

The Third Side and Africa: Civil Society's Influence in
Burundi, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the
Congo

Presented by

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Literature Review

Since the end of the Cold War, armed conflicts around the world have declined dramatically (Human Security Report 2005). It seems however, that the violence in Africa continues, due to conflicts rising and falling between different ethnic groups, religious groups and various other dividing factors. One might ask the question then, is there another way? Is there a light at the end of the tunnel? Is there anything a country, an organization or even a person like me can do to help? While various forms of peace and conflict resolution, like the use of mediation and negotiations have succeeded in various regions of Africa like the Arusha Accords in Burundi, many negotiations, accords and treaties have also failed, like the cease-fire negotiations in the Darfur region of Sudan. What is it that makes negotiations, accords, and treaties successful, and what makes them fail? This capstone explores one part of this question and examines ways in which some third parties can influence the outcome of negotiations.

William Ury, in his book the Third Side (2000), proposes the idea that it takes two sides to fight but a third to stop, and that there is another way to look at a conflict, not solely straight on but from the larger perspective of the outside community (Ury, p24). This third side utilizes people from the community, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international organizations to bring about a more peaceful change. Who is the third side and what is their role? The third side refers to people and groups from within and even outside the feuding party's community, region or country who step in to help change the mood or

direction of a conflict; from one of potential devastation to one where the third side provides prevention of an uprising, resolution between the two sides or containment of the conflict so that the situation does not continue to deteriorate (p24).

The third side comes in many forms and guises. In some conflicts the third side could simply be one person who speaks to one or both of the feuding parties to get them to come to speaking terms instead of fighting. On the other hand the third side could be as complex as the intervention of international groups and even countries that step in and provide support to stop the conflict. In researching conflict and negotiation the third side is called by many different names and often times has varying roles in the peace process as well. An example of the third side as a single entity could be a mediator who intervenes between two or more parties to facilitate dispute resolution or the media who can influence the negotiations process through airing stories and leaking information which can often help or hurt the negotiations process and even the outcome of a conflict depending on what is aired.

Other authors have a broader view of the third side like Ury, and group people like mediators, everyday citizens and various others together and look at their influence on peace and conflict resolution. An example of this would be Anthony Wanis-St. John's use of the term civil society (St John 2008). Civil society is defined as the "vast array of public-orientated associations that are not formal parts of the governing institutions of the states" (p5). Examples would be religious institutions, non-governmental organizations, businesses and professional associations and conflict resolution groups. They also must promote the interests and perspectives of a particular sector of society. They are often seen as the middle

sphere, between the state and the individual that balances and augments the power of the state and creates awareness for individuals to promote particular interests within the state.

As stated above, what Ury calls the third side is referred to and takes on many different roles in peace and conflict literature. Christopher Mitchell (2008), in his piece “Mediation and the Ending Conflict”, uses the term mediator as an example of a third side intervener. Mediators are often leaders from other societies outside the conflict who intervene to help bring the adversaries together with the aim of concluding an acceptable agreement to end the violence and to compromise on the issues (p95). These third sides have been acting for hundreds of years but are not limited to a single person. Mediators can be representatives of countries like the United States and the United Kingdom or organizations like the United Nations (UN) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) who work together to broker agreements between feuding parties.

Evidence of the media playing a third side role can be seen in “The Role of the News Media in Peace Negotiations” (Wolfsfeld 2008). The more the media, whether newspapers, radio or television, is constructive in what they publish the better negotiations tend to be, but if the media is playing a more negative role the talks for negotiations tend to go badly as well (p131). The media also has the potential to be an influence in negotiations. The media either works with the government and airs what it is given, or it exploits what the government is doing in negotiations and makes what is being arbitrated unpopular, which tends to strain negotiations (p131). The media on the other hand has the potential to mobilize consensus among elites in support of a movement or it can also take control over events and the flow of

information associated with the process (p134). Evidence of this can be seen in Radio Okapi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which aired information on the peace process for the people of the country to follow, which when looked at from both sides could help the situation gain the needed attention to gain support, as explored in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Chapter.

The third side has also been called or referred to as “informal interveners” (Botes 2003). These informal interveners are everyday citizens, elected officials, teachers and attorneys who do not carry the title of mediator, but they do the same job in their day to day duties (p271). These informal interveners tend to have continuing relationships with the feuding parties and are often part of the dispute, or at least of the family, organizational or community setting within which the conflict occurs. They tend to have more options in solving the conflict as well because they are not tied down to the professional roles of the mediator or negotiator with which they would have had special training. They instead can bring new ways of solving the dispute from past experiences with these groups to the table that would have otherwise never been used.

How do we evaluate these third sides, and is there a framework for them that determines what grouping they fit into? John Paul Lederach (1997) in his book, Building Peace, gives a model with potential categories the third side could fall into. Lederach makes a pyramid of the groups that could be labeled the third side. He begins with the top level which consists of political and military leaders in the conflict. The next level or mid-range level is formed by leaders respected in certain sectors of society (academic, business,

religious, ethnic). The third level is the grassroots level which operates in direct connection to the masses of people and includes refugee camp officials, NGO workers, and health workers. Each of these three levels then have complementary peace building activities, that they attempt to address on the different levels of the conflict. The top level of political and military leaders generally negotiate cease-fires and peace accords. The Mid-range level conduct problem-solving workshops, train people in conflict-resolution skills, and lead peace commissions. The grass-roots level help to achieve agreements to end fighting, implement policies made at higher levels, and set the stage for a movement toward peace. This model helps to distinguish between levels of intervention.

Clem McCartney (2006), in “Dilemmas of Third-Party Involvement in Peace Processes: Reflections for practice and policy from Colombia and the Philippines” takes the idea of the third party and pushes it further by drawing a continuum to compare the characteristics of these parties in a conflict. He states that certain types of third parties exhibit and experience different strengths and weaknesses and often the very quality that helped the third party in some contexts was also the source of their limitations in other respects. His continuum begins with the dimension of the official third party which is in contrast to its opposite side which tends to look at third parties as unofficial. Another dimension begins with third parties that are formal in comparison to the more informal third parties. Other continuums look at the dimensions of external to internal, and involved to more detached third parties.

