Culture of war, instability and sustained contemporary conflicts across African states

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ABSTRACT

Africa continues to witness sustained conflicts owing to a number of different reasons. Already, evidence shows that a majority of these conflicts have been driven by long-standing social- political and economic reasons. Yet a closer look at the conflicts reveals that they have not only transformed, but are now sustained by different actors, methods, and have different objectives. Traditionally, conflicts in Africa have been driven by issues such as natural resources and struggles for political and economic power. However, there are now new factors that are significantly fueling and sustaining violence and conflicts in many parts of Africa. The paper focuses on why there have been such sustained conflicts in Africa and largely categorizes them into two main classes- old and new. Kadlor's New War Theory helps explain and distinguish these two categories of conflicts by pointing out the salient features in each. However, what cannot be categorized is the effects that these conflicts have previously had and continue to leave in the countries and populations in which they occur. These are also briefly discussed which highlights the implications - both short-term and long-term that these conflicts have in Africa. Through these discussions, perhaps a new way of conceptualization of the nature of conflicts in Africa can be developed. This guides the approaches and means to be used in their mitigation and ultimate resolution.

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Introduction

Conflicts in Africa have received close scholarly interest. A majority of the focus has been on what drives them and what measures can be instituted to resolve or bring them to an end. In spite of these efforts, they persist to this day and some have transformed into long protracted conflicts. The effects on the regions and the people that they directly and indirectly affect thus continue to be documented. Amnesty international reports that in sub-Saharan Africa, conflicts between armed groups and states, compounded with attacks on civilians continue to escalate. For instance, in Southern Africa, long simmering violent tensions in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province have now intensified into full blown armed conflict (Amnesty International, 2021). Similar violent conflicts have broken out recently in Ethiopia's Tigray region further piling new conflicts in the horn of Africa (Amnesty International, 2021). These are new additions to previous conflicts that have been long standing. For instance, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) [especially on the eastern part], Northern Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Burundi, Chad, and Angola among other countries have existed for some decades now.

The drivers of the conflicts are so wide and often operate in an aggregate form-meaning more than one factor contribute to conflict and its escalation within specific localities. It is no news that natural resources such as minerals have for long fueled violent conflicts in Africa. In fact, this is a well discussed area among scholars. Yet evidence, indicates that in spite of the rich documentation, minerals remain a major driver of conflicts in African states (Berman, et al., 2017; Addaney et al., 2019; Grant, 2020; Addaney & Lubaale, 2021; Baik et al., 2021). New evidence now shows that drivers of sustained conflicts in Africa, now include new players like climate

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change (Schilling et al., 2020; McGurik & Nunn, 2020), religion terrorism (Mroszczyk & Abrahams, 2021) among other emerging drivers.

This paper focusses on why these conflicts have existed for such a long time and makes an attempt to explain the underlying reasons to support it. The paper categorizes the conflicts into two main areas namely, twentieth and twenty first century conflicts. Obviously, some conflicts cut across these two time periods, but they have undergone significant transformations in their nature. The main argument presented here, is analysis of when contemporary conflicts have been sustained for such long periods of time. While some conflicts, on the continent have been fairly brought to an end, they have left behind reeling effects on the countries and their populations. The discussion thus, reels in these effects in order to have a more comprehensive analysis. While the paper, cannot comprehensively cover all conflicts in the continent, the focus here has thus covered the most significant ones with perhaps the furthest reaching repercussions. However, this does not in any way, turn a blind eye on the other conflicts left out, because aggregately, all conflicts have far reached effects on countries, regions and the people living in and outside the localities in which they occur.

Major African Wars and Conflicts of the Twentieth Century

The end of the twentieth century marked with it a history of some of terrible wars and violent conflicts in Africa with some progressing into the new 21st century. Obviously, war and conflict in Africa has had various underlying causes, courses and consequences in the twentieth century (Aremu, 2010; Sololon et al., 2018; Stapleton, 2018; Zeleza, 2008). However, their effects on the continent continue to be documented to this day irrespective of the intensity, magnitude or length (Hoeffler, 2008; Tafotie & Idahosa, 2016; Candau, Gbandi & Guepie, 2021). While scholars argue which wars and conflicts were the worst or major, consensus exists on what emerge as some of the worst conflicts and wars of the twentieth century in Africa. For example, the Somalia war and conflict (rages to this day), Rwandan Genocide, Nigeria Civil War, Eritrean-Ethiopian War, Sierra Leone civil war, Liberia war and Uganda's Lord Resistance insurgency (Norwich University, 2017). These are but a few of the major conflicts of the twentieth century. A closer look at some of these wars and conflicts is inevitable.

