in Kivu also prevented the achievement of the Tutsis' plot in Kivu. In addition, the international community through international organizations such as the UN, EU, AU and SADC were in favour of the DRC's territorial integrity.

Thus, the next sub-section deals with the aftermath of the era of Laurent-Désiré Kabila and the reunification process of the territory and the failure of various rebellions to take over the central power in the DRC.

6.4.2.2 The aftermath of the era of Laurent-Désiré Kabila and the end of the civil war

The attention in this sub-section is on the 'reunification' of the DRC's territory as a consequence of the strengthening of the centre militarily by the allies of the government of the DRC.

With regard to the outbreak of violence in the DRC as a result of the Rwandan and Ugandan aggression, Naidoo (2003) asserts that in any conflict situation, the international community has the responsibility to provide critical support and assistance to the resolution of such aggression. However, in responding to the civil wars that have dominated the post-Cold War era, the international community has generally been reluctant to intervene with means beyond political initiatives and the provision of humanitarian assistance (Naidoo 2003:86).

The UN has taken its time to engage in the search for a solution to the crisis which shook the DRC. Thus, for example, Thomas Turner (2007) as well as other scholars point out that when the Second Congo War broke out, the UN was slow to respond. It took nearly a month for the Security Council to take up the question, reaffirming the 'obligation to respect the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Congo'. It asked all states of

⁷³ These are Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi and Alexis Thambwe Mwamba.

⁷⁴ These are the pro-Mobutist Vincent de Paul Lunda Bululu, Tryphon Kin-Kiey Mulumba, Lambert Mende Omalanga and José Endundo Bononge.

the region (without naming them) 'to refrain from any interference in each other's internal affairs' (Turner 2007:157). Early in 1999, the UN supported the mediation process undertaken by the OAU and SADC, and again asked unspecified foreign states to put an end to the presence of 'uninvited' forces in Congo.

The UN Security Council gradually abandoned its silence on the violation of human rights and the plunder of the DRC. UN Security Council Resolution 1291 of February 2000, authorized a peacekeeping force (MONUC) of 5 537 men. Its mandate referred to Chapter VII of the UN Charter. This took a long time to materialize. Kisangani and Bob (2010) state that it was only on March 29, 2001 that MONUC deployed its first contingent to the east, first in rebel-held areas, and then on April 4, in the government-controlled zone (Kisangani and Bob 2010: xlv).

In order to end the civil war, an inter-Congolese dialogue (ICD) was initiated. It gathered the representatives of the DRC government, various rebel factions, unarmed political opposition, as well as organizations of the civil society in order to reach a global and inclusive agreement ending the conflict. In addition to several meetings held mainly at different localities in Africa, in this regard, there was also the April 2002 ICD led agreement reached at Sun City, South Africa. The agreement aimed to end hostilities and form a transitional government that included many of the factions in the DRC. However, not all stakeholders signed the agreement – notably the RCD-Goma. In July 2002, talks in Pretoria led to a peace accord between the DRC and Rwanda, which paved the way for the withdrawal of Rwandan forces from the DRC. Furthermore, an agreement according to which Uganda would withdraw its forces from the DRC was negotiated in Luanda, Angola in September 2002. In addition to its diplomacy, SADC states provided peacekeepers to MONUC (Hentz 2013:211).

The political negotiations for restoration of the state authority and for ending the war had often failed because of RCD-Goma and the interference of Rwanda. Finally, there was in the words of the Secretary-General of the RCD-Goma, Azaryas Ruberwa, a will for unity of the DRC:

'We want a united Congo. There are more advantages to a united Congo than a partitioned Congo. We have never thought of secession. It is impossible to conceive of it. Our leaders are from all provinces. What we do want is to change the mode of management in Congo and to have more autonomy for the provinces. We want federalism. We say yes to the unity of Congo but never to unitarism. [...] Territorial integrity allows us to remain *une puissance en Afrique* [sic]. [...]. Let's create a Congolese nation because it does not exist yet' (Azaryas Ruberwa, Interview in Goma, November 2001, quoted by Englebert 2003:14)⁷⁵.

The benefits that the peripheries could obtain by being part of the DRC were not a concern of the RCD-Goma's leadership as well as Rwanda as their sponsor. This unexpected change of

⁷⁵ Emphasis is from Pierre Englebert.

mind is in contrast to the main objective of the RCD-Goma namely the annexation of part of the Congolese territory, particularly Kivu by the Rwandan government. An important reason is that the military support by the allies of the DRC government considerably strengthened the centre of the DRC. Thus, the possibility of seeing the war being exported to Rwanda, as President Laurent-Désiré Kabila stated, raised concerns in the Rwandan camp.

Other internal reasons affected the RCD-Goma as an organization. First, Congolese members who were enrolled with the objective of overthrowing President Laurent-Désiré Kabila expressed their desire for the normalization of the situation in the DRC. They were awaiting the reunification of the country and the establishment of a responsible government in Kinshasa. As a result of their frustrations and their growing impatience with the lack of normality in the DRC, most of the Congolese rebels moved to the MLC which is entirely a Congolese politico-military movement. The partitioning of the DRC was not part of the objectives of the MLC. Congolese politicians have joined the RCD-Goma to fight Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government probably because it was founded before the MLC and mostly because of the fact that the RCD was in a position to seize power quickly.

Second, failing to realize their project in Kivu, the Tutsis (Banyamulenge) leaders of the RCD-Goma then wanted a united DRC. At the time of the negotiations for a ceasefire and power-sharing they at least hoped to influence the management of the DRC at the top in the interest of Rwanda.

For the local communities of Kivu being part of the DRC had some advantages. The connection of the Kivu region with the central government of the DRC allowed them to keep ownership of the land. Huggins (2010) argues that, in eastern DRC, land is essential to most rural livelihoods. But land is also prominent in issues of 'identity and power'. For some communities, notably Hutu and Tutsi, the issue of immigrant status is linked to an uncertain or contested right to citizenship (Huggins 2010:5). As part of the DRC the local communities of Kivu are still in the majority and enjoy their land for agro-pastoral activities. Besides the reasons of security cited by the Rwandan government, the issues around land and rights to citizenship of the Tutsis in the DRC are latent causes that have motivated the formation of the AFDL and alternatively the RCD by Tutsis (Banyamulenge).

On December 17, 2002, organized by the ICD, a comprehensive peace agreement was signed in Pretoria, South Africa, by 80 Congolese participants in the civil war. Beyond the agreement, the participants at the ICD had drafted and approved the Constitution of the Transition. Under the agreement, Joseph Kabila would remain president (and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces) with four vice-presidents (Kisangani and Bob 2010: XLVI) each heading a particular government commission consisting of ministers and their deputies. The formula 1+4 for the

presidency of the DRC helped to end the internal crisis regarding the legitimacy of the institutions. For the transitional period, the RCD-Goma Secretary-General, Azaryas Ruberwa, ascended to the position of vice-president of the DRC and in charge of the Commission of Politics, Defense and Security. Jean-Pierre Bemba, leader of the MLC, gained the position of vice-president in charge of the Commission of Economy and Finance. Arthur Z'ahidi Ngoma, of the non armed opposition, was in charge of the Commission of Social and Emergency; and Abdoulay Yerodia Ndombasi, the representative of the presidential political party the *Parti du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et la Démocratie* (PPRD), was in charge of the Commission of Reconstruction and Development. Moreover, the agreement also specified the structure and composition of the parliament. Haskin (2005) mentions that the 500-member National Assembly and the 150-member Senate were inaugurated on August 22, 2003 with Olivier Kamitatu (MLC) leading the former and Bishop Marini Bodho (civil society) the latter. The National Assembly held its first sitting on October 6, 2003 (Haskin 2005:161).

The new political institutions and their hosts have received an indisputable legitimacy and were valid for five years of the transitional period of 24 months with effect from June 30, 2003. A new constitution was drafted and approved by popular referendum on December 2005. The new constitution came into force on February 18, 2006. This paved the way for the general elections that were held in July 2006. The armed branches of the rebellions were integrated into the *Forces Armées Congolaises* (FAC). For the convenience of the representatives of the rebellions, the FAC changed its name into *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (FARDC). Nevertheless, the insecurity issues and the humanitarian crisis to the east of the DRC have persisted during the transitional period and later due to the presence of the militias such as the *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC) led by Thomas Lubanga and the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), the *Interhamwe* and the Movement of March 23 (M23)⁷⁶.

The relations between the centre and the periphery in the DRC were critical after the collapse of the centre. The reason is that the rebellion by the RCD seemed initially like an occupation of the eastern part of the DRC by the neighbouring countries of the Great Lakes region, namely Rwanda and Uganda, including Burundi which was acting behind the scenes. A careful examination of this rebellion shows that the Oriental Province and Kivu as restive peripheries of the 1960s have not really rebelled against the Laurent-Désiré Kabila government as such. Those areas have just been used as a starting point of the rebel movement that was to lead to the

⁷⁶ The name M23 refers to the March 23, 2009 peace agreement signed by President Joseph Kabila and the *Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple* (CNDP). The M23, led by Jean-Marie Runiga, is a rebel movement established in December 2009 and comprised mainly of Tutsis who formerly comprised the CNDP, and its armed wing, led by Général Bosco Ntaganda, was officially integrated into the national army. Rebels claim to be fighting because the government has not lived up to the terms of the agreement.

overthrow of the Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government. But, in reality, as discussed above, this was part of an attempt at annexation of the Kivu region by the Rwandan government. Disillusioned Congolese politicians joined rebel movements with the objective of participating in the management of state affairs from which some were excluded during the brief era of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. The peace process that followed in fact prevented the secession and annexation of this part of the DRC.

6.4.3 Katanga Province

Although there are three conflicts in the restive Katanga Province, namely tensions between southerners and northerners, between outsiders and natives, and between Mai-Mai militias and the national army (Africa Report 2006:3), for the purpose of this study, attention is paid to the formation of the secessionist movement Bakata Katanga and the causes of the re-emergence of secessionism in Katanga in the aftermath of the era of Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

6.4.3.1 The secessionist movement Bakata Katanga

Although the Bakata Katanga was created ten years after the end of the Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government, the cause of its creation is connected with some of his government's actions in the peripheries such as the distribution of weapons in the frame of popular self-defense against invaders. Bakata Katanga in Swahili language means 'cut Katanga off [from the DRC]'. Thus, Bakata Katanga is closely associated with the Second Congo War. Its fighters were part of the Mai-Mai militia who opposed the Rwandan occupation of parts of Katanga. The 1998 war militarized the northern part of the Katanga Province. To stop the advance of the Rwandan-backed forces, President Laurent-Désiré Kabila created local Mai-Mai militias and distributed weapons to civilians in accordance with his statement that the war will be long and popular. While the enemy threat has disappeared, the militias took on a life of their own and became one of the largest security problems in the DRC (Africa Report 2006:6). This suggests that, in chronological order, there is an indirect relationship between the policy of expulsion of Rwandan and Ugandan pursued by President Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government that led to the rebellions by the RCD and the emergence of Bakata Katanga. The latter is derived from the Mai-Mai militia in Katanga organized to prevent RCD and its allies to take control of Katanga Province.

The Bakata Katanga is, according to Kris Berwouts (2014), rooted in the secessionist history of Katanga province. The Bakata Katanga is fed by the anger and the feeling of exclusion experienced by rural communities. But, rather than being a spontaneous outburst of frustration, the movement is believed to be a construction, initiated by people around President Joseph Kabila (Berwouts 2014: no page). Bakata Katanga was founded by Gédéon

Kyungu Mutanga in 2011. Before the creation of the Bakata Katanga, Gédéon Kyungu Mutanga was a leader of the Mai-Mai Katanga militia group which fought alongside the Congolese forces against pro-Rwandan rebel groups in the 1990s. After the end of that conflict, he allegedly continued to receive discreet support from someone in the military (McGregor 2014). In 2009, he and his wife were convicted of committing crimes against humanity during and after the Second Congo War. He was sentenced to death but escaped from prison in Lubumbashi after members of his Mai-Mai Katanga militia opened fire on the prison guard in September 2011. Authorities of the Katanga Province offered a US\$ 100,000 reward for information leading to his arrest. There are, however, persistent rumours that Gédéon's Mai-Mai and the Bakata Katanga are secretly backed by Katangan politicians, with the UN accusing former national police chief John Numbi of supplying arms to Bakata Katanga and allowing the movement to use his farm outside Lubumbashi as a base (McGregor 2014: no page).