The following paper will look at civil society as it relates to the mid- range level of Lederach's peace building framework. It will also draw on McCartney's continuum as it relates to the more unofficial, more informal groups in the cases of Burundi, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In each case, four "third side groups" that operated at the mid-range level were selected. The research materials available, that was needed for this paper, was limited, therefore the examples were chosen on the basis of availability of information on the civil society groups that had a presence in their respective countries. The examples were also chosen because they represent a broad range of groups from women's groups to religious groups. In comparing cases of the third side involved in the peace processes in Burundi, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, this paper will look at the Arusha Accord (Burundi), Darfur Peace Agreement (Sudan), and the Pretoria Accord (Democratic Republic of the Congo) in an attempt to determine how or in what ways the third side has had an influence in the process.

These cases were selected because they have in common a number of features. These African countries have been convulsed by genocide, civil wars, inter-state conflict and flawed democratic transitions (House of Commons). The similarities in the way the mid-range, informal third side has had an effect will be traced across the three cases. The goal is to determine if there are overarching themes for example, the possibility that the third side is relatively influential in bringing together parties that are involved in civil wars, or the idea that having a visual presence will help lessen the tensions in a conflict, or the possibility that the third parties get in the way of the negotiations process and should not be invited to the negotiating table.

CASE I: BURUNDI

Burundi has been plagued by conflict and the struggle for political power since its independence (Out of Sight 2000). Tensions, albeit not drastic ones, were seen prior to Burundi's independence but due to a shared language (Kirundi), history and intermarriage between the two major ethnic groups, Hutu and Tutsi, the people of Burundi lived in relative peace. However in the late 1800's and early 1900's the Germans and then Belgians entered into Burundi under the auspices of colonialism and slowly changed the dynamics of the social structure in Burundi by solidifying the previous permeable social structure, stratifying the groups into the more favored Tutsi pastoralists, favored for their height and more Caucasian features, and the less favored Hutu, who were seen as short, stout farmers (Uwazie p153). Due to their preferential status the Tutsi were able to become the more dominant ethnic group in the political and military sphere as the colonial powers left Burundi in the mid 1900's. When Burundi received its independence in 1962, the divisions between the Hutu and Tutsi were furthered through multiple coups and massacres over a power struggle to be Burundi's political leader. The decades that followed were characterized by violence between the dominant Tutsi minority and Hutu majority.

A glimmer of hope for an end to the violence came in 1993 when, for the first time since its independence, Burundi held democratic elections (Burundi 2009). Melchior Ndadaye, the leader of the Front for Democracy (Frodebu) party, a moderate Hutu dominated party, was elected the first Hutu president. The glimmer of hope only lasted about a month, when Ndadaye was assassinated by the Tutsi army who refused to be governed by a Hutu.

His death provoked a wave of violence which resulted in the death of approximately 30,000-50,000 people from both ethnic groups and the fleeing of 700,000 Burundians, mostly Hutu into neighboring countries like Rwanda (Out of Sight 2000).

In an effort to maintain stability in the government a new president, Cyprien Ntaryanina (Hutu), was elected in Ndadaye's place. After a few months in office however a plane which was carrying Cyprien Ntaryamira and Rwanda's President Juvenal Habyarimana was shot down and crashed near the airport in Kigali, Rwanda's capital (Accusations over Plane Crash 2000). A third Hutu, Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, was elected, and was ousted early on in his election through a coup led by Pierre Buyoya of the Uprona (majority Tutsi) party. Pierre Buyoya (Tutsi) would take the presidency, ban political parties and dissolve the National Assembly all within the course of three weeks. Buyoya was committed to seeking political power but he also surprisingly held a strong desire for peace for Burundi.

The first peace process in Burundi, called the Mwanza Peace Process, was initiated immediately after the assassination of Melchior Ndadaye in order to keep Burundi from falling into complete chaos. The process was headed by former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere who attempted to take a political and if necessary a military approach to the Burundi situation (Getting In p78). A coup by Pierre Buyoya however halted the flow of the Mwanza process and it eventually crumbled. In 1998 Buyoya, under international pressure and sanctions, announced his desire for a transitional constitution and a partnership between the government and the opposition-led National Assembly. This new partnership would open a window of opportunity for effective negotiations. As the government initiated talks with the

National Assembly the possibility for potentially successful negotiations were at hand. Both the National Assembly and the President signed an accord to promote internal dialogue hosted by Julius Nyerere. Nyerere would facilitate what would become the Arusha Accord.

Arusha Accord

Peace Process:

The negotiations for the Arusha Accord were a rather difficult process to maintain due to large number of parties that were involved in the conflict in Burundi. On top of the seventeen plus political parties, violence still continued between many of the rebel groups and the government while the Arusha negotiations were in progress. The overall goal of the Arusha Accords however was to bring a halt to the violence in Burundi and hopefully bring peace back which is why it was important to involve all of the parties in hopes to make peace a reality. Due to the violence caused by two rebel political parties the National Liberation Force (FNL) and the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD), military *splinters* of two of the Hutu political parties, the Arusha Accord progressed without them. The Arusha Peace Agreement was concluded on August 28, 2000 by a majority of the political parties but a ceasefire to the violence was nowhere in sight. A transitional government was set up however with a hope that by including both Hutus and Tutsis in the government the power struggles and violence throughout Burundi would cease.

A desire to keep Burundi from falling into a continuous cyclical pattern of violence led to the intervention of the international community in the Burundian conflict. When Julius Nyerere agreed to facilitate the peace talks for Burundi many of these groups seemed to pull

out of the area. Throughout the process leading to Arusha however, several civil society groups stepped in to maintain and even push along the negotiations in hopes to bring an end to the violence. The groups examined are the Bashingantahe, St. Egidio Community, Confederation of Women's Associations and NGO's in Burundi and Femmes Africa Solidarité. The following pages aim to assess whether these groups had an influence on the negotiations process, and to look at the contributions they may have made in the process.

Bashingantahe

Background:

In traditional Burundian society, the Bashingantahe “wise men” was a traditional body of men who were renowned for their sense of truth, justice and responsibility for the overall good of the people (Nindorera p13-14). They were an organized group in whom was vested the social, political and judicial power of their society. These men were both Hutu and Tutsi and were the epitome of integrity. The Bashingantahe were tasked with the duty of being models of Burundi's traditional values, dispute solvers as well as representatives of their local community. The Bashingantahe as a whole did not represent everyone though; they generally excluded the women who were thought, due to popular folklore, to be incapable of keeping secrets (p14).