Nigerian Civil War

The Nigerian Civil war occurred between July 6, 1967 and January 15 1970 in post-independence Nigeria. This is one of the episodic events that had landmark impacts in the country with the war taking place between the Federal Military Government and the secessionist Eastern Region. The Nigeria civil war and conflict was promoted by a series of events beginning with the coups in 1966, military leadership, secessionist of part of the country into the Biafra Republic and concerted efforts to bring the civil war and conflict to an end (Nwalu, 2020). The bloody coup of 1966, practically ended civilian administration which had been accused of nepotism, ethnicity and bad leadership. The advent of military rule brought with it unitarism that was meant to replace federalism. This created resistance from the northern part of Nigeria. The opposition of the North to the abolishment of federalism was brought about by the fear of marginalization in how the country affairs were run. These events precipitated violent coups against the state that resulted in the assassination of military leaders and sustained violent conflicts over the manner in which the country was led (Aremu & Buhaari, 2017; Ajiboye, 2020). The Nigerian civil war that ensued resulted in immense loss of lives and property, in what is described as a black genocide in post-colonial Africa. Valuable property and means of livelihoods were also destroyed leaving the survivors emerging out of the post-civil war era in abject poverty. The war also brought with it, the proliferation of small arms, distrust between the ethnic communities in Nigeria, unending agitations for the creation of states, politicization of the armed forces, and marginalization of some of the regions in the country (Iheka, 2021). The Nigerian civil war left consequences that are still witnessed in the country to this day. The country is yet to fully achieve national unity and integration. Further, there are persistent religious, and inter-communal conflicts in the country that are unending (Aremu & Buhari, 2017). Ojaruega (2021) notes that the Nigerian Civil War also involved minority groups that were caught up in the cross-fire between the major parties to the conflict.

Somali Civil War

Somalia is one of the sub-Saharan countries that has faced among the worst violent conflicts on the continent that has spilled over from the end of the twentieth to the twenty first century. The conflicts and instability in the country was so intense that is actively rages to this day. Nyadera and Ahmed (2020) note that the protracted period of war in Somalia is one that few donors, international organizations, consultants and academicians that provide strategies and models for peace have lived through. Omar (2018) laments that the protracted conflict in Somalia has resulted in a total collapse of the state, with deep rooted conflict that has resulted in fragmentation of the country and a deterioration of security and institutions. The Somalia war had numerous causes and players. Arrieta (2017) highlights the role of clan systems, international actors, Siad Barre's regime, cold war dynamics, Ethiopia inter alia as major propagators of the war. Further, Arrieta notes that the Somali conflict is multifaceted, very complex and multi-causal and possess various exogenous and endogenous factors. The Somali conflict has undergone metamorphosis since its advent in the early 90's. The armed conflict has rapidly transformed from a civil war into war against terrorism, human trafficking, piracy, a refugee crisis, transnational attacks and economic crimes. Further, it has also resulted in disintegration of the political and socio-economic fabrics in the country (Nyadera & Ahmed, 2020). Belay (2019) identifies key causes of the conflict in Somalia as; identity politics/clannism, sustained political economy due to state collapse, weak state institutions, rise of Islamist groups, competing interests of regional and international powers. Clan identity and dynamics have been manipulated by various political actors as

instruments for mobilization. These facilitate violent clan-based conflicts in the country. Secondly, state weakness and disorder have been sustained in the country by the political economy of state collapse. The protected conflict has thus been facilitated by criminal networks, warlords and powerful businessmen that have vested interests in the weakened state. A proliferation of small arms in the country has also facilitated youth radicalization further fuelling violent conflicts in the country (Mustapha & Yerima, 2021). External actors have also financed and promoted competing interest in the country, and this has sustained and even intensified conflict in Somalia (Okoli & Iwuamadi, 2021). These dynamics have also served to prolong the war and conflict in the country.