6.4.3.2 Possible causes of the re-emergence of secessionism in Katanga

The Constitution of February 18, 2006 of the Third Republic defines new relations between the centre and the peripheries in the DRC. In this regard, there are a number of grievances that are at the origin of the re-emergence of secessionist sentiment in Katanga Province. The economic reasons that led to the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia is now present with the implementation of the 2006 Constitution. The provision of Articles 2 and 175 in particular lead the nationals from northern Katanga to think about the advantages of independence and thus the secession of Katanga Province.

From a territorial perspective, the 2006 Constitution defines the DRC as a strongly decentralized⁷⁷ unitary state where the provinces have political, fiscal and juridical autonomy and important responsibilities in the organization of public life. It establishes 26 provinces including the city of Kinshasa (Article 2, Paragraph 1). The reasons that the political elites of Katanga want to cut off Katanga from the DRC are mentioned in McGregor (2014) and Berwouts (2014)'s articles. These are in this regard the following:

1. The decentralization plan would see Katanga divided into four smaller provinces. The proposed move, recently revived by President Joseph Kabila, would ensure a flow of wealth to the Katangan south while ignoring the impoverished north. Thus, the decentralization plan has met with strong opposition from the Baluba⁷⁸ of northern

⁷⁷ Several scholars prefer the term federal state to the term strongly decentralized unitary state. However, the term federal is carefully avoided by the Congolese constitution perhaps for the historic reasons that gave rise to secessionism at independence.

⁷⁸ The prefix 'ba' before the name of an ethnic group puts it in the plural. Thus, one can write for example Bakongo or Kongos; Baluba or Lubas and Bangala or Ngalas. However, the prefix 'mu' puts the name of an ethnic group in the singular. For example: Muluba to indicate Luba; Mukongo or Kongo and Mungala and Ngala.

Katanga as well as the provincial governor Moise Katumbi Chapwe, who also hails from northern Katanga.

2. Dissolving Katanga into the four new provinces of Haut-Katanga, Haut-Lomami, Tanganika and Luluaba will exacerbate the division between richer and economically unviable parts of present-day Katanga. [...] This has caused tensions and waves of violence in the past between communities divided along ethnic lines but the violence in fact had socio-economic root causes.
3. The Balubakat (Baluba from Katanga) in leading positions in Lubumbashi or Kinshasa, in control of lucrative economic activities (for example: mining, transport and trade) would be reduced to foreigners in the south of Katanga and would be cut off from an important part of their profits. The division of Katanga is thus potentially explosive and there is a lot of pressure to avoid its implementation.

Furthermore, from a financial perspective, the 2006 Constitution stipulates that the percentage of national revenue allocated to all the provinces is fixed at 40%. It is retained at the source (Article 175, Paragraph b). This means that theoretically each province keeps its 40% while it puts 60% into the account of the Central Government. According to Article 54 of Law no. 08-012 of 31 July 2008 a province is entitled to 40 % of the income generated in a province, while 60% should be paid into the general account of the treasury. This mechanism is implemented by the Central Bank of the DRC in accordance with the financial law (Kabesa 2011:58-59). However, much of the anti-government anger in Katanga is related to the failure of President Joseph Kabila's government to implement these stipulations. The central government takes more than 60%. As previously mentioned in sub-section 4.3.3, a considerable part of the national budget relies on mineral exports from Katanga. The latter is still seen as the DRC's richest periphery. The centre-periphery relations in the DRC could be improved in terms of finance if the Central Government had the political will to release the money owed to each province.

In conclusion, in terms of the centre-periphery relations, Berwouts (2014) states that the DRC seems to need Katanga more than Katanga needs the DRC and its leaders are well represented in the key positions of state (Berwouts 2014: no page). However, it is frequent to hear people from Katanga complaining that they do not profit from the wealth of their home province. This gives rise to the feeling of internal colonialism among the people from Katanga. In addition, secessionism is regarded as a way to prevent the dismemberment of Katanga Province in accordance with the 2006 Constitution. Lastly, McGregor (2014) also mentions that the secession issue provides a political cover to criminal groups like Katanga's Mai-Mai militias, which otherwise would have little in the way of a political ideology and do little to gather popular support as a legitimate secessionist movement might be expected to do (McGregor 2014: no page).

6.4.4 Kasai Oriental

The restive Kasai Oriental (South Kasai) has been quiet after the collapse of the centre although Etienne Tshisekedi was forcibly relegated to his home village within this periphery and put under strict surveillance in his residence on February 13, 1997 (see footnote no 6). His liberation and return was organized by the political police of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila to his Kinshasa residence in conditions of utmost secrecy on July 1, 1998 (Amnesty International Urgent Action Bulletin, AI. Index AFR 62/10/98).

There was no revolt vis-à-vis the central authority as well and no secessionist movement emerged in this restive periphery of the 1960s in spite of the bad treatment undergone by Etienne Tshisekedi, the leader from this former secessionist region (South Kasai), as well as his non appointment in the Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government. The reasons of this quietness would also be the ones that have been mentioned in sub-section 5.4.2.2, for example, the involvement of members of the Luba elites in various institutions of the country and the nationalist vocation of their charismatic leader namely Etienne Tshisekedi.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the centre-periphery relations after the collapse of the centre in the DRC. This important event in the DRC's history has happened at the end of the Cold War as well as the genocide of millions of Rwandan Tutsi and moderate Hutu in 1993 committed by the Hutu militia *Interhamwe* in revenge for the killing of Rwandan President Habyarimana.

For the purpose of this study, the analysis of the centre-periphery relations at the period of the collapse of the centre reveals that little progress has been achieved in order to connect the city of Kinshasa with its peripheries especially in terms of transport infrastructure in comparison with the situation of the 1960s even in terms of the administrative penetration outside urban centres. The lack of attempts at secession at this period does not mean that the relations between the centre and the peripheries have increased in quality.

The internal and international factors that contributed to the fall of President Mobutu have played a partial role in preventing the DRC from breaking up like the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia when the central government collapsed. The reasons are that the historical background of the formation of Yugoslavia by its constituent republics in 1943 is different from that of the formation of the DRC's territory. The internal economic issues within Yugoslavia between richest and poorest regions did not exist as such at the collapse of the centre in the DRC. Politically and economically, the nature of the centre-periphery relations

(relations between Serbia and other republics) that threatened the unity of Yugoslavia was not identical to the one that prevailed in the DRC in 1997.

The elimination of the secessionist movements of the 1960s in the peripheries with the establishment at the centre of a party state by President Mobutu, as well as the duration of the party state, also contributed to the lack of secession during this critical phase in the history of the DRC. Also important is the fact that whole ethnic groups at the centre as well as in the peripheries regard at present the DRC's territory as a national heritage and asset that must be protected. Current secessionist movements such as Bundu dia Kongo (BDK)⁷⁹ and Bakata Katanga lack internal support. Moreover, the UN mission in Congo (MONUC) contributed greatly to the preservation of the DRC's territorial integrity.

Regarding the actions of the new government, President Laurent-Désiré Kabila sought to strengthen the central authority weakened by the war led against Mobutu's government and eventually the collapse of the centre. He aimed at re-establishing the authority of the state all over the national territory. Thus, he implemented a number of policies to that effect within the DRC and in terms of foreign policies.

With respect to the reactions of the restive peripheries, there is initially the rebellion of RCD created by Rwanda and Uganda in Kivu in reprisal for the expulsion of their troops from eastern DRC and the Rwandan Tutsis from the central government of the DRC. This new civil war nearly partitioned the DRC's territory on account of the number of belligerents due to the split of the RCD. Ironically this conflict brought the people of the DRC together to oust what they perceived as aggressors from neighbouring countries. The assassination of Laurent-Désiré Kabila and his succession by Joseph Kabila brought a change in the process of the resolution of the conflict. The DRC's territory was unified after the inclusive peace agreement reached on power-sharing after several meetings held under the aegis of the OUA and SADC with the support of the UN. Furthermore, the Mai-Mai militia formed and armed by Laurent-Désiré Kabila in Katanga Province to halt the RCD progression eventually was transformed into a secessionist movement named Bakata Katanga. The latter is nowadays backed by Katangan politicians around President

⁷⁹ Bundu dia Kongo (BDK) is a politico-cultural movement founded in 1986 by Ne Mwanda Nsemi. According to UN Human Rights Watch (2008), the BDK is the latest of a series of independent religious movements in Bas-Congo, a province in the westernmost part of the country whose people have often complained of being marginalized in Congolese politics and whose leaders seek greater autonomy (UN Human Right Watch 2008:66). Regarding its political programme and ideology, the BDK's goal is to promote the 'renaissance' of the African people and their spiritual, cultural, moral and social values; the reappropriation of resources in the geographical region defined by the BDK as the Kongo Kingdom, as well as the reunification of the Kingdom's people; and the establishment of a decentralized and administrative system which would give the Congo people more control over their political and economic destiny (UN May 2008, para. 24, quoted by Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2011:1). On March 21, 2008 the Government of the DRC banned the ethnic-based religious and political sect BDK. This decision is motivated by the fact that BDK poses a serious threat to the stability of the Province of Bas-Congo and to national security because of its calls for the self-determination of the Kongo people.

Joseph Kabila. The grievances regarding the dismemberment of Katanga in particular as foreseen in the 2006 Constitution are at the origin of the discontent of Katanga's political elite.

There is a will to improve the centre-periphery relations in the DRC in the frame of the 2006 Constitution. For example, it foresees the possibility of the relocation of the DRC's capital city (centre) in order to connect a large number of people at the central administration as well as the restitution of 40% to each province on its contribution to national revenue to allow the development of the peripheries.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus in this research has been on secessionism in the peripheries of the DRC as an antithesis to territorial unity as advocated by the Central Government. The DRC with its three secessionist movements during the First Republic (1960-1965) is an interesting case for the study of centre-periphery relations within the context of secessionist movements and particularly because the DRC was able to maintain its territorial integrity within a context of its extreme diversity and the enormity of its territory. This research aimed at explaining the nature of the relations between the centre and the peripheries in the DRC which gave rise to attempts at secession, but which also failed. Preventing the fragmentation of the DRC, particularly after the collapse of the centre in 1997, is important. In spite of the secessionist awakening across the world in the wake of the fall of Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, the DRC was able to maintain its territorial borders.

The theory of centre-periphery relations has been used in order to review and to analyze a set of major challenges to the territorial integrity of the DRC. A variety of theories was used in an eclectic approach to the study. It was necessary to include some of the important theories regarding centre-periphery relations, such as internal colonialism and right-sizing the state, together with other related theories – including nation-building, the right of secession and conflict - in a single framework. Nevertheless, the theory of centre-periphery relations was the dominant theoretical approach. The reason is that secession, by its nature, involves the centre versus the periphery. Thus, the present study has employed explicitly the centre-periphery relations as a way to arrive at the elucidation of the issue of the various threats of territorial integrity of the DRC.

There are four key stages in the conduct of this research, namely: 1) The period prior to the independence of the DRC that is the era of King Leopold II and the colonial history of the DRC; 2) The phase following the independence of the DRC which was characterized by a weak centre that lacked control over the periphery; 3) The period of President Mobutu's rule which was characterised by the strengthening of the centre; and 4) The phase following the fall of President Mobutu.

Since this study was mainly based on a comparative study of the restive peripheries and their reactions, the comparative historical analysis has been used as a way of doing research on the problem.

7.2 GENERAL FINDINGS

A number of findings were made with regard to the roots of secessionism in the DRC and the attempts by the Central Government to preserve the territory of the DRC.