Role in Peace Process:

The role of Bashingantahe was virtually destroyed with the appearance of the Belgians in Burundi. Instead of being held responsible to the people of Burundi the Belgians

made the Bashingantahe responsible to them and dismissed their traditional role in society to that of mere followers of Belgian orders (Nindorera p13). Integrity was no longer a requirement to become a Bashingantahe but instead primary education and knowledge of Swahili. Their formal role was never fully restored but their traditional role and what they stood for was reflected in the peace process in Burundi. Before Belgian occupation, major conflicts had never broken out in Burundi due to the presence of the Bashingantahe.

When the negotiations process began in Arusha, the desire to go back to “old Burundi” where ethnic conflict was handled more peacefully was desired. As the negotiations in Arusha were underway the values of the Bashingantahe were desired to be utilized in the process. Many of those involved in the peace process pushed strongly toward the idea of electing leaders that held the values of the Bashingantahe so that the outcome of the Accord would be not only be representative of the people but also in the hands of capable moral leaders. In 1999 the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) pushed for the establishment of the democratic institution of the Bashingantahe Council and in 2000 there was recognition by the Hutu and Tutsi groups to restore the Bashingantahe (p18). By reinstituting the Bashingantahe Council and instituting the ideas of integrity among the younger generations there were hopes that the two parties would be able to strengthen tolerance and mutual respect especially within the rural areas of Burundi.

The Bashingantahe’s was re-established and is now a civil society organization that openly challenges the policies and actions of those in power where it deems them to be violating the values of honesty, integrity and transparency (Bashingantahe Peace Building Programme2008) Although the original Bashingantahe did not allow women, the new

council consisted of forty men and women from all ethnic and social groups including youths, elders, and peasants (30). The council was completely voluntary and it appears some members attended the negotiations between the government and the armed rebels in an attempt to seek peace between the two sides.

St. Egidio

Background:

Another civil society group that was visible in the negotiations during the Arusha Accord in Burundi was the Community of St. Egidio. The Community of St. Egidio is a Catholic lay, religious community that originated in Rome, Italy from the small church of St. Egidio. These men and women were committed to evangelization and solidarity with the poor and the weak in Italy (Bartoli 2009). They have since expanded to maintain projects in over twenty countries and have a membership of approximately 15,000. The community has been known to focus on the individual/more personal level in helping the homeless, the poor and sick but they have more recently delved into the world of international peacemaking: Through personal relationships and active diplomacy of friendship the St. Egidio Community has been able to get close to many leaders in countries like Burundi which have been suffering for many years because of injustice and war (Verhoeven 2009). They have gone into these countries and have made efforts to make peace between the various political parties with their experience from working on an individual, personal level.

Role in Peace Process:

In Burundi the St. Egidio Community recognized the two track peace process system, one which was principally led by Nyerere, who was pushing the peace process on the diplomatic track. The second track, a more unofficial track, was where the community of St. Egidio found its niche in Burundi. The Community “attempted to arrange an agreement for the suspension of hostilities between the Tutsi led Burundian Government and the ‘principle’ rebel groups” (Verhoeven 2009). One of the biggest successes of the St. Egidio Community was their ability to get the National Council for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD), a major rebel political party in Burundi, to talk to the government of Burundi on the inclusion of the rebel group into the future government . Due to the power of extremists in Burundian politics both the government and the CNDD decided to meet in private instead of in the public eye in four rounds of discussions in Rome (Preventing Genocide 1998). The goal of the talks was to reach a suspension of hostilities which would hopefully lead to the inclusion of more parties in the peace process.

After four talks the three had come up with an agenda of crucial items like restoring constitutional and institutional order, suspension of hostilities and addressing a ceasefire. Progress halted, however, between the government and the CNDD. The government wanted a new constitution, the CNDD wanted to reinstate the constitution from 1992. When an agreement couldn't be reached the St. Egidio Community was to be unable to keep the CNDD engaged, and they eventually left Burundi.

Confederation of Women's Associations and NGO's in Burundi

Background:

Throughout the crisis and struggles for power sharing, women were a hard hit group in Burundi. They faced collective human atrocities: death, humiliation, kidnapping and collective rape (Nibizi 2005). In an effort to speak out about the destabilizing conditions that the war had upon their society as a whole, a consensus was achieved to take on the responsibility to stand up for women and their rights in Burundi. One of the first women's groups to organize was Confederation of Women's Associations and NGOs in Burundi (CAFOB). CAFOB in Burundi was a network of women's associations from differing ethnic groups that functioned as an NGO whose goal was to improve the socio-economic conditions and legal representation of women as well as promote women in peace building.

Role in Peace Process:

At Arusha CAFOB lobbied persistently for women to participate in the Burundian peace process. In order to get the voice of Burundian women heard, CAFOB engaged Burundian politicians, the President of the Regional Initiative for Burundi, his Excellency, Yoweri Museveni and other mediators in the Burundian conflict (Peace Women 2009). Because of their persistence, women were incorporated into the government and transitional institutions in Burundi. While groups like CAFOB were not directly involved in the negotiations at Arusha, they were however invited to attend as observers making a visible statement for women in the peace process. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom claim, that "throughout the process they made written contributions and

recommendations about questions being debated and also about the draft peace agreement which they see as a step forward for women and peace in Burundi” (Peace Women 2009).

Femmes Africa Solidarité

Background:

Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) was another women’s NGO working to engender the peace process in Africa (Origin of FAS). They were established in 1996 and worked to promote the leading role of women in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts on the African continent (Femmes Africa Solidarité 2009). Their four main objectives as an NGO were to foster support and promote women’s initiatives in the prevention management and resolution in Africa and for the respect of their rights. They desired to strengthen women’s leadership capacity to restore and maintain peace, engendering policies, structures, programs and the peace process for the attainment of durable peace and human security in Africa (Femmes Africa Solidarité). They also advocated at the national, regional and international levels for African women’s rights and concerns and their critical role on issues of peace and security.

Role in Peace Process:

In Burundi, the FAS in response to an appeal from the women in Burundi organized training workshops and advocacy missions for about 150 Burundian women who participated in the Arusha Peace Process and Negotiations in 1998 (Femmes Africa Solidarité). When the Arusha Accords were signed in 2000, FAS helped CAFOB to consolidate its involvements in

Burundi's democratizations through the organization of advocacy missions and training workshops.

Analysis:

Throughout the Arusha Accords, the desire to bring an end to the violence was on the forefront of the minds of those who were involved. In looking at the negotiations at Arusha one notices that several civil society groups had a presence or were visible during the process, but one may ask did the four groups influence the negotiations and if so, what were their contributions?

