



The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) – review of Norwegian support to the ICGLR Secretariat

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Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

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review of Norwegian support to the ICGLR Secretariat**

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With executive summary in French and English

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Executive summary (English)

This report presents the findings from a review of the Norwegian support to the Secretariat for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). The objective of the Norwegian contribution was to support the establishment of a functioning documentation centre and conference facilities for the ICGLR, and to strengthen the capacity for translation in the organisation. The Norwegian support is relatively modest, not amounting to more than three million Norwegian NOK. However, as the ICGLR is a new organisation that attempts to build a regional institution covering a volatile region, the Review Team has chosen to define its mandate relatively broad, not solely focusing on the Norwegian financial contribution, but also on the larger question of the relevance of the ICGLR in the Great Lakes Region.

The review is based on desk studies of relevant documents and interviews with stakeholders and the staff of the Secretariat. These interviews were conducted in Kampala, Kigali and Bujumbura in the period between 23 March and 1 April 2009.

The ICGLR encompass eleven countries with different institutional capacity and interests and degree of involvement in the conflicts in the region. The Pact on which it is built was signed on 15th December 2006, and the Secretariat effectively came into existence in May 2007, and was fully operational in 2008. It is therefore an organisation that has spent much of its activity on establishing itself. This has clearly limited its impact on the region it is supposed to serve, and must be taken into consideration in decisions about future funding.

The agenda that the Pact gives to the Secretariat is large and very ambitious, suggesting that the Secretariat may easily overstretch its limited institutional capacity if it does not set concrete objectives based on an agenda of clearly defined priorities. The Secretariat is aware of this, but it is also torn between two competing positions; a narrow political agenda, and a broad-based developmental agenda.

Due to the infancy of the ICGLR, the Norwegian contribution was channelled through a third party cost-sharing agreement with UNDP Burundi. Under the agreement, UNDP manages the Norwegian contribution and responds to ICGLR requests for disbursements. The funds has not been fully utilised and a request for a no-cost extension has been forwarded. This is a result both of the time the Secretariat has spent on organising itself, but also a consequence of challenges with regard to its relationship to UNDP. There is, however, no doubt that the money that has been spent has been used wisely. The equipment has been bought, it works and the documentation centre is in the process of being built.

The next year will be crucial for ICGLR. The organisation has taken some important steps forward and implemented some promising programmes, but much work also remains. Norwegian policymakers must therefore conclude if they see an added value in the ICGLR or not. If so, support should continue, and could come in the form of a) through UNDP-Burundi; b) directly to the Secretariat; or c) through a third country.

Executive summary (French)

Le présent rapport livre les conclusions de la révision de l'appui norvégien au Secrétariat de la Conférence Internationale sur la Région des Grands Lacs (CIRGL). L'objectif de la contribution norvégienne consistait à appuyer la CIRGL dans la mise en place d'un centre de documentation et de conférence fonctionnels, et à renforcer la capacité de traduction de la CIRGL. La contribution norvégienne est relativement modeste et se chiffre à a peu près trois millions de Couronnes Norvégiennes (NOK). Toutefois, compte tenue du fait de la jeunesse de la CIRGL qui s'attèle à mettre en place une institution régionale couvrant une region volatile, l'équipe de révision a choisi de définir et d'étendre son mandat de manière large, ne se limitant pas uniquement à la contribution financière norvégienne, mais également en analysant la question de la pertinence de la CIRGL dans la région des Grands Lacs.

La révision est basée sur différentes études analytiques, documentations et entrevues avec les parties prenantes et le staff du Secrétariat. Ces entrevues ont été menées à Kampala, Kigali, et Bujumbura durant la période allant du 23 mars au 1er avril 2009.

La CIRGL est composée par onze pays membres aux capacités institutionnelles et aux intérêts différents et à différents degrés d'implication dans les conflits de la région. Le PACT, fondation même de la CIRGL, a été signé le 15 décembre 2006 et le Secrétariat devint effectif au mois de mai 2007 pour être pleinement opérationnel en 2008. Il apparaît ainsi évident que l'organisation a passé le plus de son temps à s'établir. Ceci a clairement réduit son impact sur la région qu'elle est appelée à servir, et cet état de fait devrait être pris en compte dans toute décision concernant les financements à venir.

Le programme que le PACT accorde au Secrétariat est large et très ambitieux, présageant une sur-extension des capacités institutionnelles de ce dernier si rien n'est fait pour se fixer des objectifs concrets basés sur un programme de priorités claires et définies. Le Secrétariat est conscient de ce risque. Toutefois, il est partagé entre deux situations conflictuelles: un programme politique étroit et un programme de développement élargi.