First, with regard to the period prior to the independence of the DRC which influenced the centre-periphery relations in the DRC, it was found that the pre-colonial context has influenced the centre-periphery relations because of the ethnic diversity of the population who lived in the area of the future DRC and a variety of pre-colonial polities created by those people given their cultural wealth. Those pre-colonial polities had emerged among people possessing a homogeneous culture. However, the DRC has ethnically a heterogeneous society made up of fourteen pre-colonial cultural identity zones.

The most important polities that have been established within the secessionist provinces before the arrival of the Europeans in the second half of the nineteenth century are, in Kasai, the Kingdom of Kuba and Kingdom of Luba; in Katanga, the Kingdom of Lunda and the Kingdom of Yeke; and in Oriental Province and Kivu, the Kingdom of Mangbetu, the Shi chiefdom and the Kingdom of Rwabugiri. For example, there are two influential notables of the Lunda and Yeke ethnic groups who arranged a secessionist movement in Katanga in the 1960s, namely the Lunda, Moise Tshombe, and the Yeke, Godefroid Munongo. Likewise, a local leader Luba, Albert Kalonji, arranged another secessionist movement in South Kasai and bore the title of Mulopwe exactly like in the ancient Kingdom of Luba. There is somewhere a link between the presence of significant pre-colonial polities and the attempts at secession within the areas where they were established. Furthermore, the attempt to annex the eastern part of the DRC, especially Kivu, by the Rwandan government during the rebellion of *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD). This event in Kivu in 1998, after the collapse of the centre of the DRC in 1997, was in accordance with the pre-colonial political entity of King Rwabugiri from Rwanda in the Kivu region.

The centre-periphery relations were also influenced by the arbitrary and artificial nature of the boundaries of the Congo Free State (CFS) as established by King Leopold II who 'won' the Congo Basin at the Berlin Conference (November 15, 1884 - February 26, 1885). The wishes and interests of the original inhabitants of the region were not considered and boundaries were arbitrarily demarcated to serve the interests of the colonial powers. The restive regions were affected by the artificial demarcation of the boundaries. Boundaries artificiality fuelled conflict, because heterogeneous ethnic groups were forced to be part of the same state. This made it

difficult to establish a political and administrative centre with widespread legitimacy that could sufficiently penetrate the peripheries. It also contributed to an identity problem in the sense that a shared sense of 'Congolese' was lacking.

The huge size of the DRC which is a legacy of the era of King Leopold II as well as the incredible natural resources of the future DRC has influenced its future centre-periphery relations. The Belgian government bought the CFS in November 1907 from the Association Internationale du Congo (AIC) for the economic profit it could obtain from its rule over the Congo. The Belgian government was aware of its inability to control the colony alone. Thus, it allocated the administration of some parts of the territory to dealer companies that operated in the restive provinces in particular. In addition, Katanga Province enjoyed a special status with regard to the administration of its territory in comparison with the other provinces. For example, its Vice-Governor-General dealt directly with the Belgian government as did the Governor-General of the whole colony. This special status granted to Katanga is at the bottom of its 'independentist' tendency which made it a prominent example of a restive province of the DRC in the 1960s. The instability of the DRC came in part from the policies of Belgium during the colonization which arranged the fragmentation of the Congo with the intention of controlling the wealthiest regions of the DRC, especially the mining of Katanga Province.

7.3 CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS IN THE AFTERMATH OF INDEPENDENCE

The Belgian government granted independence to the Belgian Congo on June 30, 1960. The lack of educational opportunities, together with a lack of expertise in the politics of a large and complex state, negatively influenced the centre-periphery relations at the time of independence. This was a central factor in the new state's instability. As a consequence, the Constitution (*Loi fondamentale*) drafted by the Belgian Parliament and adopted for an independent DRC seemed rather complicated for the indigenous elites. It thus opened the door to divergent legal interpretations that fuelled political conflict. Furthermore, competing and even conflicting interests, as well as uncertainty of what the future implications of the constitutional provisions would be, also nurtured a desire for self-determination instead of control by the centre.

Second, the first phase of the centre-periphery relations in the newly independent Congo is characterized by a weak centre and the lack of control of the centre over the periphery. One of the reasons for the weakness of the centre is because only two political parties, namely the *Mouvement National Congolais* (MNC) led by Patrice-Émery Lumumba and the *Parti National pour le Progrès* (PNP) led by Paul Bolya, were present throughout the DRC with a presence in all the provinces when the legislative elections were held on May 22, 1960. The Prime Minister and the Head of State, namely Prime Minister Patrice-Émery Lumumba and President Joseph

Kasa-Vubu came to power in the elections. Thus a central authority, which united the Congolese people at the time of independence, was absent.

Moreover, the centre-periphery relations were affected by the way the first government was formed. The personality of the radical and charismatic Prime Minister, Patrice-Émery Lumumba, harmed the relations between the centre and the periphery in the days following the independence of the DRC. Lumumba did not include in his government his major opponents although he claimed to have formed a government of national unity. The exclusion of Moïse Tshombe and Albert Kalonji in Lumumba's government is one of the reasons for their revolt and particularly because their home regions were the biggest contributors to the national budget. Furthermore, both of them had a substantial power base and concerns regarding the future of their home regions were therefore to be expected especially in the context of a loss of certain privileges in the case of Katanga.

The centre itself was weakened because of the disagreement between the head of state and the prime minister. The conflicting relationship between President Joseph Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba regarding the opposing views on the management of state affairs had weakened the centre. Kasa-Vubu's personality was best seen to serve the interests of the West. This disqualified his rival Lumumba at the centre who was regarded as more leftist. Kasa-Vubu's moderation and pliability made him a valuable US ally against the radical nationalists and Communists who threatened Congolese unity as well as the country's Western political and economic orientation.

Another weak point of the centre is the fact that, at independence, the centre (then Leopoldville) was not necessarily more developed. The DRC's economy was mostly based on mineral resources located in the peripheries. The restive peripheries in particular had at the time most of the state's assets in mineral and industrial wealth. In terms of right-sizing the state, it was necessary for the centre to have the restive peripheries as parts of the DRC. This played an important role in motivating the wealthiest peripheries to challenge the Central Government. Moreover, at the time Leopoldville was reliant on the peripheries in particular for its food supply. But the centre was dominant for a variety of reasons but particularly because it was the seat of political power which implied that it was in a position to control the peripheries. Nevertheless, the reality on the ground indicated that at independence the centre was not strong enough to keep the peripheries together in order to maintain territorial unity.

In addition, the centre-periphery relations were affected by inadequate state presence within the territory basically because of the vastness of the territory. It was unable to penetrate into the remote peripheries because of the lack of a well-organized transport and telecommunication infrastructure. The restive peripheries, especially Katanga and Oriental Province, including Kivu, were and are still quickly more accessible from neighbouring countries

than from the state capital. This resulted in an inability of the Central Government to provide proper administrative services and to exercise political control over the whole territory, particularly in the rural areas that were cut-off from the provincial centres. With regard to telecommunication, fixed-line telephone services in the DRC during the 1960s were generally poor with only a limited number of connections in operation. Needless to say that administratively, the central authorities could hardly contact officials in remote areas. This has contributed to a widening gap between the centre and the peripheries.

The public servants were recruited and worked within their home provinces. There was insufficient cultural commonality between the centre and the peripheries. At that time, there was limited intermingling of the various segments of the population from different parts of the country. There were important differences in the ethnic composition of the centre and the peripheries and also among the various provinces. Ethnicity therefore became an important factor in the relations between the centre and the periphery as well as in and among the various regions. The public servants' allegiance to the central authority was often limited compared to their allegiance to local tribal leaders, such as the influential Moise Tshombe and Albert Kalonji, in Katanga and South Kasai respectively. What is more, at independence, the election of the provincial government and the provincial president by the provincial assemblies has reinforced the politico-administrative 'independence' of the provinces vis-à-vis the central authorities. This was largely an attempt to appease the peripheries and to 'compensate' them for the loss of certain privileges they enjoyed prior to independence and in particular in the case of Katanga.

Furthermore, in terms of defense, the new Congolese government inherited weakened armed forces. For example, regarding its human resources, the Congolization of the army faced a lack of skills at officer and command levels. Congolese soldiers were promoted from the rank of Sergeant-Major to commander. Officer Ranks were distributed to all non-commissioned officers above the rank of sergeant. This suggests that the Congolese soldiers lacked expertise at the critical time of independence. This weak point explains the inability of the Congolese National Army (ANC) as instrument of the Central Government to dissuade local leaders in the peripheries from compromising the territorial unity. Thus, the ineffective control of the centre over the peripheries resulted in the setting up of military forces unbeknownst to the Central Government.

The above-mentioned factors combined, explains why, a few days after the independence of the DRC, the Central Government faced several threats of secessionism which would have resulted in the downsizing of the DRC's territory. The greatest challenge faced by the Central Government was the unilateral declaration of independence of Katanga Province by Moise Tshombe on July 11, 1960. The timing of secession is important - a mere 11 days after

independence - this strengthens arguments that personalities played a role and that the constitution (*Loi fondamentale*) did not adequately address the interests of the provinces and the whole of the population. The second instance of an attempt at secession was the announcement of independence of South Kasai by Albert Kalonji on August 8, 1960. This supports the idea that the contagion effect of secessionism in the neighbouring Katanga on South Kasai is important because of the similarities of these two territorial entities such as their economic weight in the DRC and the demand for provincial autonomy expressed earlier by their local leaders.

The assassination of Patrice-Émery Lumumba on January 17, 1961 affected once again the weak centre-periphery relations because his elimination from the political scene played a role in the establishment of the People's Republic of the Congo, on September 5, 1964, in Oriental Province and Kivu by Christophe Gbenye who was a Lumumba follower. The timing of this event is different – four years after independence. Contrary to the establishment of the new 'states' in Katanga and South Kasai, the creation of a breakaway state in Oriental Province, including Kivu, was dictated by a leftist ideological orientation promoted for the DRC by a number of Lumumbist leaders. Ideology was not part of the agenda of the political Round Table of January 18-27, 1960 in Brussels. Although Lumumba was not openly in favour of communism, his followers however did it after his death through their actions.

With respect to the secessionist movements of the 1960s, the Katanga secession war was influenced by the ethnic character of the political parties that were founded during the period leading to independence. The *Confédérations des Associations Tribales du Katanga* (CONAKAT) benefited from the support of certain Europeans in the Katanga region who represented the worst kind of colonialism. The secessionist movement at the heart of the creation of the breakaway state in South Kasai is the *Mouvement National Congolais*- the Kalonji-wing (MNC-K). Kalonji espoused Tshombe's opposition to a centralized system advocated by Lumumba. Thus, the MNC-K political party programme overlapped to some extent with that of Tshombe. By contrast, the programme of the *Comité National de Libération du Congo* (CNL) promised an end to foreign domination. This referred to the indisputable allegiance of the Congolese Central Government to the West.

Eventually, the illegality of the three attempted secessions was established. First, the *Loi fondamentale* (fundamental Law) of May 19, 1960 on the structures of the DRC did not make provision for the right to secede. By considering this provisional constitution, one realizes that legislators (Belgian Parliament) did not really pay attention to the possibility of secession. As a consequence, the *Loi fondamentale* had no disposition prohibiting secession specifically. But one can say that the mind of this Law denied the right of secession and made secession an illegal act. Second, in the conduct of secessionism, the populations of the three restive regions

did not approve democratically of the secession by referendum. Another fact is that some ethnic groups within the seceding territories were opposed to secession. Thus each periphery had to deal with dissenting opinions and to a certain extent with internal centre-periphery relations. The 'centres' that advocated secession was unable to exert power over the whole territory they wished to secede. This is patent for the provinces of Katanga and Kasai. In this regard ethnic groups such as the Luba from Katanga and Lulua in Kasai are striking examples. Thus each of the restive regions experienced their own problems of centre-periphery relations.