Beginning with the Bashingantahe, it appears that their clout as honorable men or men that could be looked-up to was more admirable than their actual actions in the peace process. When originally established it seems that they were not able to rule on, or have a direct influence on, the negotiations as a whole. While the Bashingantahe were asked to help bring the government and the major rebel groups together, their influence at the negotiations seems to be minimal.

The Community of Saint Egidio on the other hand seems to have had a greater impact on the negotiations process as a whole. These men and women worked the second track of negotiations in the Arusha Process and were successful in getting the CNDD, a major political party in Burundi, to secretly talk to the Burundian Government, which seems to have enabled future negotiations to be held between the government and the other political parties. While it appears that the St. Egidio Community was only able to engage the principal

armed rebel group in an effort to open political dialogue, evidence suggests that this initial step helped to push the official negotiations process forward. It paved the way for further negotiations on the diplomatic track to eventually be successful.

The women's groups like CAFOB and the FAS seem to be influential in the peace process in Arusha but their contribution to the process seems to be for the rights of women and women's empowerment. This impact is seen in the acquisition of government positions for women in the transitional government and the government itself, rather than on the negotiations process as a whole. Through workshops and advocacy missions these women's groups were able to get the voice of Burundian women heard from both sides of the conflict. They also appeared to be influential in preparing and teaching women how to be leaders in the peace process so that they could give recommendations at the negotiations.

In analyzing the influence and contributions of civil society in Burundi one notices that the genuine efforts of these groups were to push forward the negotiations process in hopes to stop the violence. They don't seem to be the sole reason why the negotiations were relatively successful either. Civil society groups in the case of Burundi seem to be helpful in initiating the peace process, like the St. Egidio and Bashingantahe's efforts to get the government and rebel groups to talk to one another. Civil society groups like the women's groups may have paved the way for better representation for the women in Burundi in not only the peace process but also in their government. On the whole, civil society, as it refers to the informal mid range level of society, seems to have had some positive influences on the negotiations process in Burundi.

CASE II: SUDAN

Background:

The conflict in Darfur is very complex, which involves differing identities, the economy, and land. One of the main problems in the Darfur region in Sudan is that there are four overlapping processes of identity formation which are associated with a different period in the region's history. These four identities are Sudanese identities associated with the Darfur Sultanate, Islamic identities, the administrative tribalism associated with the 20th Century Sudanese state, and the polarization of "Arab" and "African" identities (Waal 2004). In Sudan most of the focus has been on the north-south conflict, and the east-west axis, where Darfur lies, has been mainly neglected as a separate and important focal point for state formation in Sudan.

A beginning point for conflict in Darfur can be seen in 1916 when Darfur was defeated under the title of the Kingdom of Darfur and became part of Sudan, which had been an independent British and Egyptian territory since 1899. Darfur was a Muslim sultanate whose rulers gained power through their role in the region's slave trade (Shoup 2006). When Sudan became an independent country in 1956 the Sudanese government set up a "people's council's to replace chiefs that had led the regions tribes" (Shoup 2006). The government however failed to provide funding for schools, police and clinics therefore the people of Darfur blamed the government in Khartoum for the region's lack of development. Then in 1969 following a military coup in Sudan, the new Sudanese government divided Darfur into three states: Gharb Darfur in the west, Shawal Darfur in the north, and Janub Darfur in the

south. The goal of the Sudanese government was to end clashes with local rebels and to prevent the Fur majority from influencing local politics and, to give the Arab-dominated central government more control over the area (Shoup 2006). Throughout the Darfur region, conflict increased and even intensified, especially in the 1980s when droughts amplified the competition for land and water resources. In May 2000, a manuscript called the Black Book, which outlined Darfur's grievances toward the central government, circulated in mosques throughout Sudan. The goal was to show "the imbalance of power wealth in Sudan" and the dominance of the three tribes from Sudan's Nile Valley in the north of Khartoum. The book caused a major stir in Sudan (Shoup 2006).

More recently, in 2003, rebels from Darfur attacked various military installations which triggered a hostile response from the Sudanese government. The government supported its proxy janjaweed militias on the rebel's tribal groups (Grono 2006). The government then supported what has been called an ethnic cleansing campaign, with well coordinated air strikes and joint ground operations. The goal of the government was to "drain the swamp" by driving out civilians from their villages, thereby denying the rebels sanctuary in Darfur (Grono 2006). The result of the violence between the groups has been over 200,000 dead from conflict related disease and malnutrition and more than two million have been forced from their homes. The janjaweed have also resorted to burning and looting of villages, large scale killings and abductions (Africa Focus 2004). In response to the neglect and lack of protection, the people of Darfur have decided to take action and arm themselves against the janjaweed. Two main groups, the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA/M) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) eventually emerged as prominent forces in the Darfur region.

Darfur Peace Agreement

Peace Process:

The main peace processes in Darfur that will be covered in the following pages, is the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). In 2006 the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed by the Sudanese Government and one faction of the Sudan Liberation Army led by Minni Minawi. The DPA was a step toward ending the violence. The Darfur Peace Agreement included four main components: a security arrangement, power-sharing, wealth sharing and a Darfur-Darfur Dialogue (Darfur Fragile Peace Agreement p1). The latter refers to a consultation in which the Darfurian community leaders excluded from the talks in Abuja would be able to meet to resolve many of local disputes. The peace process in Darfur ultimately sought to bring in and disarm the militias that had caused so much damage. The DPA, however, was rejected by two of the three rebel groups. Fighting between the rebels and the government forces became worse in some areas because of the agreement. Two parties, the SLA faction under Abdel Wahid Mohamed Nur, and the JEM have refused to sign. Abdel Wahid demanded more direct SLA participation in the implementation of security arrangements and was dissatisfied with the DPA's provisions for political representation. The JEM stated that the protocols on power and wealth sharing did not adequately address the conflicts root causes: the structural inequities between Sudan's center and its periphery that led to the rebellion (p1). The groups examined are the St. Egidio Community, Center for Human Dialogue, Concordis International and Justice Africa. The following pages aim to assess

whether these groups had an influence on the negotiations process, and to look at the contributions they may have made to the process

St. Egidio

Role in Peace Process:

The St. Egidio Community, as identified in the case of Burundi, also seemed to be one of the major civil society groups that had an influence on the Darfur Peace Agreement. Much like they had accomplished in Burundi, the St. Egidio Community in 2005 brokered talks between the two main rebel groups the SLA and the JEM. Both groups pushed for reparations as the precursor for talking; for example they wanted the war crime suspects in Darfur to be sent to an international court for trial before they would return to the negotiating table. The St. Egidio Community however, along with the African Union, in Rome got the groups to “make a solemn commitment to resume as soon as possible the Abuja negotiations under the auspices of the AU without preconditions” (Balmer 2005). Because of their initiative the St. Egidio Community was nicknamed the UN of Trastevere, for the Rome neighborhood where it was based (Balmer 2005).