Comme la CIRGL était encore à ses débuts, la contribution norvégienne a été canalisée à travers une tierce partie sous forme d'un accord de partage de coût avec le PNUD au Burundi. Sous cet accord, le PNUD gère la contribution norvégienne et réponds aux requêtes de décaissement de la CIRGL. Les fonds n'ont pas été utilisés en totalité et une requête pour une extension sans frais a été introduite. Ceci a été dû au double fait du temps que le Secrétariat a passé à sa mise en place mais aussi à la nature des difficultés dans ses relations avec le PNUD. Néanmoins, il n'y a aucun doute que les fonds débloqués ont été utilisés à bon escient. L'équipement nécessaire a été acquis, et fonctionne bien. Le centre de documentation quant à lui est sur le point d'être construit.

L'année prochaine sera cruciale pour la CIRGL. L'organisation a réalisé d'important pas en avant et a procédé à la mise en place de programmes prometteurs. Toutefois, beaucoup rest à faire. Les décideurs politiques norvégiens doivent par conséquent se décider si la CIRGL a une valeur ajoutée ou pas. Si oui, l'appui devrait continuer et pourrait être sous forme d'appui à travers: a) le PNUD-Burundi, b) directement à la CIRGL, ou c) à travers un pays tiers.

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List of abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CEEAC	Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique Centrale
CEMAC	Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale
CEPGL	Communauté Économique des Pays des Grand Lacs
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern African States
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FDLR	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda
FNL	Forces for National Liberation
GoF	Group of Friends
GTZ	Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MONUC	United Nation's Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RoC	Republic of Congo
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SFRD	Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
U.S.	United States

1.0 Introduction – reviewing institution-building in a volatile region

This report presents the findings from a review of the Norwegian support to the Secretariat for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). The ICGLR operates in an environment that best can be characterised as the deadliest conflict since the Second World War. Even the world's largest peacekeeping operation, the United Nation's Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) has not managed to bring peace to the region. The conflicts in the Great Lakes Region are complicated, multi-layered and involves a multitude of actors with different interests (see Prunier 2009; Bøås 2009). Thus, suggesting that the countries that constitute the ICGLR have conflicting interests and interpretations of the crises that has caused so much death and despair in this part of Africa.

The ICGLR is an attempt to build a regional institution that covers a volatile region with countries and governments with different interests and degrees of involvement in the current conflicts. This is an important premise for this review as the situation entails that the ICGLR face huge challenges and must overcome many constraints if it is to fulfil its mandate. This is also the reason why the Review Team has chosen to define its mandate relatively broadly, not solely focusing on the Norwegian financial contribution, but also on the larger question of the relevance of the ICGLR in the Great Lakes Region.

The Norwegian contribution is relatively modest, not amounting to more than three million Norwegian NOK. However, it comprises an important source of funding for the ICGLR as it was directly targeted towards institution-building. The objective of the Norwegian contribution was to support the establishment of a functioning documentation centre and conference facilities for the ICGLR, and to strengthen the capacity for translation (mainly between English and French) in the organisation. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also supported the implementation of the 2006 International Conference of the Great Lakes Region with \$300,000 through the 'Group of Friends' Multi Donor Trust Fund managed by UNDP Nairobi.

1.1 Approach and methodology

This report will therefore assess the extent to which the objectives spelled out in the agreement between Norway, ICGLR and the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP) has been achieved;¹ and the degree to which the ICGLR is progressing in terms of its mandate, including an analysis of the relevance of the ICGLR in the region. Based on these discussions, we conclude and suggest policy recommendations with regard to possible continuation or redesign of the Norwegian support to this organisation. Important themes covered in the report include questions of relevance; efficiency; effectiveness; sustainability and institutional capacity; and development partner coherence and co-ordination, as well as questions concerning gender, conflict sensitivity, environment, and administration, as requested by the Terms of Reference (ToR).²

We would also like to point out that the ICGLR encompasses eleven very different countries. They differ with regard to their institutional capacity to interact with the organisation, but also with regard to their interests and degree of involvement in the conflicts in the region. The Review Team therefore decided to define the member countries in terms of core countries and concentric circles of ever more peripheral countries, focusing mainly on the former which include, Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In addition to these three countries we have also paid particular attention to Burundi. It is also a core country to the main conflict (albeit to a lesser degree than the three aforementioned ones), and it is the host country of the ICGLR as its headquarters are located in Bujumbura.