The UN Charter is hesitant on the issue of secession, including the works of scholars on the right to secede. Laurie Nicholson (1998) argues that, according to the UN, the legal right of secession is a very complicated one, where in one legal decision it is asserted that secession is not legal because of certain conditions and other decisions show how secession is legal. It tends to be evaluated on a case by case basis and is not a universal legal right (Nicholson 1998:15-16). Finally, several resolutions of the UN had reaffirmed the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC. For example: UN Security Council, Resolution 169 (1961) of November 24, 1961 regarding the secessionist activities against the Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The illegality of the latest attempted secession was ultimately established also through an international instrument such as the OAU Charter. The OAU⁸⁰ of which the DRC was a member at the creation of the People's Republic of the Congo was opposed to secession. The OAU in particular 'guaranteed' the territorial integrity. For example: The Resolution of the Third Extra Ordinary session of the council of ministers held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 5 to 10 September 1964, regarding the threat to the territorial integrity of the DRC when the People's Republic of the Congo was established.

The attempts at secession all ended militarily, first by the military operation of the Congolese National Army against the Autonomous Mining Republic of South Kasai, second by the UN intervention against the State of Katanga and lastly by a combined action of the forces of the UN and the Congolese National Army against the People's Republic of the Congo. More than 100,000 people, mostly Congolese, perished in the early sixties in the conflicts which also had ideological dimensions involving super-power rivalry between the USA and Soviet Union, as well as the People's Republic of China. The centre was unable to put down the attempts at secession on its own, but due to the UN's reluctance to endorse secession the international community mainly rallied behind what it regarded as the *de jure* government of the DRC. Furthermore, the centre was not in favour of secession – obviously for financial reasons. Thus right-sizing the state in order to make it more manageable was not an attractive option.

⁸⁰ OAU (nowadays African Union - AU) was established on May 25, 1963.

As alluded to, personalities also played a role in the mentioned secessionist attempts. Joseph Kasa-Vubu, the DRC's first head of state, was downbeat and reticent in his political style. He thus lacked the ability to mobilise sufficient support from the peripheries. It is obvious that with the absence of a dynamic president, the centre could not hold onto its peripheries. In addition, as leader of a political party (ABAKO), he supported the idea of an ethnically homogenous country. He was unable to strengthen the centre. For these reasons he was eventually ousted by the military high command on November 25, 1965. The latter installed Lieutenant-General Joseph-Désiré Mobutu as head of state. He appropriated this coup for himself by gradually moving aside his comrades from the wake of power.

From the above historical context of secessionism in the DRC, in the 1960s, it can be concluded that, at the time of the independence of the DRC, there was little that kept the centre and the peripheries together in terms of transport and telecommunication infrastructure, political relations, economic relations, administrative relations as well as ethnic and cultural relations. The Central Government was unable to be represented throughout the huge territory by reliable public servants who would oppose all threats to the territorial integrity of the state. It is thus understandable that some provinces regarded the DRC as unmanageable and that secession constituted attempts at making the administration more manageable and economically viable.

In addition there were concerns regarding internal exploitation and internal colonialism. The principle that the provinces should give according to their means and receive according to their needs drove the leaders of political parties in wealthy Katanga and South Kasai (CONAKAT and MLC-K respectively) towards secessionism. It was the centre who determined what the needs of the provinces were and this often did not reflect the reality on the ground. Many villages were far removed from the centre and received very little in return from the centre. The latter were underdeveloped and impoverished in contrast to their wealth of natural resources. This was indeed a form of internal colonialism.

Overall the centre was too weak at the time of independence to quell on its own secessionism in the restive peripheries, although it did so by using the armed forces during the attempt at secession of South Kasai - which entailed a bloodbath for the Lubas. This humanitarian tragedy led in part to the conflict between President Kasa-Vubu and Prime Minister Lumumba. This weakened the centre even more. In contrast, Katanga Province and Oriental Province were strengthened by the significant support they were receiving from Western powers. States such as China and Egypt gave support in the case of the establishment of the People's Republic of the Congo.

However, in addition to the refusal of the Central Government to recognize the creation of the new states within its territory, the right of secession was denied to secessionist movements in the DRC by the UN and OAU. Although reluctant to invest in the research of the solution for armed conflicts experienced by the DRC, the UN eventually granted important military support in favour of the Central Government. Thus, foreign military interventions largely enabled the Central Government to end the attempts at secession and to re-integrate the restive peripheries of the 1960s.

It can therefore be argued that during this phase the weak centre provided opportunities to strong leaders with secessionist ideals to take advantage of a weak centre. However there is also evidence that the Central Government did not only oppose secessionism on the basis of principle, but also because it was dependent on these provinces for financial reasons. Thus, 'right-sizing' the state was simply not an option to the Central Government. This dependency in turn fuelled secessionist attempts. But it is also clear from this part of the history of the DRC that secession can only be successful if by consent from the centre, or if not, the periphery should be powerful enough to force secession onto the centre. It is within this dynamics between the centre and the periphery that international role-players become important. In this case international intervention overwhelmingly supported the centre.

7.4 CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS AND THE STRATEGIES OF PRESIDENT MOBUTU

The second phase of the centre-periphery relations in the DRC is that of strengthening the centre by President Mobutu. He put in place several strategies to prevent any attempt of dismemberment of the DRC's territory – as experienced during the First Republic. These included strategies to keep the peripheries connected with the centre and to create feelings of national unity. For this purpose he adopted Mobutism as ideology and two strategies namely the centralization of power and the institutionalization of the one-party system. The process of centralization formally eradicated any form of pre-existent local autonomy. In addition, all citizens of Zaïre became members of the 'one' political party at birth.

Mobutism as ideology included major initiatives of Mobutu such as nationalization and 'Zaïrianization'. Zaïrian policies under Mobutu proceeded to nationalize the 'concessionary companies' for the strategic reason of establishing control of the assets of the peripheries. His presence in the board of directors of GECAMINES as from 1968 illustrates his will to manage the DRC's largest mining companies and the attention he paid to the economic resources of his regime. This 'seizure' of GECAMINES allowed him to strengthen economically the power of the centre and to keep Katanga Province in particular under the authority of the Central Government. The takeover of the mining companies was also regarded as a means of eliminating the influence of some foreign powers on the restive peripheries of the DRC that

nurtured secessionist movements. In addition, he adopted Zaïrianization as a strategy during the first decade of his coming to power. Most Zaïrianized businesses were located in the peripheries. Their distribution to selected people close to President Mobutu who were not necessarily natives from those areas, gave rise to discontent among local populations. However, the peripheries paid the costs of the Zaïrianization, because the sacrifice Mobutu's government required from the people as a result of the slowdown of the national economy due to the policies of nationalization and Zaïrianization was made by the peripheries. Thus, President Mobutu's aim was to strengthen the centre vis-à-vis the peripheries even though this could require the weakening of the peripheries.

Nation-building was an important goal during Mobutu's first decade in power. In spite of the abovementioned negative consequences of his strategies he managed to establish in the first decade of his rule an unprecedented sense of national unity and political stability through his policy of appeal to authenticity and the establishment of personal rule. The context of these attempts is however also important namely the painful aftermath of violence that accompanied the attempts at secession, as well as ending them. The trauma the people were exposed to make them susceptible to attempts aimed at maintaining peace and likewise to accept the apparent inevitability of being a citizen of the DRC. Thus, it was during the era of Mobutu that the Congolese people started to behave, for the first time in the DRC's history, as a nation by forming national teams in sport and winning trophies in African competitions in soccer and ladies' basketball. They also experienced political stability and everyone felt at home any place throughout the DRC under the Mobutu government. Exceptions were the episode of the expulsion of the Lubas from Kasai in Katanga and the non-natives from Kisangani in the beginning of the 1990s when Mobutu's power was weakening. The reinforcement of Mobutu's position in Zaïre was openly with the support of the West, particularly the USA and France. But on his own he also tried internally to strengthen the centre vis-à-vis the peripheries.

After the strengthening of his position as national leader, President Mobutu sought to be in charge of the centre of command of the military and to put under his sole authority all soldiers within the national territory. Thus, the military as well as the security forces were unquestionably one of the backbones of Mobutu's strengthening of the centre. It included individuals close to Mobutu and particularly members from his ethnic group, the Ngbandi, and neighbouring ethnic groups such as the Ngbaka and Mbudja. This implied that the peripheries were unable to organize their own militias as in the early years of independence. Thus from a military point of view the peripheries were weakened. This implied that, for their security, the peripheries became dependent on the centre. Thus, with regard to the centre-periphery relations in the sphere of national defense, everything was organized in such a manner that the centre controlled the peripheries powerfully. In order to control all the peripheral areas, the army general staff was - and still is - located in the centre (Kinshasa) and managed its forces

through three regional headquarters (also called military regions) located at Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Kisangani. Strengthening the centre also required the organization of the personal safe-guarding of the Head of State at the centre. In the process of strengthening the centre, President Mobutu organized his own security, because he was of the opinion that there must be a strong man at the centre capable of maintaining territorial unity. The *Division Spéciale Présidentielle* (DSP) served this purpose and included mostly Ngbandi soldiers, drawn from Mobutu's home region.

Nevertheless, the centre-periphery relations were not always harmonious during the era of Mobutu. President Mobutu became increasingly separated from the people because of the excesses of his various security services at the centre, as well as in the peripheries, in their attempts to enforce obedience by the people and to ensure that they toe the line. The rebellions in Shaba (Katanga) in 1977-1978 were planned by the *Front pour la Libération Nationale du Congo* (FLNC), led by Bumba Natanaël, of which most members belonged to the Lunda ethnic group and the ex-Katangan gendarmes who were exiled in Angola and who fought for Tshombe's secessionist movement. The reason was that the Lunda ethnic group lost the economic and political power they once held during the colonial administration and during the First Republic. The Lundas in particular resented the fact that they were ultimately excluded from the management of GECAMINES. All in all, this implied exploitation or internal colonialism of the peripheries by the centre and consequently had negative implications for nation-building.

Although driven by secessionist movements, the invaders' goals in both the Shaba I and Shaba II rebellions were not the secession of Shaba (Katanga) but the overthrow of the Mobutu regime. This was a further indication that the problem of the DRC's territorial unity of the 1960s was no longer of importance during the era of Mobutu. However, the vulnerability of the centre was demonstrated by the inability of the *Forces Armées Zaïroises* (FAZ) to quell the Shaba I and Shaba II rebellions. The reality on the ground showed that Mobutu had not yet succeeded in forming a sufficiently powerful army. It was his diplomatic strategies and the commitment of international allies that allowed him to overcome the rebellions.

The era of Mobutu, which started with promises of peace and prosperity, eventually became synonymous with corruption, military repression, and a failed state. Opposition to President Mobutu was mounting. In the late 1980s, following internal socio-economic crises, a popular consultation initiated by President Mobutu was organized all over the country, including the centre and the peripheries. The fact that President Mobutu's opponent, Etienne Tshisekedi, was prevented from governing, although he was chosen as prime minister during the political compromise made between the incumbents and the opposition and subsequently elected as prime minister at the *Conférence Nationale Souveraine* (CNS). The idea that the position of

prime minister should be filled by the opposition, has driven the country to a severe political crisis between Kinshasa (centre) and Kasai Oriental (periphery) on the one hand and Kasaians and natives from Katanga on the other hand. This led to a massive expulsion of the Lubas who were settled in Katanga.

That painful episode led the Lubas from Kasai to be disobedient towards the central authority. Thus local populations of Kasai Oriental undertook to reorganize themselves alongside the rest of Zaïre. However, there was no attempt at secession in Kasai Oriental. Various factors played a role in the Lubas' change of attitude regarding secessionism. These are the absence of a strong secessionist leader in the peripheral area who could push them towards seceding from the DRC; the integration of the Lubas with the populations of the other provinces; the involvement of members of the Luba elite in various institutions of the country; and the nationalist vocation of their charismatic leader Etienne Tshisekedi.