Center for Humanitarian Dialogue

Background:

Another nongovernmental organization operating in Darfur from 2003-2004 was the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue. The Center for Humanitarian Dialogue is a conflict mediation organization from Geneva, Switzerland which has grown into an independent

global organization that has worked in Europe, North America, Africa and Asia. Their overall aim is to help alleviate the suffering of individuals and populations caught up in both high profile and forgotten conflicts by acting as mediators and by providing other mediators with the support they need to work effectively (CHD 2009). Their mission is to support initiatives that offer the best possibilities for a just and lasting peace in line with international law.

Role in Peace Process:

In Darfur, the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue was requested by the African Union and United Nations to contribute to the peace process and help solve the crisis in the region. They were asked to support mediation efforts related to the DPA's non-signatory movements in the negotiation process identifying key issues, building consensus on negotiation issues as well as to contribute to unite the movement's leadership (CHD 2009). They were also asked by the Darfur opposition movements, donors and the AU/UN to reengage in Darfur and in doing so meet with representatives of all of the parties in Darfur.

The Center for Humanitarian Dialogue approached the situation by addressing the divisions within the opposition movements in Darfur. While there, they sought to establish coherent structures to enable the opposition movements to comprehensively participate in the political process and address humanitarian issues resulting from command and control difficulties (CHD 2009). Evidence suggests that the CHD established and developed a strong relationship with the SLA and the JEM through its visits to Darfur. It also aimed to facilitate negotiations of a sustainable ceasefire between the rebel groups and the government.

Concordis International

Background:

Concordis International, a small British organization, also had an imprint on the Darfur Peace Agreement. Concordis International's goal is to help individuals and groups in conflict situations seek paths toward lasting peace. Their vision is to "work alongside those affected by armed conflict in the world building consensus on the issues that divide and thus enable them to create lasting peace and hope for their shared future" (International 2009). They seek to achieve long-term transformation of relationships across conflict boundaries, by engaging all constituencies of a country in sustained examination of issues of common interest (Concordis International 2009). Concordis International claims that these systematic and well-researched discussions are intended to move beyond the lines of confrontation to build on shared purpose and explore new possibilities for peace. Rather than becoming involved in official peace negotiations, they aim to build relationships that pave the way for peace or contribute to post-conflict nation-building and long-term transformation of relationships (Concordis International 2009).

Role in Peace Process:

Concordis International seems to have been active in Darfur with thirteen low key consultations for key individuals. These consultations, have to date been facilitated at an all-Sudan level, typically covering one or two themes requested by the participants, including such disparate subjects as water resources, education, land and religion (Simmons 2006). The consultations have also covered issues like the devolved government within the Sudanese

Constitution, and the enabling and sustainable and safe return and reintegration of the displaced people of Darfur. It appears that their goal for Darfur was to ensure that the voices of Sudanese society were heard and not just the views of those of the rebels and the Sudanese Government. Concordis' conclusions of the consultations in Darfur suggested that they felt that closer attention to the issues covered by these meetings might have led to a more comprehensive and generally acceptable peace agreement for Darfur (Concordis 2009).

Justice Africa

Background:

Justice Africa, an advocacy organization and research institute, also appears to have had visibility in Darfur. Justice Africa was founded in 1999 in London to campaign for human rights and social justice across Africa. They contribute to the understanding and resolving of some of the most pressing issues by means of conferences, media work, publications, and direct engagement with policy makers as well as initiating and supporting civil society activities for peace justice and democracy in Africa (Justice Africa 2009). Justice Africa has made a name for itself because it is run by, for and with Africans and African communities guided by the Pan African slogan “nothing for me without me” (Justice Africa 2009).

Role in Peace Process:

Justice Africa's contributions to Darfur seem to have taken a different approach than the other civil society groups in Darfur. Justice Africa campaigned for human and legal

rights in Sudan. They provided information on the conflict, the actors, and the history and society in Darfur to provide information on the conflict and inform the programs of the AU and national governments of the developments in the conflict. They have also organized, along with Sudanese civil society, a series of debates which were open to the public and broadcasted across the country on important national issues facing Sudan in an effort to involve all Sudanese citizens in a discussion of the country's future (Justice Africa 2008).

Analysis:

In looking at the Darfur Peace Agreement one notices that there are fewer mid range level civil society groups that had an influence in the peace process. But the question still remains: did these groups positively influence the peace process as a whole? What was their influence if any? According to Peter Dixon and Mark Simmons, it is difficult to draw a clear picture of non-governmental involvement in Sudanese peacemaking, or even to determine what has been going on at any particular time (Simmons 2006). This is perhaps inevitable given the frequent need for discretion, as demonstrated by the early attempts to broker a Darfur ceasefire when media attention and press statements proved counter-productive. Reluctance to coordinate is understandable from the point of view of the official mediators, who may feel they have more than enough complications at the table without adding extra actors (Simmons 2006). One of the main issues for the Darfur Peace Agreement unfortunately was that it was not accepted by two of the three Darfur groups that participated in the negotiations, a factor that has negatively impacted the implementation of the agreement. The signing of the DPA has been followed by fragmentation of the political

parties and a deterioration of the security situation on the ground. Many civil society groups like Justice Africa, an NGO working for peace in Sudan sees the DPA as a failed peace process because it has failed to halt the cycle of violence and suffering.

The role for civil society in Darfur was mainly as mediators and educators of the conflict. Women's groups and other types of NGOs have either been left out of the process or have begun to get involved in Darfur after the signing of the DPA. The reason why the DPA has been criticized and blamed for having flaws is because, as stated earlier, two parties the SLA faction under Abdel Wahid Nur (SLA/AW), and the JEM refused to sign.