Some of the core countries are obviously more powerful than others and there is considerable rivalry between some of them. However, none of them can claim the status of hegemony. This is important as the lack of a clear leader or hegemon among the ICGLR countries makes it difficult for any of the member countries to provide leadership, vision and not the least the ability to set agendas and priorities. The relative success of regional organisations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) can clearly be debated, but there is also little doubt that South Africa and Nigeria provides leadership of some sort to their respective regional organisations. There are no similar countries in the ICGLR.

Another aspect of importance for the review that should be underscored is that the ICGLR is relatively new as an international organisation. The Pact on which it is built (the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region) was signed on 15th December 2006, and the Secretariat effectively came into existence in May 2007, and

¹ The Norwegian funding was channelled through UNDP's Country Office in Burundi and is still managed by this office. There were obvious reasons for this solution, but as we will see it has also created its own challenges and problems. We return to this issue in Chapter 5.

² See Annex I.

became fully operational in 2008 with the completion of staff recruitment. This is therefore an organisation that naturally has spent the majority of its activity and resources up until now on constituting itself. This has clearly limited its overall impact on the region it is supposed to serve, and must be taken into consideration in the review process.

The review is based on desk studies of relevant documents and interviews with stakeholders and the staff of the Secretariat (see Annex II). These interviews were conducted in Kampala, Kigali and Bujumbura in the period between 23 March and 1 April 2009. The Review Team would like to thank the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala and all the people who gave assistance, advice and made themselves available for formal interviews as well as informal conversations. The Review Team would also like to offer a special thanks to Ambassador Mulamula, her staff at the Secretariat and the UNDP Country Office in Burundi for effective assistance in obtaining the written documentation needed for the evaluation.

2.0 The International Conference for the Great Lakes Region

The ICGLR is as we already have mentioned a recent creation. However, it also has a fairly long history as it emerged from a series of international responses to the conflicts in the Great Lakes Region. The first seeds for a new mechanism for regional co-operation in the Great Lakes Region were planted as early as 1999, but the ICGLR was not officially launched before 2004. In one of many international efforts to find a solution to the multitude of problems that confronts the Great Lakes Region, the governments of the countries in the region were brought together under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU) and the Group of Friends (GoF) in 2003. This was the official starting point for the ICGLR.

The GoF is a gathering of 28 countries active in the Great Lakes Region and ten multilateral and regional organisations. Thus, bringing together a combination of donor countries and African countries as well as international organisations. Since December 2003 the GoF has given the ICGLR political, diplomatic, financial and technical support. This led first to the Dar es Salaam Conference and Declaration in November 2004, and thereafter to the above-mentioned signing of the Pact in Nairobi in 2006.

The ICGLR therefore effectively came into existence on 15th December 2006 when the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region was signed in Nairobi by or on behalf of the heads of state of Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), the Republic of Congo (RoC), DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. It entered into force on 21st June 2008 when it had been ratified by eight out of

eleven countries. Sudan and Angola ratified the agreement in 2009, and even if Zambia still has not ratified – claiming some technical difficulties – it is meeting its financial obligations. The Pact was therefore swiftly ratified by the member countries, and the Secretariat and Ambassador Mulamula clearly deserves some credit for this.

The components of the Pact are:

- The Dar es Salaam Declaration – with the priority policy options and guiding principles of Peace and Security; Democracy and Good Governance; Economic Development and Regional Integration; and Humanitarian and Social Issues.³
- The Protocols (10)
- The Programmes of Action
- The Regional Follow-Up Mechanism
- The Fund – the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development (SFRD)

The most important parts, however, are the ten Protocols that cover fields such as:

- non-aggression and mutual defence;
- democracy and good governance;
- judicial co-operation;
- prevention of and curbing crime of genocide, crimes of war and crimes against humanity;
- prevention of illegal exploitation of natural resources;
- specific reconstruction and development zone;
- protection and assistance to internally displaced persons;
- prevention and suppression of sexual violence against women and children;
- property rights of returning persons;
- management of information and communication.

Taking the immense needs and the political difficulties of the region into consideration this is indeed an ambitious agenda. Thus, suggesting that the Secretariat may overstretch its limited institutional capacity if it does not set concrete and realistic objectives based on an agenda of clearly defined priorities.