Lord's Resistance Army Insurgency

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has for nearly three decades carved a path of disorder and violence in East and Central Africa. Led by Joseph Kony, the group that mainly uses guerrilla warfare has resulted in more than 100,000 civilian deaths, with hundreds of thousands displaced across five countries. The group has exploited the regional bush sanctuaries and used human and natural resources to sustain a violent conflict for a long period of time (Day, 2019). Schomerus (2021) laments that the LRA is one of Africa's most notorious armed groups that has operated in Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. The LRA has waged an enduring and protracted conflict in post-colonial Uganda leaving behind adverse socio-political and economic consequences (David & Ayegba, 2021). The LRA conflict portrays the changing patterns of conflict in Africa, where civil wars have transformed into fragmented armed groups with power bases that are decentralized. Incentives to the end the conflict seem to be minimal and in spite of huge resources spent by the international community in a bid to capture some of its leaders, the conflict still persists. Various efforts to bring peace between the conflicting parties through mediation have yielded little results.

Rwandan Genocide

Perhaps one of the worst genocides in recent history, the Rwanda genocide occurred in a backdrop of manipulation of ethnic divisions. Long simmering tension between the two main ethnic communities that lived in the country. Historical facts indicate that the two warring communities had had heightened tensions pre and immediately after independence. Ethnic violence and conflicts is documented in Rwanda immediately after independence. The desire to gain political power back from the opponents served as a motivator for communal organization and the staging of attacks against rival groups. Tensions between warring communities finally culminated in a 100-day spree of brutal violence that resulted in mass massacre. The Rwandan Genocide led to the death of more than 800,000 people (McDoom, 2020, Armstrong et al., 2020). Even after the war ended, a new conflict broke out between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. To this day, militia that were former Rwandese soldiers who escaped into DRC operate alongside Congolese militia and other armed groups (Bedford, 2019). The result has resulted in serious insecurity since the militias target civilian populations causing death, harm and injury. The end of the Rwandese Genocide did not therefore end the conflict in the region. The Eastern part of the DRC which borders the Rwanda is a highly volatile area and perennial conflicts continue to persist in the area. The Rwandese case provides a good example of how conflict can transform and remain sustained, beyond the region in which it took place. Long standing ethnic tensions along the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo has resulted in sporadic fighting (Lisa et al., 2021). This tensions further, provide evidence of the nature of sustained violent conflicts in the area. Although efforts have been instituted to bring the conflict to an end, underlying factors and external actors have significantly played the role of sustaining the violent conflicts in the region. Such sustained conflicts, call into question whether efforts to genuinely bring the conflicts to an end are yielding any fruits at all. The sustained conflicts in the region have compounded the border conflicts, human refugees, insecurity, and affected development and hampered peaceful cohesion and living among the communities living at the border between DRC and Rwanda (Mathys, 2017). The sustained conflict in the region also present various geo-political consequences for warring factions in the area, in addition to the immense human, and economic effects it has had on the region. It is obvious, that long standing underlying reasons have served to ensure sustained violent conflicts along the border between Rwanda and its neighbouring countries.

Other Conflicts

There also exist other recorded conflicts that happened in this era. For example, the Eritrean-Ethiopian War [1998-2000] in which neighbouring countries fought with devastating effects on human populations and communities at the border (Guazzini, 2021). Long standing historical root causes anchored the war with disputes over identity, ideology, economy and history. However, tensions remained, and as recent as 2018, the coming to power of a new prime minister in Ethiopia opened up renewed peace engagements between the two countries (Tronvoll, 2020). The Horn of Africa has also had other violent conflicts including those recorded in Uganda, Northern Kenya, and Sudan. Solomon et al. (2020) observes that the horn of Africa region stands out as one of the world's territories which are most volatile and vulnerable to armed conflict. Further, the conflicts have affected the region for the last 50 years disrupting the lives of people as well as the environmental impacts they leave behind. Politics and the desire for self-determination has also significantly contributed to a majority of the conflicts that have taken place in the horn of Africa (De Waal & Nouwen, 2021).

Major African Wars and Conflicts in the 21st Century

The 21st century brought with it a continuation of long-standing previous conflicts and an emergence of new conflicts in many parts of Africa. Some countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo has witnessed violent conflicts and unprintable human atrocities

over the last three decades. Tengu (2020) notes that the violent conflicts that the DRC has faced has arisen out of weak public institutions in the country that have failed to truly live up to their constitutional and institutional roles. As a result of a deformity in the public institutions, a system of personal rule, pilferage of public coffers, human rights abuses, violent conflicts and a failure of the state emerged. Roessler and Verhoeven (2017) focus on liberation politics and outbreak of Africa's deadliest conflict- DRC conflict. The authors, bring to play the various factors and events that primarily shaped both conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These include the quest for regime changes to overthrow dictatorial regimes as witnessed in the revolution against Mobutu and his overthrow from power. However, this marked the beginning of a protracted conflict in the country in which comrades, went into war against each other.