Groups like the St. Egidio Community and the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue in seem to have had contributed the most to the Darfur situation by providing mediation to the rebel factions and the government which seems to be a step towards establishing positive relations between the two. With groups like Concordis International issues like water resources, education and land which also seem to be a point of contention began to be addressed between the government and the rebel factions as well. It seem that the civil society groups that were involved in the process made an imprint on the Darfur Peace Agreement, as seen in the consultations between the rebel groups and the Sudan Government and the mediation that was offered. Overall the efforts of the first track diplomacy, where governments and high level officials meet, had more of an impact on the outcome. Some attribute the failure of the agreement to the lack of women's groups or other civil society groups (Rowling 2007) however the refusal of the JEM and the SLA/AW to participate in the signing of the Agreement seems to be the main reason why the agreement failed.

CASE III: DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Background:

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), much like Burundi and Sudan is another complex case in Africa. These complexities stem from the legacy of colonialism, conflict spillover from neighboring countries and the involvement of neighboring states in the DRC. The DRC gained its independence in 1960 from Belgium but its early years were plagued by political and social instability. The new government that was formed was a coalition between Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and the President Joseph Kasavubu. Within a short amount of time a struggle was evident between the two for overall power, both attempting to dismiss the other from government (Mobutu Sese Seko). In November 1965 Col. Joseph Mobutu the Chief of Staff of the Congolese army seized power and declared himself president through a coup. Mobutu renamed the region Zaire and ruled the area through fraudulent elections and brutal force (SADC 2008). In October 1996, a civil war erupted in the DRC when Rwandan troops led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL), entered the DRC (Pike 2009). Mobutu was forced to flee the country, and Kabila was declared president. By 1996, the war and genocide in neighboring Rwanda had spilled over into the DRC (then Zaire). Rwandan Hutu militia forces (Interahamwe) who fled Rwanda following the ascension of a Tutsi-led government were using Hutu refugee camps in eastern DRC as bases for incursions against Rwanda (Pike 2009). In 1998 Kabila ordered all foreign troops out of the DRC. Most refused to leave and the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD), backed by Rwanda,

attacked the government in hopes to oust Kabila (World Movement for Democracy 2008). Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia stepped in to help the DRC and in February 1999, Uganda backed the formation of a rebel group called the Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo (MLC) who established control over the northern third of the DRC (Pike 2009). The Rwandans and the RCD withdrew to eastern DRC, where they established de facto control over portions of eastern DRC and they continued to fight the Congolese Army and its foreign allies (Pike 2009). In July 1999, a cease-fire was proposed in Lusaka, Zambia, which all six parties (The DRC, Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Uganda, and Rwanda) signed by the end of August.

In 1999 a ceasefire was signed by the government, the RCD and the MLC at Lusaka, Uganda. The agreement stipulated that an Inter-Congolese Dialogue should be set up in order to create a transitional government that included representatives of the DRC's government, armed opposition, the political opposition and civil society (World Movement for Democracy). But fighting continued. The parties to the Lusaka Accord failed to fully implement its provisions in 1999 and 2000 and Kabila was criticized for hindering progress toward an Inter-Congolese Dialogue, and suppressing internal political activity (Pike).

In 2001, the Inter-Congolese Dialogue began in Addis Ababa under Ketumile Masire, the former president of Botswana. Many of the meetings in Ethiopia made little progress and were adjourned until 2002 when a dialogue was reconvened in South Africa (Pike 2009). This dialogue came to be called the Pretoria Agreement. Around this time Kabila was assassinated and his son Joseph became president. Joseph, unlike his father was more willing

to participate in negotiations and he was successful in negotiating the withdrawal of Rwandan forces which occupied the eastern part of the Congo. Roughly two months later the Pretoria Accord was put in place and signed by all the remaining parties in an effort to stop the fighting and establish a government of national unity (Mobutu Sese Seko 2003).

Pretoria Accord

Peace Process:

The Pretoria Accord was signed on December 17, 2002 and was an all- inclusive agreement following the Inter Congolese Dialogue which began initially in Sun City, South Africa. The Inter Congolese talks ended in April of 2002 when the government and the MLC brokered an agreement that was signed by the majority of the delegates but left out the RCD and the opposition Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party among others (Pike 2009). This partial agreement was never implemented and the talks began again in October 2002. This time the talks led to an all inclusive power-sharing agreement. The agreement was composed of two parts. One was the withdrawal of Rwanda troops from the eastern part of the Congo; the other was the disarmament and demobilization, repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRRR) of foreign armed groups (Pike 2009). By the end of 2002 all Angolan, Namibian and Zimbabwean troops had withdrawn from the DRC. By October 2002 Rwandan troops had also withdrawn , although many had integrated with the RCD forces (Pike 2009). The Pretoria Accord was formally ratified by all parties on April 2, 2003 in Sun City, South Africa.

When looking at the Lusaka and Inter-Congolese Dialogue prior to the Pretoria Accord, evidence suggests that there were fewer third parties involved, especially women's groups, who were generally represented by one woman at the negotiating table. In the Pretoria Accord which preceded the Lusaka Agreement more civil society groups were involved in the process in hopes that the agreement would bring an end to the conflict. The civil society groups that will be examined are Femmes Africa Solidarité, Women as Partners for Peace, Hirondelle Foundation, and the League of Voters. The following pages aim to assess whether these groups had an influence on the negotiations process and to look at the contributions they may have made to the process.

Femmes Africa Solidarité

Role in Peace Process:

Women play a critical role in the peace process yet they are either absent or grossly underrepresented in diplomatic peace negotiations at which peace accords have been signed and the future of countries decided (Mpoumou p1). Prior to the Pretoria Accord women's visibility in the peace process was limited to one woman at the Lusaka agreement. To engage more women in the peace process and ultimately make them more visible on the international stage, the UN adopted the Security Council Resolution 1325 in October of 2000 which stressed the importance of women's full involvement in all efforts to maintain and advance peace and security (p2). This resolution urged those involved in the peace processes to push for women's participation in the formal arena of the process. One such group was the Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), which has also been active in Burundi and throughout

much of Africa as well. In the DRC with the help of Women's Partners for Peace in Africa (WOPPA) a fellow women's NGO (discussed below), set up several conferences that brought women from throughout the DRC and from parties, the government and civil society together. In 2002 negotiations began in Nairobi, Kenya on the Inter Congolese dialogue, a plan of action that called for an immediate ceasefire, the inclusion of women and their concerns in all aspects of the peace process and formation of the Congolese women's councils and the adoption of a 30 percent quota for women at all levels of government in any final settlement was established (p2). In Pretoria only 10 women were able to attend in November and December of 2002 although group members were selected for their expertise on the issues, they were more symbolic and limited to private meetings with delegation heads.