The Secretariat is undoubtedly aware of the possible mismatch between its own limited capacity and its huge and ambitious agenda. However, it is also torn between two competing positions circulating around the ICGLR: 1) a narrow political agenda, and 2) a broad-based developmental agenda. Peace, security and development is of course integrally

³ In the Dar es Salaam Declaration, gender, human rights, environment, human settlement and HIV/AIDS are defined as cross-cutting issues.

linked also in this region, but questions can certainly be asked about the realism in attempting to establish another regional donor mechanism (e.g. the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development) in such a fragile and volatile region that already accommodates so many other regional development initiatives.⁴

This tension is not new, but as the Review Team sees it an integral part of the process since its very beginning. There are many reasons why eleven diverse and different countries, some of them *de facto* almost at war with each other took part in the process and signed first the Dar es Salaam Declaration and then later the Pact. However, the possibility of the manifestation of a new source of donor funding clearly played a role. Never explicitly stated in policy documents but part of the discourse surrounding the ICGLR-process anyway was the idea of a developmental ‘Marshall-plan’ for the region. This created a tension that has remained ever since between external stakeholders mainly interested in facilitating political dialogue through a transparent multilateral fora (e.g. the ICGLR) and regional member countries who sought out a much larger developmental agenda through explicit linkages between peace, security and development and a new funding mechanism for regional projects (e.g. the SFRD). This tension is obvious in several of the documents that emerged from this process. For example, in a Regional Preparatory Committee meeting in January 2006 in Nairobi, the Canadian co-chair of the GoF argues for an issue-specific approach towards a particular limited geographical area in the Great Lakes Region (Leahy 2006:2).

The overall purpose of the Conference is not entirely obvious to all. It is an all-encompassing approach to bring lasting peace and security to the region. However, we have to show how our Conference is contributing to addressing the pressing issue of insecurity caused by the continued presence of armed groups and foreign militias in the Eastern DRC, specifically the FDLR, ex-Far Interahamwe and the FNL and other armed groups. The Conference is meant to build upon specific initiatives currently underway to deal with these groups and to explicitly link the security dimension with other elements that need to be addressed if we are to put an end to what fuels conflict.

This has been the general donor position since this process started; vividly summed-up by a Tanzanian policy brief in 2005: ‘The GoF is against the establishment of a new structure with attendant cost implications’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation 2005:5).

Clearly a debate about ownership and different views, where member states maintained their right to choose their preferred option, but with the benefit of hindsight, it may have been better for the ICGLR if this question had been sorted out at the beginning,

⁴ We will return to this issue in detail in Chapter 3, 4 and 5.

but this was not the case. The Nairobi meeting that finally established the Pact and the ICGLR was already one year beyond schedule and in order not to lose too much momentum this question was swept aside. Supposedly to be dealt with later, but effectively creating an international organisation caught between the objective of the donors to create a lean mechanism to deal with specific issues concerning the war in the DRC, and the aspiration of the member countries for the establishment of a new regional donor supported mechanism controlled by themselves (e.g. the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development). Thus, in short, an in-built tension between a narrow focus on peace and reconciliation among core Great Lakes Region countries and a broader mandate for regional development.

2.1 The Secretariat and national counterparts

The result was therefore establishment of a relatively small Secretariat in Bujumbura in 2007 with a huge and difficult agenda. The official mission of the Secretariat is to be an effective and dynamic institutions which co-ordinates, facilitates, monitors and ensures the implementation of the Pact and other initiatives in order to attain peace, security and development in the Great Lakes Region. The objective is that by 2012, ICGLR's Secretariat should be recognised as an effective and efficient institution and as a focal point to co-ordinate the initiatives of member states and stakeholders in the Great Lakes Region.

The Secretariat is therefore supposed to be the technical arm for the co-ordination and national implementation of the aforementioned Pact. It is primarily funded by membership fees, and headed by an Executive Secretary (Ambassador Liberata Mulamula), assisted by a Deputy Executive Secretary and Senior Programme Officer (Charles Chileya). This leadership duo is supported by an administrative staff of 15 people and 9 programme officers covering the issues of peace and security; democracy and good governance; economic development and regional integration; social issues; and cross-cutting programmes. The Secretariat is therefore the technical day-to-day body of the ICGLR. Officially, the top-organ is the Summit of Heads of States (supposedly to meet once a year), followed by the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (composed of the Ministers of the Member States in Charge of the Conference).⁵

⁵ The latter is supposed to meet in ordinary session twice a year, but it may meet in extraordinary session on the request of one member state with the consent of the absolute majority of member states. See also organigram for the Conference Secretariat in Annex IV.