This stage reveals that, paradoxically, although he promoted national unity from the outset of his coming to power and during his political career, on the ground President Mobutu was able to divide the inhabitants of the peripheries in order to protect his power. In terms of President Mobutu's priorities, his concern with national unity was secondary to his quest for power.

Nation-building during the era of Mobutu was mainly achieved through a cultural strategy named the 'appeal to authenticity' which included a dress code. This contributed towards a sense of a shared identity including a sense of patriotism.

The weak transport infrastructure connecting the centre and the peripheries was never sorted out even during the era of Mobutu. This aspect of development was neglected and sometimes even argued that it was with the strategic purpose of preventing a possible insurrection in the peripheries to reach the centre easily. However, this 'gap' between Kinshasa and the peripheries in terms of physical space had security implications for Mobutu and his government concerning the Kivu region. This isolation led the peripheral populations such as the Nande ethnic group of North Kivu to organize their area themselves, instead of waiting for the Central Government. For example, the Nande took over multiple functions previously assigned to the state. The loss of major internal infrastructure encouraged in some areas the development and greater reliance on cross-border infrastructure and trade between isolated regions of Zaïre and neighbouring countries for example North Kivu - Rwanda and South Kivu - Burundi. Thus, some peripheries enjoyed a degree of self-determination by default.

Motivated by the end of the Cold War in 1989, Mobutu's Western allies put a stop to military assistance partly due to his government's human rights abuses. This weakened the Zaïre's centre of power even further. The failure of the Forces Armées Zairoises (FAZ) to overcome the rebellion by the AFDL introduced into Kivu and backed by Uganda, Rwanda, Angola and Burundi

which had the tacit approval of key members of the international community, especially the USA, led to the collapse of the centre in Zaïre on May 17, 1997.

Centre-periphery relations during the era of Mobutu were complex and even contradictory. The lack of attempts at secession in the DRC during this phase does not suggest that the relationship between the centre and periphery was excellent. Apart from the contact between the inhabitants of the centre and those of the peripheries thanks to the utilization of mobile phones, there was no real improvement in the connection between the centre and the peripheries. Thus some areas enjoyed some self-determination by default, simply because the state was not in a position to interfere. Through his policies, President Mobutu did succeed on the one hand to establish some sense of common identity, but on the other hand, the totalitarian nature of his political style united a significant section of the population to seek his overthrow. In the rebellions against his rule, it was again demonstrated that the centre remained weak in its ability to overcome internal political challenges and particularly those of a military nature. Thus the lack of attempts at secession during this period is complex and cannot be merely subscribed to the nation-building strategies of President Mobutu. There were the memories of the failed attempts at secession; the reality that the international community is reluctant to support secession; but also the shared reality of Mobutu's human rights record.

7.5 CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS AFTER THE ERA OF MOBUTU

The third phase of the relations between the centre and the peripheries is the legacy of the second phase where the centre was initially powerful, but collapsed with the downfall of President Mobutu. Contrary to all expectations, President Mobutu's successor was Laurent-Désiré Kabila, leader of the AFDL. There are several similarities between Mobutism and Kabilism. Like his predecessor Laurent-Désiré Kabila funneled much of the country's wealth and power into the hands of his family and friends. He sought to strengthen the central authority weakened by the war against Mobutu's government and the eventual collapse of the centre. He likewise aimed at re-establishing the authority of the state all over the national territory. Moreover, he sought through some of those policies to address the socio-economic crisis that he inherited from President Mobutu and for which the peripheries paid a heavy price. Thus, at the onset of the era of Kabila, the whole of power was concentrated in the office of the president to the detriment of the peripheries.

The policy of Kabila's government in favour of communism was in line with his Marxist background. In spite of the inauguration of a new era in international relations with the end of the Cold War, President Laurent-Désiré Kabila did not keep up with developments in the world. He acted as whether he was still in the 1960s. His various policies showed that he wanted to accomplish the dream of Lumumba's followers who attempted to create in 1964 in Oriental

Province and Kivu the People's Republic of the Congo as a communist state. The relations between the centre and the peripheries were affected by President Kabila's ideological stance. The centre as the centre of political dominance paid the price for attempting to put the DRC, known as a country with a liberal economy, in the direction of a socialist model of the economy. Most of his foreign policies – for example the relations of the DRC with the People's Republic of China - led to the antipathy of the Western democracies (USA, France, Belgium and England) towards his government.

The centre-periphery relations were also disturbed by President Kabila's uncompromising attitude. This led to the organization in the peripheries of armed rebellions, namely: The *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) led initially by Ernest Wamba dia Wamba and the *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC) led by Jean-Pierre Bemba. The reaction of the peripheries towards the policies of Kabila's government gave rise to an unprecedented civil war which nearly entailed the partitioning of the DRC's territory. The RCD (later called RCD-Goma after the split) was created and introduced into the restive peripheries of the 1960s (initially in the Kivu region and gradually in Oriental Province), by Rwanda and Uganda when President Kabila expelled their troops from the eastern part of the DRC and kicked out Rwandan representatives from the government of the DRC. The behaviour of the rebel leaders of RCD-Goma during the Second War suggested that the occupied peripheries (Oriental province and Kivu) became *de facto* a state. However, the international community through the international organizations such as UN, EU, AU and SADC, expressed clearly in favour of the DRC's territorial integrity and thus did not support and recognize it as a state.

The war would have been shorter and probably with a different outcome in favour of RCD if Angola had not broken the offensive of the RCD. This early military intervention of Angola led to a long civil war unforeseen by rebels and their allies. However, ending the Second Congo War in the DRC was problematic because of the complexity of the belligerents and of their agendas. The physical elimination of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila in 2001 was part of the solution for ending the civil war. For this purpose, an inter-Congolese dialogue (ICD) has been initiated. The benefits that the peripheries (Kivu region) could obtain by being part of the DRC were not a concern of the RCD-Goma's leadership as well as their Rwandan sponsor. This unexpected change of mind by looking for the unity of the DRC is explained by the fact that the military victory has become hypothetical. The fundamental reason is that the military support by the Central Government's allies considerably strengthened the centre of the DRC. On December 17, 2002, at the ICD, a comprehensive peace agreement was signed by 80 Congolese participants in the civil war. Under the agreement, Joseph Kabila would remain president with four vice-presidents.

Several factors explain why secession was not an option at this stage – in spite of a weakened centre. These are first the fact that the population of the periphery (Kivu), through the organization of the Mai-Mai militias, was openly opposed to be separate from the Central Government in order to protect their ownership of lands against the Rwandan Tutsis who were regarded as invaders. On their own they would not have been able to do so. Thus, the dependency on the centre and its allies for security reasons was a factor. Second the USA as well as the AU was clear on the need to respect the territorial sovereignty of the DRC. This opinion of the USA in particular had encouraged the Central Government to pursue the reunification of the DRC. Third the military support by the allies of the government of the DRC considerably strengthened the centre of the DRC. Fourth Congolese members who were enrolled in the rebellion of the RCD with the objective of overthrowing President Laurent-Désiré Kabila wanted the normalization of the situation in the DRC. They were awaiting the reunification of the country and the establishment of a responsible government in Kinshasa.

Another important reaction of the restive peripheries during this phase is the formation of the secessionist movement Bakata Katanga and the re-emergence of secessionism in Katanga. Although the Bakata Katanga was created ten years after the end of the Laurent-Désiré Kabila government, some of the reasons for its creation can be contributed to some of his government's actions in the peripheries. Of importance is the distribution of weapons within the framework of popular self-defence against the Rwandan Tutsi invaders. The Bakata Katanga is rooted in the secessionist history of the province and was fuelled by the anger and the feeling of exclusion from rural communities. But, rather than being a spontaneous outburst of frustration, the movement is believed to be a construction, initiated by people around President Joseph Kabila. The reasons that the political elites of Katanga wished to cut off Katanga from the DRC is tied to the implementation of the Constitution of February 18, 2006 because it advocates the dismemberment of Katanga Province. The Balubakat (Baluba from Katanga) in leading positions in Lubumbashi and Kinshasa, and who were in control of the lucrative economic activities would be reduced to foreigners in the south of Katanga and would be cut off from an important part of their profits. The re-emergence of secessionism in Katanga is due to the understanding that secessionism is regarded as a way in which the dismemberment of Katanga Province could be prevented.

Thus in spite of all the political challenges and the collapse of the centre in 1997, the territory of the DRC remained intact. There are a number of factors that played a role in this regard.

First, the lack of secessionism at the time of the collapse of the centre is partially due to the weakening of these movements after they were militarily defeated during their attempts at secession and the creation of new states. The institutionalization of the one-party system and the other political strategies of President Mobutu largely contributed to their elimination. The

one-party system of which all Congolese were compulsory members suppressed secessionist trends of the peripheries for some years. Before the end of the first legislature (1960-1965), the secessionist movement CONAKAT, initially a political party, led by Moïse Tshombe was converted into a national party in anticipation of the legislative elections in 1965, which he won. This important secessionist movement changed the name into CONACO to illustrate that it was no longer a tribal but rather a national political party. Later in 1990, with the return of the country to the multi-party system, the secessionist movements of the 1960s, CONAKAT, MLC-Kalonji and CNL never returned to the political scene even under the label of a political party.

Second, the diverse strategies employed during the era of Mobutu to eliminate secessionism in general but in particular in these three regions, and to create feelings of national unity, have contributed to some extent to connect all of the peripheries with the centre. Mobutu's government tried to integrate the Congolese people all over the country. For example, the public servants were assigned outside their home provinces and committed to work for the nation and not for their own ethnic groups. On the one hand the lack of federalism in the first constitution promoted secession because of the political preferences of the secessionist leaders, which was exacerbated by the weakness of the centre. But, on the other hand centralization during the era of Mobutu in fact assisted the formation of a national identity as a result of the methods employed from the outset. President Mobutu was successful in strengthening the administrative processes by severely punishing dissenters especially politicians. He managed to recruit loyal followers in the peripheries. However, the painful experience of the first round of secession should not be underestimated.

Third, the centralization of power and the dependence of the peripheral sub-structures upon the centre explain the territorial unity during the era of Mobutu. In the DRC, the survival of the centre is linked to its ties with the peripheries since its resources derive for a large part from the peripheries but also its links with some of the major powers. In this regard, one of President Mobutu's priorities was the reorganization of the army in order to keep the peripheries and the centre connected. This also resulted in the survival of his regime. Consequently, in his attempt to remedy the powerlessness of the military, including the security forces, he made of the Cold War a resource for the strengthening of the centre by presenting himself as an anti-communist. The benefits of this policy for Mobutu's government were the acquisition of the support from Western nations, predominantly from the USA.

Fourth, the lack of international support for secessionist movements is an important factor. It became clear that without consent from the centre and the international community, it is unlikely that an attempt at secession would succeed. Although independentist movements remain in the DRC's peripheries, for example Bundu dia Kongo (BDK) in Bas-Congo Province and Bakata Katanga in Katanga Province, the lack of sufficient international support for the former

secessionist movements is an important factor in the maintenance of the DRC's territorial unity. The issue of the 'right of secession' may play a role in the international community's unwillingness to support secessionist movements and to rather provide support to the state (centre). Also, Bundu dia Kongo and Bakata Katanga have not yet reached a significant level of organizational strength as political movements to attract international support.

Fifth, there is the commitment of the Congolese people themselves to the unity of the country. Forced to live together in a single political entity by the central authorities over the years, the majority of Congolese people now regard the huge territory of the DRC as a national heritage and asset that must be protected. The existence of a shared identity is undeniable. The preoccupation of the Congolese people at the centre as well as in the peripheries was the ousting of President Mobutu rather than the breakup of the DRC as such.

From this point of view, the territory has become in itself a factor of unity despite the ethnic diversity of the DRC's inhabitants. The Congolese people do not want to lose a part of the national territory. For example, on the spur of patriotism, the young people of Kinshasa enlisted massively in the military to defend the national territory against the invasion of the eastern DRC by Rwanda and Uganda and helped the armed forces to arrest the invaders in Kinshasa. They are now aware that the abundance of natural resources that the immense size of their territory contains is a major asset capable of making the DRC one of the powerful states in the world.