In Sudan, violent conflicts and fighting led to the separation of the country into two countries- Sudan and South Sudan. This came after long conflict and fighting between various communities in the former Sudan. In spite of this separation, evidence shows that South Sudan has known little peace since it gained its independence from the rest of Sudan (Nyadera, 2018). The South Sudanese war has persisted and parts of the country continue to remain highly volatile. Violent conflicts have engulfed the country fuelled by the available natural resources- particularly oil (Moro, 2018). The Libyan conflict and uprising of 2011 has destabilized the country plunging it into protracted conflict between various functions. In neighbouring Egypt, uprising within this past decade have brought with it conflicts among various factions. Although Egypt appears to have largely managed to bring these conflicts under control, some other countries have not achieved such results (Winer, 2019). Recent developments in Northern Mozambique are presenting new evidences of emerging conflicts on the southern part of the continent. The terrorist organizations are bringing in the Islamic extremism and its role in violent conflicts in Africa (dos Santos, 2020; Ali, 2021). This continues to present new challenges for conflict resolution on the continent and piles more evidence on the nature of sustained conflicts in many countries in Africa.

A Theory of Contemporary Conflicts in Africa: New War Theory

A theory to explain why such sustained violent conflicts in the country exists is thus worthwhile. The main theory advanced here is Kaldor's – New War Theory. Kaldor (1999) develops the theory of New Wars. This theory explains the concept behind what can be termed as old wars and new wars. It allows for a fair dissection between what is referred to as new wars and the simmering old wars. Kaldor begins by observing that new wars happen in the era of globalization. They take place in countries or regions where autocratic states have been significantly weakened due to opening up to the rest of the world [globalization]. Further, new wars have a different logic from what Kaldor (1999) calls 'old wars' [wars predominating 19th and 20th centuries]. As such, the theory points out distinctions of these two types of wars. First, old wars were fought by established armed forces of countries whereas new wars are fought by a number of different networks of state and non-state actors. These include the regular armed forces, warlords, jihadists, private security contractors, paramilitaries, mercenaries, warring factions and so on. Secondly, the goals of old wars were geo-political ideologies and interests whereas new wars are now fought in the name of identity such as religion, tribe, ethnicity, resource area localities and so on. Thus, the aim here is to gain access to the state for particular groups or factions rather than carry out programmes and policies that are in the interest of the broader public interest (Kaldor, 2013). For new wars, identity politics is constructed through war, and this is the aim of the war/conflicts.

Thirdly, Kaldor (1999) in this theory indicates that in old wars, the decisive encounter was battle. This involved capturing territory using military means, however, in new wars, there are few battles and territory is captured using political means. This is achieved through controlling the population and often uses techniques such as displacement, forceful removal of people having different opinions and identities among other such factors. The use of violence in the new wars is thus largely directed against civilians in order to control territory rather than against enemy forces. Finally, Kaldor finds that old wars were mainly financed through state resources. However, in new wars, due to weakening of states and falling tax revenues, we have new forms of predatory finance. This include kidnapping, smuggling, looting, pillaging, 'taxation' of humanitarian aid, diaspora support among others. Thus, there is an economic incentive in new wars but distinguishing those who use political violence for economic reasons and those in predatory economics as a means of financing their political causes is difficult. New wars are also part of the open globalized centralized economy in which there is low participation and revenue generation depends on sustained violent conflict and wars. This is different from old wars which were typically centralizing, autarchic and involved mobilizing the population. Kaldor (2013) while defending this theory notes that these differences of the old and new wars have implications for the regions in which they occur. First, whereas old wars had extremes for both sides as each side tried to win, new wars tend to spread and become protracted as warring sides gain economically and politically from violence itself rather than 'winning' [the war]. Secondly, whereas old wars were linked to state building, new wars tend to contribute to dismantling and destabilization of the state.