Women as Partners for Peace

Background:

Women as Partners for Peace in Africa (WOPPA) have also had an influence in the DRC much like their compatriots the FAS. WOPPA is a women's NGO that want women to be more involved in the peace building process. Their main goals are networking in order to strengthen the work of organizations that support women as participants in peace building activities (PeaceWomen 2001). They also "mainstream women's participation at all levels including policies and conflict prevention and resolution programs geared towards peace promotion on the African Continent." They also want to transform conflict not simply through the cessation of killing but also through peace building programs as well as "bridge

the gap between what happens at the policy tables and the activities on the ground” (Peace Women 2001).

Role in Peace Process

In the DRC with the aid of the FAS, WOPPA organized the Nairobi training workshop to “build Congolese women’s capacity for the technique of negotiation in preparation for the Inter Congolese dialogue” (Peace Women 2001). In the DRC, under the initiative of WOPPA and FAS, the creation of the caucus was established as a mechanism to channel and amplify women’s voices. The Congolese women organized a caucus to enable them to strategize, reflect and analyze the issues discussed in the various commissions. The caucus has since been institutionalized as an NGO. The caucus became a space to discuss and develop strategies for effectively impacting the talks, as well as ways to reach out to the public, through the national and international press, to raise awareness of the important role of women in the peace negotiations (Peace Women 2001).

Hirondelle Foundation

Background:

The Hirondelle Foundation has been another influential civil society group in the DRC. The foundation is an organization of journalists which set up and operate media services in crisis areas (CEDIM 2006). The foundation was started in 1995 and they have since been working throughout the Great Lakes region in Africa as well as Liberia, Tanzania, Kosovo, Central African Republic, Timor Leste, DRC, Sudan, Sierra Leone and Nepal

(CEDIM 2006). The birth of the organization came out of the plane crash of Rwandan President, Juvenal Habyarimana which triggered the genocide in Rwanda (Hirondelle Foundation 2009). In an effort to tell the true story and continue to inform the people on the ground, they turned to their journalism skills. With the help of the Swiss Agency for Development, the journalists established the foundation and launched their first radio station, Agatashya, with the intention of giving information to the people crisis areas (Jorio 2006). As an independent media source they believed they play a fundamental role in societies where authoritarian and non democratic regimes are in power (CEDIM 2006). In such situations, the traditional media fall silent because of the insecurity and the physical risks (Hirondelle Foundation 2009). As an independent radio station they believe they can play a crucial role in furthering peace by “dissipating rumors, avoiding propaganda and focusing attention on hard facts” (Hirondelle Foundation 2009).

Role in Peace Processes:

In the DRC the Hirondelle Foundation worked alongside the UN mission in the DRC, (MONUC) to establish Radio Okapi. Radio Okapi’s broadcast ability stretches to ten locations throughout the DRC on continuous all-day short wave and FM broadcasts (CEDIM 2006). It disseminates information in three native languages, French and English and covers news and the peace processes. Their goal is to enhance civil society’s outreach and participation in the peace process. It is estimated that they provide service for approximately 45,000,000 inhabitants (CEDIM 2006). Apart from the news they focus on topics like humanitarian issues, and with the main goal being the peaceful promotion of a peaceful

solution to the conflict in the DRC. Journalists from Radio Okapi provided continual coverage at Pretoria's peace talks filing live bulletins. Their content covered the summit between President's Kabila, Kagame, and Mbeki and was broadcasted throughout the DRC (USAID).

League of Voters

Background:

Other NGO's like the La Ligue des Electeurs (League of Voters) work to instill a culture of democracy, human rights and peace in the DRC, through the use of public education (What's Being Done 2008). The League of Voters organized courses and campaigns on the issues of peace democracy and democratic elections as well as interviews for the protection of human rights defenders (National Endowment for Democracy 2009). They are active members of DRC's civil society and advocate for peace and democratic reform in the country. They also advocated for civil society members who were relatively unknown to be included in the peace process. The league of voters is considered one of the largest and most experienced election organizations monitoring and observing the elections process (NED 2009).

Role in Peace Process:

In the DRC the League of Voters worked to insure that the global and inclusive agreement of the ICD included provisions that guaranteed the transparency, neutrality and fairness of the presidential elections scheduled for 2006 (NED 2009). They were known for conducting massive voter education campaigns before and after the Pretoria Accord, with the goal of educating the people of the DRC on voting procedures. The goal of the League of

Voters was to get the people of the Congo “out” to vote on election day as well as participate in campaigns and monitor the elections themselves (NED 2009) and get them to get out and vote on election day, participate in campaigns and monitor the elections themselves. Through an advocacy campaign that took place in conjunction with the Inner Congolese Dialogue following the 2002 peace agreement the league ensured that a non partisan independent electoral commission was adopted within the country’s constitution (NED 2009).

Analysis:

In looking at the Pretoria Accord it seems that civil society’s influence focused mainly on the lead- up to the Accord, and the elections that followed. Their influence appears however to have contributed greatly to society as a whole, but not necessarily to the peace process. The Pretoria Accord was an agreement between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in an effort to bring an end to the war in the DRC. To get to that stage, evidence suggests that excessive efforts were made by women’s groups to get a much needed political negotiation in the Congo (Kapinga 2003). All through the political negotiations, women lobbied to convince politicians that peace was necessary in order to reconstruct the nation and relieve a population living in misery (Kapinga 2003). With the help of women’s groups like the FAS and WOPPA the promotion of women’s rights and women’s involvement in the negotiations brought women throughout the DRC from differing political parties, the government and additional civil society groups together. When the Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed, the influence of women seems to have improved their visibility in the negotiations from one woman in the Lusaka Accord to ten

women in the Pretoria Accord. Women's efforts to participate in formal peace processes however have faced various challenges like the polarized and tense environment of conflict negotiations which usually reinforces prevailing patriarchal and other social attitudes that exclude women from power circles (Mpoumou). In spite of this however, the influence of women's groups on negotiations seemed to grow.