Nowadays, the DRC is facing border disputes with its neighbours such as Uganda, Zambia, Angola and Rwanda⁸¹. The issue at stake is either the exploitation of natural resources by these states, or the search for space for agro-pastoral activities. The settlement process of the border disputes is followed with interest by the Congolese elite even those who are not from the affected areas. They have adopted the Belgian motto *l'union fait la force* (the unity makes the strength).

Sixth, the trend now is to lead the country towards unity through federalism when one examines the 2006 Constitution. In many aspects the 2006 Constitution reflects a post-conflict consensus in particular on the management of the state in order to maintain a united DRC. The DRC's unity is conceived through federalism in order to preserve the cultural specificity of each area. This was the argument of the unforgettable fathers of independence such as Moïse

⁸¹ Uganda and DRC continue to dispute the RuKwanzi Island in Lake Albert and other areas on the Semliki River with Hydrocarbon potential. A boundary commission continues discussions over a Congolese-administered triangle of land on the right bank of the Lucinda River claimed by Zambia near the DRC. Angola and DRC have both land and maritime disputes for exploitation of petroleum and enlargement of access to the Atlantic Ocean in favour of the DRC. Both Rwanda and DRC are very well aware of the fact that the disputed border runs through a mineral-rich area (cross-border in North Kivu) (see for example Joan Ferrante 2013:76).

Tshombe and Joseph Kasa-Vubu (see sub-section 4.3.2). The non implementation of federalism has given rise to secessionism in the peripheries (case of Katanga).

7.6 ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

The focus was on an understanding of the DRC as a case, but from the research there are also some findings that are of relevance to theories pertaining to centre-periphery relations, secession, right-sizing the State, nation-building and even leadership.

First, with regard to the definitions of centre in the theory of centre-periphery relations, most definitions present the centre as more developed than the peripheries. However, in the context of the DRC, the centre was not necessarily more developed but it was dominant for a variety of reasons but particularly because it was the seat of political power which implied that it was in a position to control the peripheries. In this particular case it was about the centre of political and administrative power. Thus the concepts of centre and periphery should be understood within the particular context they are relevant.

Second, with regard to secession, those wishing to secede should have sufficient power to secede if the centre is not in favour of peaceful 'secession' that is the voluntary granting by the centre of independence to a specific territory in order to establish a new state. Violent secession is the actual break-away of a part of the territory to form a new state and will only succeed if the periphery has sufficient power vis-à-vis the centre. In the case of the DRC the periphery was unable to convince the centre and the international community that secession would be in the best interest of both. Likewise it was unable to mobilise sufficient resources to break-away.

Third, right-sizing of the State is for all practical purposes the product of secession, or in a more abstract sense the attempts by the centre in order to improve its control over, as well as administration of the peripheries. Right-sizing the State in the context of the DRC refers more to the efforts made by the central authority to keep the rich peripheries, such as the restive peripheries identified in this study, under its control even though it was not necessarily to the advantage of the peripheries. The transfer of wealth towards the centre and the underdevelopment of the peripheries were strategies in this regard. But they were not to the advantage of the peripheries.

Fourth, if there is an attempt at secession, dependency or some form of symbiotic relationship between the centre and the peripheries is unlikely to result in peaceful secession. This was one of the main reasons why the centre opposed secession in the DRC. It is thus unlikely that the centre would support secession if it derives some benefits from having the peripheries under its

control. Likewise it can be argued that the peripheries are unlikely to attempt secession if they derive some benefit from the relationship, and/or are dependent on this relationship.

Fifth, unless a dependency relationship is seen as being to the mutual benefit of both the centre and the peripheries, the quest for secession may arise.

Sixth, to prevent secessionism the centre should be powerful enough to quell attempts at secession, or at least be able to mobilise sufficient support in favour of the centre. It is particularly in this regard that International Law, principles regarding the international recognition of states, foreign relations and the international community play an important role. Sovereignty of the state, international recognition and the respect for international boundaries are all important. Thus in the case of a power stalemate between the centre and the peripheries, the 'winner' would be the one that was able to mobilise sufficient international, or even regional, support in its favour. In the case of the DRC this support was mainly to the advantage of the centre. Although some of the peripheries were able to get international support, this was insufficient.

The lack of compromise and moderation of the leaders at the centre was an important factor that fuelled tension between the centre and the periphery. What is more, the leaders of secessionist movements, as well as the central authorities lacked political ethics. On the one hand, in an attempt to defend the centre or to quell revolts in the peripheries, the latter were capable of using illegal means pending the arrival of UN support. Thus, Laurent-Désiré Kabila distributed weapons for popular self-defence against Rwandan invaders during the rebellion of the RCD. Previously the reluctance of the UN prompted, for example, Patrice-Émery Lumumba to beg the Soviet Union to assist his government in order to end the attempt at secession of Katanga. The examination of the 'right of secession' may come to play in the slowness of the UN to act.

The establishment of new independent states from the DRC's territory were on the whole wished for by the leaders of the secessionist movements rather than by the local populations of the peripheries. Thus leadership among secessionist movements are important – secessionism can simply not happen if it is not driven by political leaders.

7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

As in much other research, some recommendations emerge also from this study in order to help the government of the DRC in the mission of protecting the unity of its huge territory as well as in nation-building. The following is a set of four observations coupled with the concrete propositions.

First, the centre-periphery relations in the DRC were put to the test everytime the peripheries and neighbouring countries were aware of the inability of the centre to protect the territorial integrity. The weakness of the national security forces gave rise to the emergence of revolt in the peripheries in the 1960s. This is obvious for the attempts at creation of the new states by the secessionist leaders of the wealthy Katanga and South Kasai at independence in 1960. Likewise, the weakness of the centre encouraged the creation of the People's Republic of the Congo in 1964 in the peripheries by Lumumba's followers. Similarly, there is also the recent attempt at partitioning of the DRC's territory during the Second Civil War ignited in 1998 by the RCD's Tutsi rebels under the influence of the pro-Tutsi states of the Great Lakes region, specifically Rwanda. They clearly tried to take advantage of Mobutu's compromised position at the centre after the end of the Cold War.

The weakness of the Central Government to quell the various attempts at downsizing the DRC's territory had been overcome thanks to international military intervention. Consequently, the Central Government of the DRC has to strengthen the national army as a priority with the objective of dissuading the peripheries from seceding on the one hand and the neighbouring countries from looting natural resources and wanting to annex a part of the DRC's territory on the other hand. The protection of the legacy of the huge size of the country has to be a permanent commitment of the Central Government. The *Forces Armées de la RDC* (FARDC) has to be able to keep the peripheries connected with the centre, and at the same time to safeguard the borders.

Second, there is a need to remedy the weakness of the centre's control over the peripheries given the Central Government's weak administrative penetration of the peripheries. The Central Government has to invest in the transport infrastructure (roads, railways, waterways and airways) to link the remote peripheries with the provincial centres and the latter with the capital city (Kinshasa) so as to allow proper mobility of people and goods. The public administration should be modernized rapidly in terms of equipment, facilities and the public service in order to adapt it to the population growth and advances in technology.

There is also a need to develop a local administration. The first imperative for countries with a vast territory, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, is to bring together leaders of government (the administration) and the governed. The aim is to achieve better administration of the country, also allowing public servants to respond appropriately to the concerns of citizens within a reasonable time frame. The central authorities cannot ensure the execution of administrative tasks at each point of the territory. There must therefore be loyal, professional and efficient public servants at local level for this purpose. This would require effective decentralization and preferably within a federal framework. The unitary administration of a territory size of the DRC is impractical.

Third, the peripheries of the DRC are underdeveloped because of the phenomenon of internal colonialism. Although the natural resources are located in the provinces, the latter receive less than their contribution to the national income. This unfair sharing of income creates an uneven development between the centre and the peripheries that leads the population of the peripheries to move towards the centre. The feeling of internal colonialism was one of the grievances that had driven the local leaders of Katanga and South Kasai to claim local autonomy at independence. This trend continues to exist in Katanga because of the failure of the Central Government to return 40% of the provincial revenue to each province according to the 2006 Constitution. Thus, it is imperative for the Central Government to implement this stipulation of the constitution in order to pacify the impoverished populations of the peripheries and to create national concord and development. This is fundamental for the stability of the national institutions and the involvement of the various ethnic groups in nation-building.

Fourth, the policy of exclusion has never brought peace in the DRC. It is sufficient to refer to the different cases of exclusion of opponents in the so-called governments of national unity in the DRC's history. For example, the cases of Tshombe and Kalonji in the formation of a 'government of national unity' by Lumumba; the case of the rejection of Lumumba's followers such as Antoine Gizenga and Pierre Mulele in the Government formed by Joseph Iléo following the demise of Lumumba; the case of Tshisekedi at the transition period during the reign of Mobutu; and the case of the supporters of Mobutu in the formation of the government of Laurent-Désiré Kabila after the collapse of the centre. The threats to territorial unity that followed gave rise to serious political crises putting to the test the relations between the centre and the peripheries. This suggests that, in the effort to keep everyone together, the central authority should always outdo itself to include the opposition representatives into government given the past of the country.

The Katanga Province has taken an important part in this study because of its tendency to secessionism. From the beginning to the end in passing through the middle of this study, Katanga Province has proved to be a headache for the Central Government. It is Katanga Province that appears in the analysis of secessionism in the DRC at the head of the restive provinces. Consequently, much of the explanations related to the phenomenon of secession in the DRC have referred to this significant political entity. In terms of centre-periphery relations, it was found that DRC seems to need Katanga more than Katanga needs the DRC. Thus, a special detailed study focussing on the centre-periphery relations in the case of Katanga would give a more in depth look at Katanga's relationship with the centre. It is difficult to morally justify actions that lead to the humanitarian tragedy experienced in the 1960s in the DRC if Katanga were to attempt to secede once again.

Finally, the theory of centre-periphery relations has been a true pillar for the conduct of the study on the secessionism in the DRC. It would also be interesting to look at the phenomenon of contagion between the restive peripheries within a state. Contagion appears to be important within the context of attempts at secession in Katanga Province and the neighbouring South Kasai. This will bring researchers to consider the periphery-periphery relations in addition to the relations between the centre and its peripheries.