Resources and Conflict in Africa

It is no secret that Africa is richly endowed in natural resources. While this is not the only factor contributing to conflict on the African continent, taking a closer look at the role that this has played in conflicts and their sustenance in Africa is worthwhile. Already, scholars have called the natural resources in Africa a 'curse' due to the salient role they play in conflict (Frynas & Buur, 2020; Akpan & Umoh, 2021; Sini et al., 2021). But resources by themselves do not generate the conflict, rather it is their exploitation, revenue distribution from their sale and involvement of communities in their use appear to be the main issue. Examining how resources have driven conflicts in selected few countries is the focus of the next few sub-sections. The discussion is split into the main regional blocks namely, Western Africa, Central Africa, East, North and Southern Africa.

Western Africa

West African countries including Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia have had some of the worst conflicts aided by or arising out of resources. In Nigeria, wars over oil rich regions are well documented. Factions led by warlords, militants and rebel groups have long fought for the battle of oil blocks and the revenues that come with it (Simon, 2020; Rexer & Hvinden, 2020; Saka et al., 2021). Oludimu and Alola (2021) find that the oil 'resource curse' hypothesis is valid in Nigeria. Further, Nigeria is having new drivers of conflict such as pasture and water among pastoralists and crop growers. This is creating more conflicts and escalating already worse tensions among various agro-pastoralist communities in the country (Ikhuoso et al., 2020; Okechukwu et al., 2020; Oghuvbu & Oghuvbu, 2021). When violent extremism is included into the equation, it further complicates the case for sustained conflicts in Nigeria. Terrorism, through various militant groups in Nigeria [including Boko Haram] have been responsible for insecurity, kidnappings, bombings, population displacements, and protracted violent conflicts in the northern part of the country (Ajah et al., 2020; Onapajo & Ozden, 2020). These conflicts in Nigeria have various socio-economic repercussions and consequences on the population and the country at large.

Scholars argue that the discovery of oil in Nigeria played a critical role in sustaining the Civil War (1967-1970) and other conflicts in the country. This emerged as struggles for the control of oil revenue resources became critical factors in conflict in the country. The oil deposits also attracted foreign players into the Nigerian conflict with foreign companies becoming significant players in the Nigerian oil industry (Omaka, 2019). To this day, the oil sector is tainted, and participants in the industry are often regarded to have used unorthodox practices (Okpan & Njoku, 2019). This tainted image, has also complicated the energy sector in the country, because Nigeria has perennial fuel shortages and blackouts in spite of its immense oil and gas deposits. Considering that about three quarters of the discovered oil deposits were located in the Eastern part, it served as a major motivator for calls for secessionists and the eventual attempts to break away into the Biafra State. The ensuing civil war in the country was largely influenced by the business of oil, with secessionists in the Biafra region exporting oil through seaports in the region. Funds of this exports played a major role in financing violent conflicts with the military leaders of the country at the time (Omaka, 2019). The oil was however, not the only factor in the conflict, but rather one of the main triggers. Fighting for self-defense in order to self-rule and survive significantly contributed to the violent conflict that the Nigeria republic faced.

In other West African Countries, resources have been used to fuel and fund violent conflicts. For instance, Sierra Leone witnessed the use of diamonds [blood diamonds] in civil war and conflicts by various warring factions. Rebels on Sierra Leone had enough resources to sustain their conflicts that was funded by blood diamonds mainly aided by weak international controls, porous borders, state collapse and roles of brokers or middlemen (Wapmuk, 2021). Conflict diamond thus aided the Sierra Leone civil war, one of the worst civil wars and conflicts in West Africa (Schulte & Paris, 2020). Similar evidence of use of blood diamonds is documented in Liberia (Salako, 2020). Further, in Liberia, other natural resources and minerals were sold off by warlords to finance violent conflicts in the country (Akiba, 2020). This rich evidence provides historical evidence that natural resources in a country can be used to fuel, fund and exacerbate violent conflicts in Africa. Further, the presence of external actors in these natural resource sphere worsens the conflicts and complicates their resolution processes.

Central Africa

The Central African region of the continent is one of the hotspots of violent conflicts on the continent. Notable conflict countries include the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Central African Republic (CAR) where there have been prolonged violent conflicts. The underlying reasons for the conflicts in these regions include calls for regime changes due to authoritarianism, vast mineral and natural resource deposits, secessionist movements, inter-ethnic conflicts, interference by foreign authorities among other factors. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is no secret that the country is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of natural resources specifically, minerals and rare earth metals. The discourses on the mineral endowment have often led to divergent opinions among scholars with some ascribing names to define the conceptualizing of the state of the DRC and the present mineral resource wealth. Jules Cornet, the famous Belgian geologist referred to the DRC as a geological scandal due to the vastness of its mineral resource wealth (Nzongola-Ntalaja (2004). To other scholars, the minerals are a resource curse (Rapanyane, 2021; Grynberg & Singogo, 2021; Isheloke & von Blottnitz, 2019).