The Hirondelle Foundation and Radio Okapi seemed to be influential in lead up and post Pretoria Accord. Radio Okapi had the broadcast ability to stretch to ten different locations in the DRC and with this potential came the desire to influence and enhance civil societies outreach and participation in the peace process. While it is almost impossible to gauge the influence the radio station had on the negotiations themselves, without a radio station like Okapi, it seems that much of the population of the DRC would be ignorant about the political situation and peace process going on in their country. By providing the public with up to date information about the peace process, Radio Okapi had the potential to put pressure on the protagonists to participate in the peace process.

Conclusion

Ury, in his book the Third Side, drew on the idea that the third side was a way of looking at the conflicts around us not just from one side or the other but from the larger perspective of the surrounding community (p24). He states that any one of us can take the third side anytime at home, at work, in the community and in the world. Other authors like Lederach provided a model that categorized leadership and the approaches to peace building. As noted at the start, Lederach drew on the idea that leadership and peace building could be represented in a pyramid where at the pinnacle of the pyramid, the “most visible leadership and the fewest people were represented”, and the base represented the greatest number of people affected by the conflict in local communities spread across the area being studied (The Moral Imagination p78). The third level he referred to was the mid-range level. At this level small sets of people move between the grassroots and the highest level of leadership. This level of people creates processes that support or link the other two levels together (p78). From these two authors, this paper look at the third side using the mid-range level approach to peace building. More specifically the paper also drew from McCartney’s “Dilemmas of the third party involvement in peace making” and used the dimension of the more unofficial and more informal characteristics in looking at the third parties. In defining the type of third party involvement that would be researched, the paper then progressed into looking at three conflict cases in Africa and assessed the contributions and influence civil society had in these conflicts. The cases of Burundi, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were chosen because they have been convulsed by genocide, civil wars, interstate conflicts and flawed democratic transitions (House of Commons).

In looking at the cases of the Arusha Accord (Burundi), the Darfur Peace Agreement (Sudan) and the Pretoria Accord (DRC) some similarities emerged in the way civil society, operating at the mid-range level of Lederach's triangle, appears to have contributed to and influenced the negotiations. One group of civil society members that appears to have contributed to the negotiations across the three cases has been women's groups. Women individually and collectively contribute to peace building in many ways yet, their contributions are often overlooked because they take unconventional forms, occur outside formal peace processes, or are considered extensions of women's existing gender roles. (Strickland). Women's groups like CAFOB, FAS, WOPPA, even though they were not necessarily invited to the negotiations, seem to have been able to foster support for women's participation in the negotiations, so that they could give recommendations to include women's rights into the negotiations. These groups, through promoting women's initiatives, seem to have an effect on women's leadership capabilities through organized training workshops. In the case of the DRC the FAS and WOPPA worked together to organize a workshop to "build Congolese women's capacity for the technique of negotiation" (PeaceWomen 2001). Because of UN resolution 1325 as well as the efforts of the women's groups, the number of women that participated in the negotiations also increased from one woman to ten. In the case of Burundi, it appears that the persistence of the women's groups toward the negotiations enabled them to participate as observers in the negotiations and eventually, they were able to be incorporated into the government and transitional institutions (PeaceWomen 2001).

Other civil society groups that seem to have had an influence on negotiations were mediators like the St. Egidio Community, the Bashingantahe and the Center for Human Dialogue. In Burundi, the influence of the Bashingantahe appears to be present in the mediations between the government and the armed rebel groups, although there doesn't seem to be much evidence of the outcome of these mediations. The St Egidio Community on the other hand, as an external, international civil society group, in contrast to the insider neutral Bashingantahe, seems to have been instrumental in the mediations between the Buyoya government and the main rebel group, the CNDD. The St. Egidio Community was able to engage the two groups in several secret talks in hopes to arrange an agreement for the suspension of hostilities. Although progress was halted in this mediation because of disputes on the formation of the new government, the St. Egidio Community seem to have been able to pave the way for future negotiations between the rebel factions and the government so that official negotiations could again take place on the diplomatic track. The Center for Human Dialogue also appears to be influential in its mediation efforts, seen the intervention between the Sudanese Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement to solve the crisis in the region of Darfur. The Center for Human Dialogue, as another external, international group, through developing a strong relationship with the JEM and SLA, were able to address the structures that would enable these groups to participate in the political process and potentially get them involved in the formal negotiations for Darfur.

The third group of civil society that seems to have had an influence on the negotiations process are the advocacy and media groups like Concordis International, Justice Africa, the Hironnelle Foundation and the League of Voters. Through consultations,

campaigns and broadcasts these groups were able to speak in support of human and legal rights and democratic elections, speak on the involvement of society in the negotiations process and speak out about the negotiations process so that they might be able to influence the population to get involved in the peace process. Radio Okapi, with the help of the Hironnelle Foundation, claims they have helped to influence and enhance civil society's outreach and participation in the peace process by providing live broadcasts throughout the DRC on the peace talks that were occurring in Pretoria (USAID 2002). Concordis International, through consultations seems to have been influential in ensuring the voices of Sudanese society were heard, instead of solely those of the rebels and the government. Through debates and providing information on the conflict in Darfur, groups like Justice Africa have been able to advocate human and legal rights in Sudan . Finally, groups like the League of Voters, while not directly involved in the negotiations have conducted large-scale voter education campaigns, with the goal of educating the people of the DRC. In doing so they have also pushed to ensure that language for a non- partisan, independent electoral commission was adopted within the country's constitution, so that the people's voices could be heard and counted.

To conclude, in looking back at Lederach's pyramid of leadership and peace building, he referred to the mid-range level of civil society as the level with small sets of people who move between the grassroots and the highest level of leadership and creates processes that support or link the other two levels together (p78). In the cases of Burundi, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo evidence of the influence of third side can be seen in the attempts of these groups to not only bring an end to violence but to also have

an effect on the negotiations, that may make this possible. While many of the groups were not directly invited or directly involved in the negotiations that took place in their respective countries, their efforts to make a difference have helped to raise awareness about the conflict and the contents of the peace process, advocate for the participation of civil society groups to be included in the negotiation of the agreement, which in some cases was successful, as well as expand the opportunity for dialogue between the government and various rebel groups as well as civil society organizations. Many of these groups also helped to increase the involvement as well as the presence of women in the peace process, although their contributions were often given from the sidelines of the process and not from within the peace process itself. While the mid-level, informal third side often does not get recognition, as is evident in the lack of research material available on civil society groups as stated above, their contributions to the peace process are not insignificant, they seem instead to be a stepping stone for the processes that occur on other peace tracks.

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