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Map 2: The provinces of the DRC such as inherited from the colonization in 1960

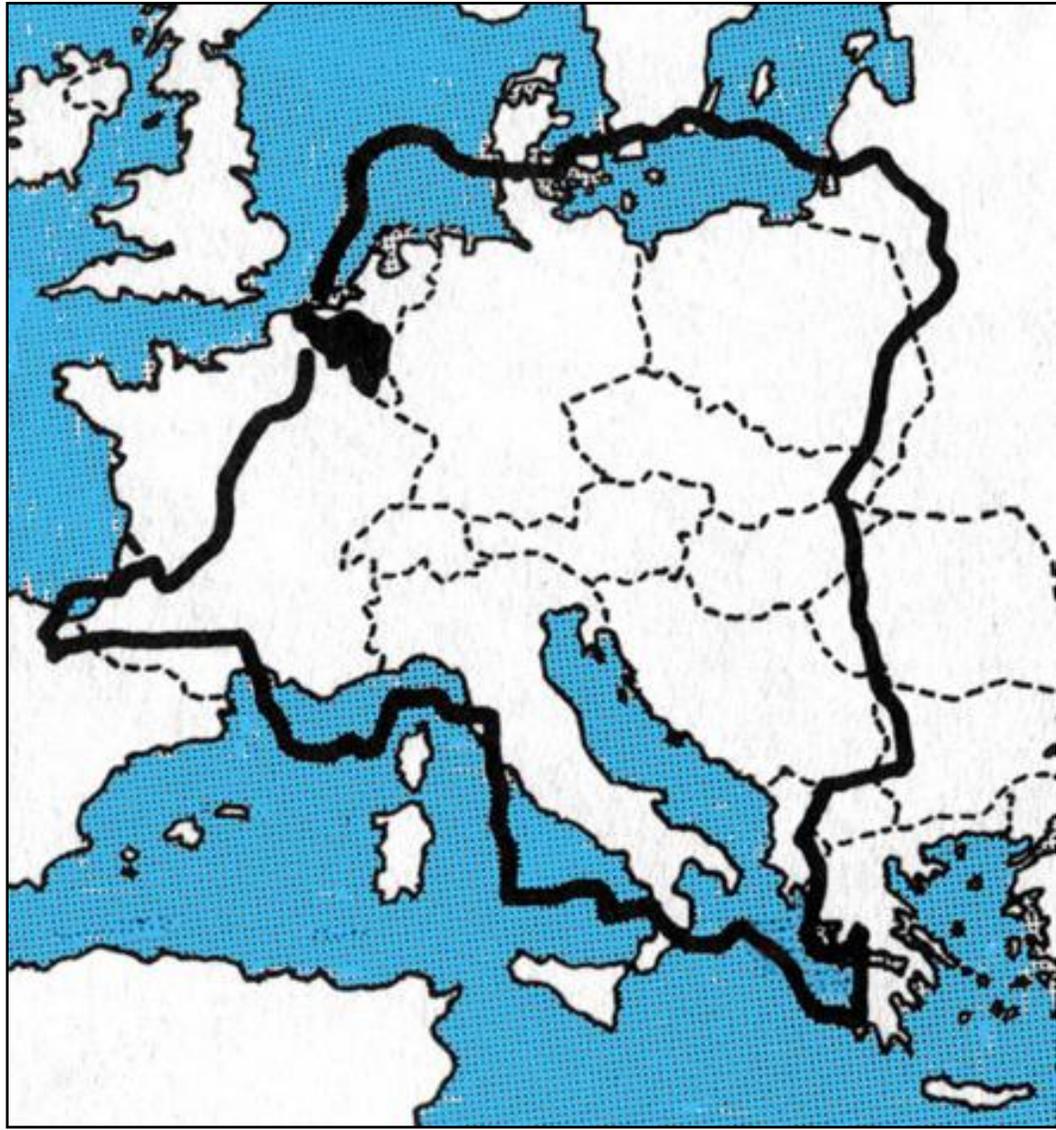
(See sub-section 4.2.1, Table 3)



Source: Themightyquill#mediaviewer

Map 3: Size of the DRC compared with Belgium and Western Europe

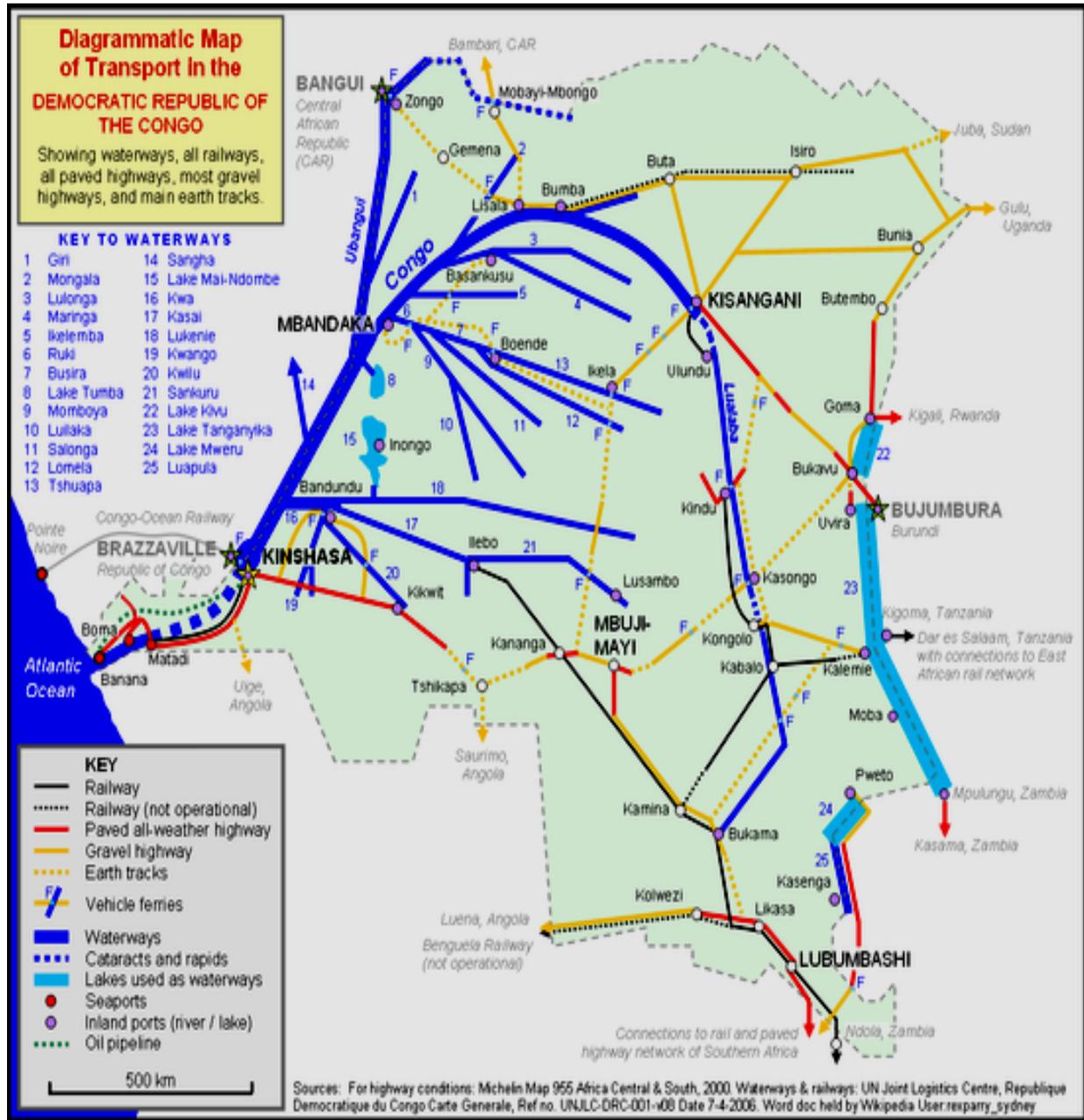
[See sub-section 3.2.4, (a)]



Source: UROME (Royal Belgian Overseas Union), quoted by McGUIREWOODS 2011:8

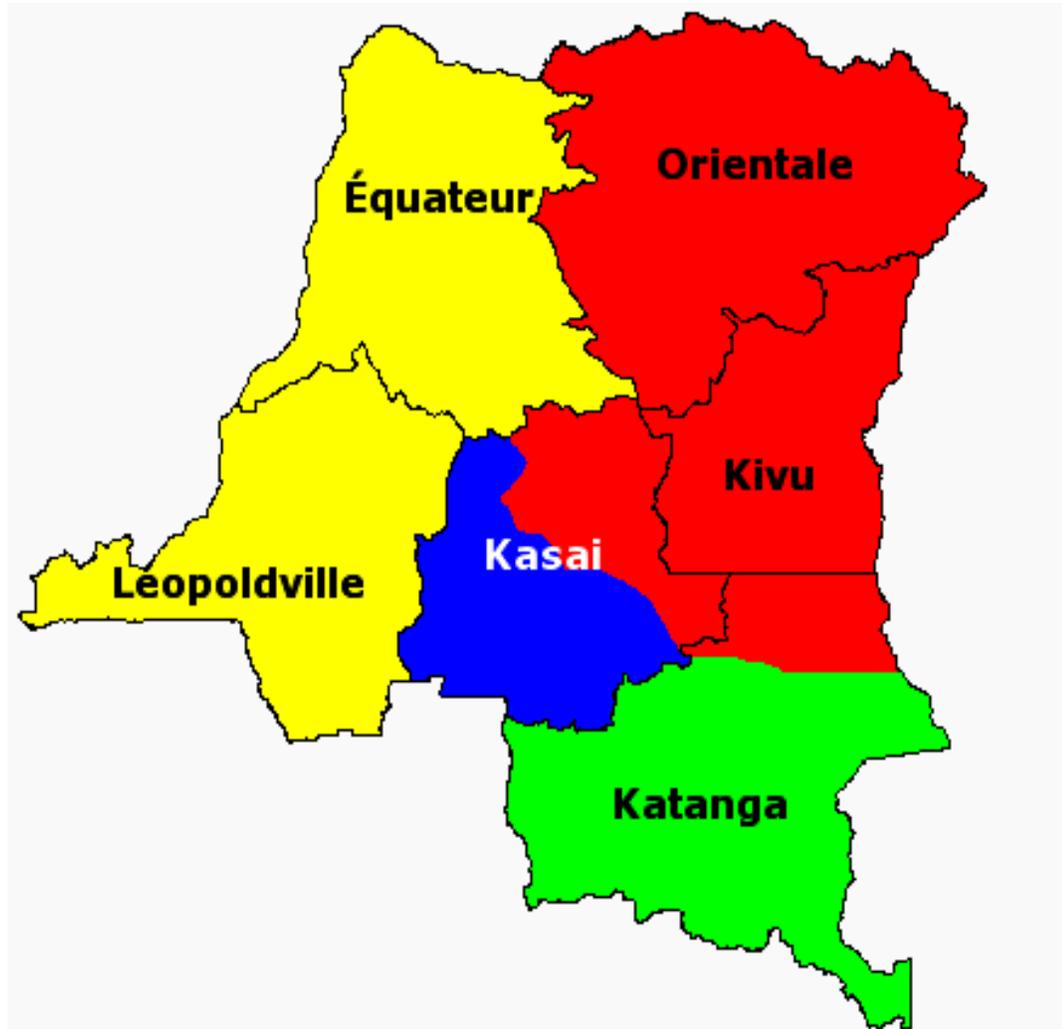
Map 4: Transport infrastructure in the DRC

(See sub-section 4.3.1.1)



Map 5: Territorial control during the Congo crisis of the 1960s⁸²

(See sub-section 4.3.2 paragraph 9 and sub-section 4.4.2)



Source: Library of Congress Country Studies: Zaire; Based on information from Hermann Kinder and Werner Hilgemann, *The Anchor Atlas of World History*, 2, Garden City, New York, 1978, 268.

⁸² Colour code:

Yellow: Central Government in Leopoldville (Kinshasa)

Red: Communist Government based in Stanleyville (Kisangani) formed by Antoine Gizenga in the wake of the dismissal of Lumumba as prime minister by President Joseph Kasa-Vubu (see sub-section 4.3.2, paragraph 9).