Nevertheless, it is evident that the mineral resources have played a more salient role in violent conflicts in the country. Armed rebel groups have fought over the control and access to mining sites and locations, especially on the Eastern part of the country. The conflict here is fuelled by the huge revenues generated by the mining and sell of rare earth metals, some of which are only found in abundant amounts in the DRC [such as cobalt and coltan]. Rebel groups [often funded by external actors] have sustained violence creating population displacement, insecurity, loss of human life, destruction of property, and unsustainable mining practices. The natural resources have also previously been heavily pilfered by the central government where few people have benefitted from their exploitation. Tengu (2020) laments that the pilferage of resource revenues and the resulting conflicts in the country arose out of an absence of strong and empowered public institutions. Those who have previously wielded power have looted natural resources in the country, abetted violent conflicts and institutionalized a culture of bad governance. This is in spite of the fact that Tengu (2007), had already established that the country had everything it needed to develop. These has created agitations by the masses, weakened public institutions, institutionalized a system of personal rule, and sustained a culture of bad governance.

All these factors, aggregated create conducive ground for sustained violent conflicts in the country. The discovery of minerals in other locations have also exacerbated an already worse conflict situation due to the unrest that arises out of their access and exploitation. Angola and Zambia are also key members in this conflict minerals that further complicate the case for ending of conflicts in Central Africa. In spite of efforts to have a sustainable mineral resource supply chain such as certification of rough diamonds and due diligence for responsible supply chain of minerals from conflict areas (Dam-de Jong, 2020), conflicts in these regions due to the mineral resources persists to this day.

The external actors and ever-growing demand for some of these minerals spells doom for the ending of conflict in the region. For example, some key materials used in the development of batteries that are key in the manufacture of electronics come from conflict torn Democratic Republic of Congo. These has given rise to 'conflict minerals' (Deberdt & Le Billion, 2021). These conflict minerals have sustained child labour, corruption, environmental degradation, rebel groups and insecurity especially in the regions where the mining takes place and across the supply chain. The conflict prone minerals have also forced migration and human security issues (Grant, 2020). It has also facilitated illicit flow of financial resources, which is movement of capital across borders due to illegal activities. This is supported by underground activities such as smuggling and trafficking of minerals and other natural resources that have been obtained illegally. The trade in conflict minerals also supports illicit arms flows, that go back to fuelling insecurity and violent conflicts (Dam-de Joung, 2020). There is therefore little incentive to end conflict by the various parties involved in the conflict minerals. This serves to further fuel and sustain violent conflicts in the region.

Conclusion

Africa continues to be one of the continents with unending violent conflicts. The protracted conflicts have had multifaceted effects on the countries and regions where they occur. Already, this paper continues to document, that African conflicts have a plethora of drivers ranging from traditional ones such as mineral resources, power struggles, and regime changes to new and emerging ones like climate change, religious terrorism and so on. The paper has also delved into the two main periods of the conflicts by separating them into the twentieth and twenty first century conflicts. While some conflicts examined traverse these two time periods, their effects and consequences on the regions in which they have occurred is immense. Often, populations have been displaced, states weakened or collapsed, economies devastated amid other social and political implications.

The paper attempts to elucidate these conflicts by using Kadlor's New Wars Theory that explains the nature and dynamics of the African countries. The theory brings to play the nature of the current conflicts that are ongoing on the African continent and explain the new reasons as to why the conflicts continue to persist. It is evident, that in some of the African conflicts, there are few incentives to bring the conflicts to an end due to a number of various actors that are benefiting from them both economically, socially and politically. Further, in the era of globalization, current African conflicts and wars have foreign vested interests and actors who desire to see a persistence of some of these conflicts. It is no secret that foreign entities have taken sides in some of the African conflicts and wars based on the type of interests that they are pursuing. This further complicates any resolution process and is emerging as one of the significant factors for sustained conflicts in Africa. The paper has examined the dynamic nature of the African conflicts and implications and consequences that they have for both the African continent and the world at large.

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