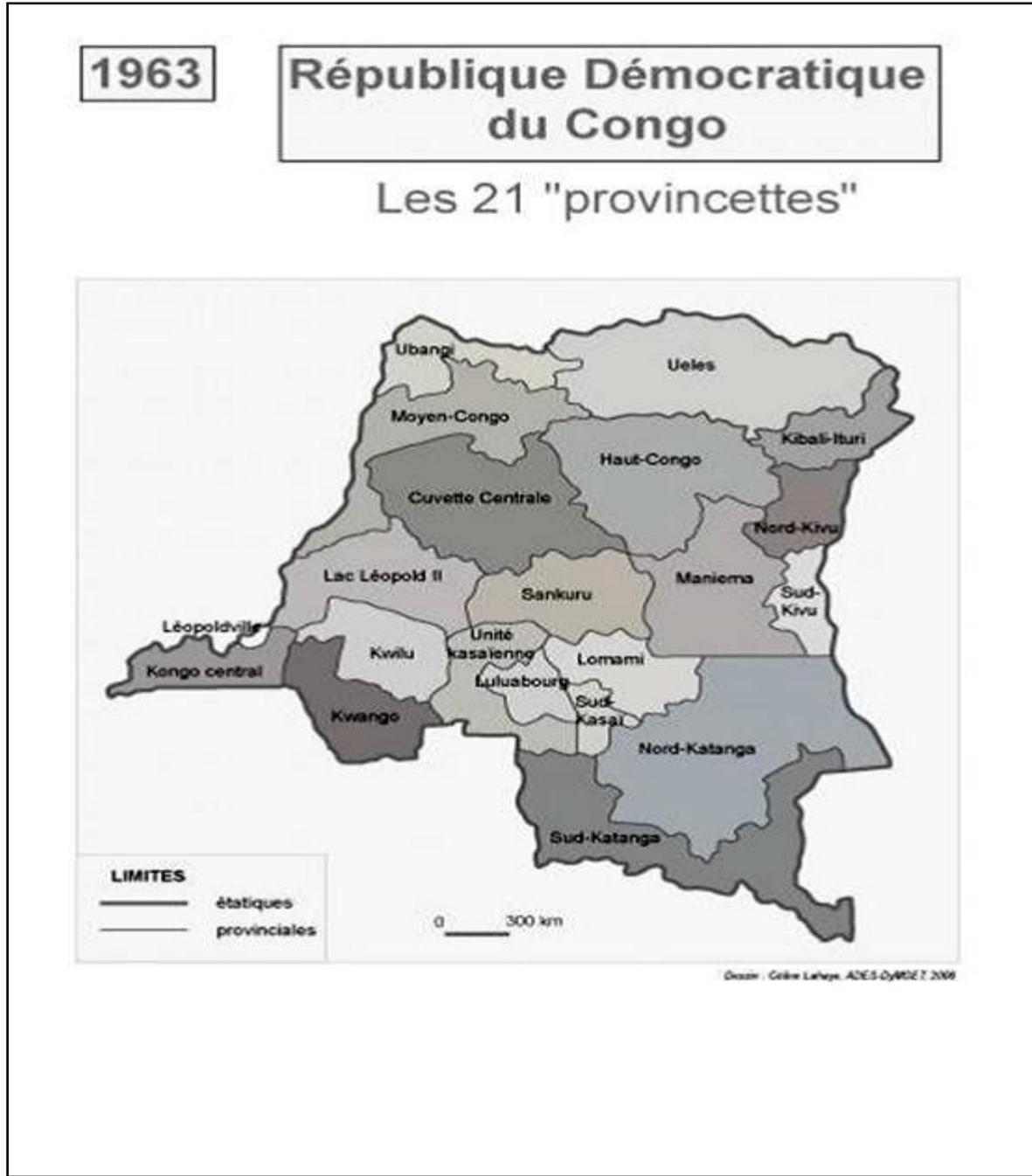
Green: State of Katanga (July 11, 1960 – January 14, 1963) ruled by Moïse Tshombe.

Blue: Autonomous Mining Republic of South Kasai (August 8, 1960 – October 5, 1962) ruled by Albert Kalonji

Note that the People's Republic of the Congo was established by Christophe Gbenye between 5, 1964 and January 14, 1965 in Oriental and Kivu Province nearly in the same area than Gizenga's Communist Government (see red colour).

Map 6: The 21 'provincettes' in accordance with the Constitution of Luluabourg⁸³

(See sub-section 5.2, paragraph 12)



Quoted by Par Guy De Boeck 2015:12

⁸³ There is a mistake of the year mentioned on this figure. It is 1964 rather than 1963.

Map 7: Administrative map at the end of the era of Mobutu⁸⁴ till the draft of the 2006 Constitution



Source: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations Cartographic Section dated July 2004

⁸⁴ Leopoldville Province was divided into Bandundu, Bas-Congo (called shortly before as Congo-Central) and Leopoldville (nowadays Kinshasa) as well as Kasai Province was divided into Kasai Occidental and Kasai Oriental by the ordonnance-loi of April, 10, 1967, whereas Kivu Province was divided into North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema (formerly sous-regions [districts] of Kivu Province by the law no 031 of July 20, 1988.

Map 8: Four national languages⁸⁵ and their area in the DRC

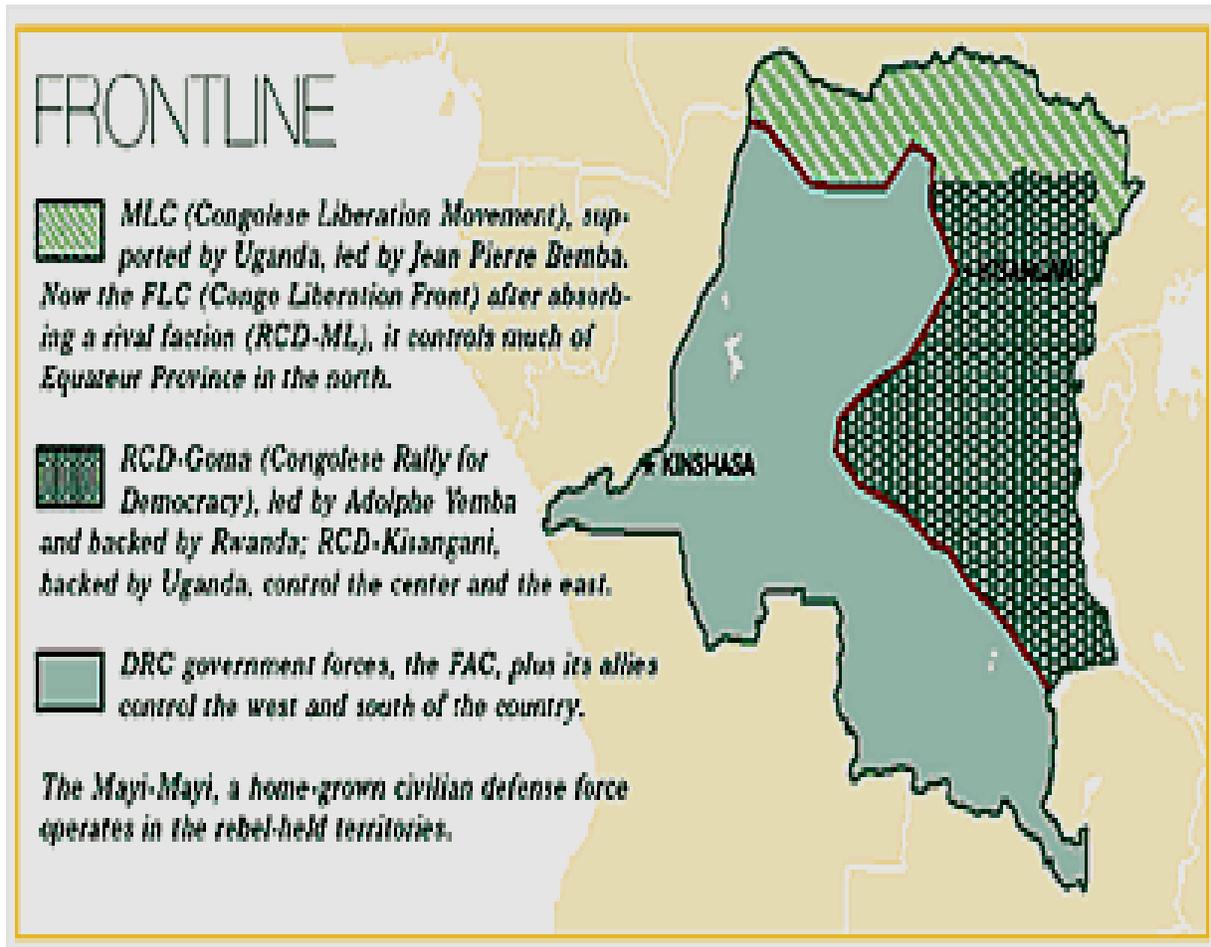
(See sub-section 4.3.5 paragraph 11)



⁸⁵ The right spelling is Kikongo and Swahili instead of kicongo and sawahili as indicated in this figure.

Map 9: Territorial control during the Second Congo War from August 1998 to April 2002

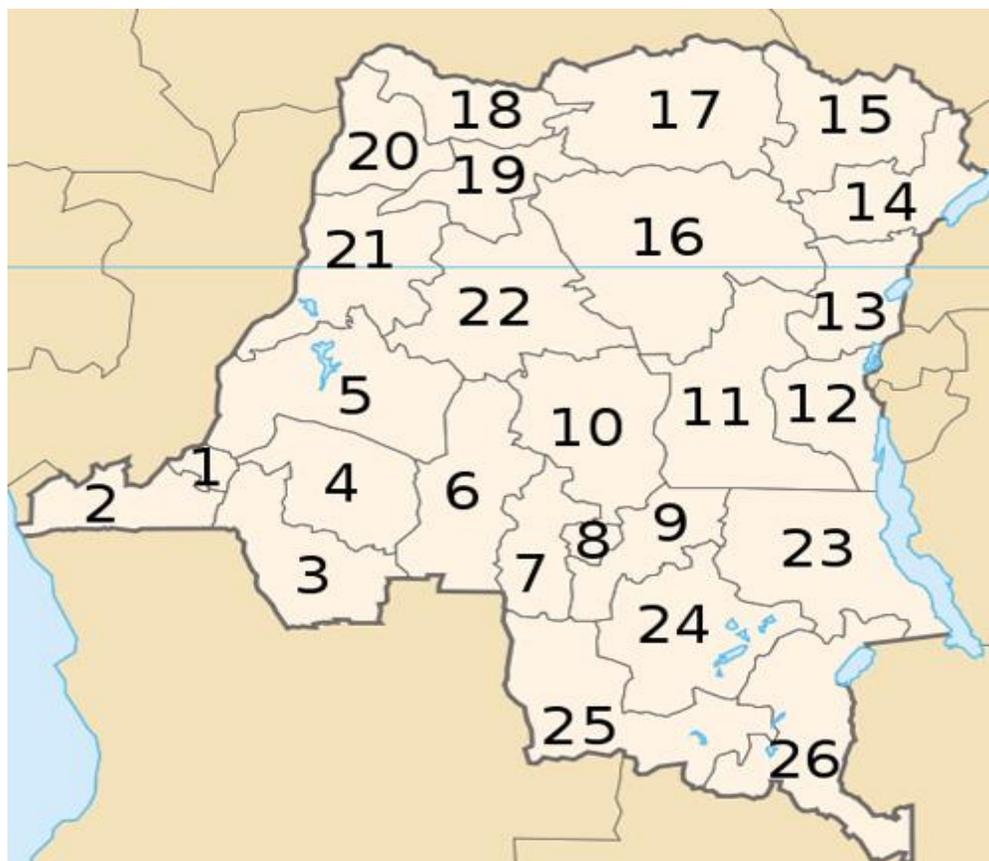
(See sub-section 6.4.2.1, c)



Source: Monusco, dated April 2010.

Map 10: New provinces and their capitals in compliance with the 2006 Constitution

(See sub-section 6.4.3.2, b)



Source: <<http://marianna-ivanova.com/ref-country-cod.php>> Accessed on November 11, 2015

PROVINCES	AREA/Km ²	CAPITALS	PROVINCES	AREA/Km ²	CAPITALS
1. Kinshasa	9965	Kinshasa	15. Haut Uele	89683	Isiro
2. Kongo central	53920	Matadi	16. Tshopo	199567	Kisangani
3. Kwango	89974	Kenge	17. Bas Uele	148331	Buta
4. Kwilu	78441	Kikwit	18. Nord Ubangi	56644	Gbadolite
5. Mai-Ndombe	127243	Inongo	19. Mongala	58141	Lisala
6. Kasai	65631	Luebo	20. Sud Ubangi	51648	Gemena
7. Lulua	59111	Kananga	21. Equateur	103902	Mbandaka
8. Kasai Oriental	9545	Mbuji-Mayi	22. Tshuapa	132957	Boende
9. Lomami	56426	Kabinda	23. Tanganyika	34940	Kalemie
10. Sankuru	104331	Lodja	24. Haut-Lomami	108204	Kamina
11. Maniema	132250	Kindu	25. Lualaba	121308	Kolwezi
12. Sud Kivu	65130	Bukavu	26. Haut Katanga	132425	Lubumbashi
13. Nord Kivu	59483	Goma			
14. Ituri	65658	Bunia			