This Secretariat with a total staff of 26 people thus has limited resources compared to its extensive mandate.⁶ The programme officers are recruited not directly by the Executive Secretary, but nationally. Each member state is tasked to identify candidates for the position of programme officers, one from each member country.⁷ This means that member countries presents short-listed candidates to the Secretariat.⁸ The Secretariat hired a Kenyan human resources firm – Manpower Services to assist in the recruitment process that also brought on board experts from UNDP. The panel for interviews and selection of candidates that were established was chaired by the Executive Secretary. As such, the process seems sound and transparent. However, it is still unclear to the Review Team whether the whole short list of candidates from a member country can be rejected or not. It is easy to understand why a system of national quotas for programme officers has been developed, but the current formula may also entail some restrictions on the power of the Executive Secretary to choose the best candidates available and ensure a reasonable balance in staff competencies and experience. That said, the Team has not found any evidence of lack of staff quality or of officers being selected on any other basis than their respective merits.

In theory, at least part of the capacity problem is solved by the National Co-ordinating Mechanisms in the member countries. These are the national counterparts to the Secretariat, and are therefore the bodies responsible for implementation of action. In most cases, these mechanisms are integral units of the respective member countries' foreign ministries.⁹ Some of them are quite active. Uganda is one example, particularly in what is defined as border Zone 3 (an issue we will return to in detail in proceeding chapters), whereas in other cases they come into action for the purpose of regional meetings. If the ICGLR is to avoid becoming another 'Serena Hotel workshop' arrangement, it must concentrate not only on interaction with the national co-ordinating mechanisms, but also on creating activities on the ground, in the various borderland areas of its border security zoning system.

⁶ Two technical advisers are furthermore provided by Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) (for the Regional Project on Illegal Exploitation of National Resource Exploitation) and by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

⁷ Tanzania and Burundi excluded, as they have provided the Executive Secretary and support staff.

⁸ The only exceptional case in which a member state has sent to the Secretariat a staff member is Sudan, where the candidate who had been interviewed and selected was assigned to another duty by the Government of Sudan. It took almost one year for the Government of Sudan to find someone to fill the vacancy that this created.

⁹ In Rwanda, this unit is placed in the Office of the President. Most likely because the Office of the President also co-ordinates the country's participation in the so-called *Tripartite Plus*, an organisation that includes Uganda, Rwanda, DRC and Burundi. We will return to this organisation in more detail in chapter 3, 4 and 5.

2.2 Strategies of the Secretariat

The Secretariat has initiated some action on almost all issues covered by the Protocols mentioned above and all ICGLR action is grounded in policy and strategy documents. The overall strategic direction of the ICGLR is as already mentioned grounded in the Pact and its related documents. According to the Secretariat, its approach to the implementation of these plans is summed-up in comprehensive Strategic Document developed in February 2008 that defines the core tasks of the Secretariat, the vision and mission as well as an implementation plan in achieving its objectives with clear timeframes. This document was, however, not made available to the Review Team when it visited the ICGLRs headquarters in March 2009, and neither has it been forwarded to the Team at a later date. This is a pity as it leaves questions concerning the Secretariat's capacity for strategic planning open-ended.

To date, the most elaborate as well as promising initiative is the 'border security zoning system'. This initiative is innovative and countered by interests and activity from member countries. The 'border security zoning system' also relates directly to the 'peace and security' part of the Dar es Salaam Declaration and to a lesser degree to the three other dimensions of this declaration (e.g. democracy and good governance; economic development and regional integration; and humanitarian and social issues).

This initiative takes as its point of departure that the wish to develop and improve border security management is present in the region, but constrained by the lack of broad-based regional structures (see also ICGLR 2006). Regional co-operation is thus hampered by the uniqueness of different border points, and other constraining issues such as: weak institutional capacity in some states that limits frontier security co-operation; presence of armed and region-destabilising negative forces; mutual suspicion and low levels of trust among states; and the multiplicity of structures and externally driven initiatives. This gives an accurate picture of the situation prevailing in the region, and the initiative also aims to develop a framework within which states can maximise on their resources and regional policy perspective to develop alternative mechanisms for handling border security.

Quite correctly, the ICGLR argues that security issues assume different forms in different parts of the Great Lakes Region, and that this obviously provides challenges for the development of region-wide border security management structures. The answer to this problem is according to the ICGLR (2006) to dissect the region into smaller units based on their particular security dynamics, where joint security management is supposed to entail

co-operation in the management of border zones. Hence, the ICGLR has divided the region into 12 different border security zones. These are:

- Zone 1 (Uganda, Rwanda and DRC);
- Zone 2 (Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania);
- Zone 3 (Uganda, Kenya and Sudan);
- Zone 4 (Sudan, Uganda and DRC);
- Zone 5 (Sudan, CAR and DRC);
- Zone 6 (RoC, DRC and CAR);
- Zone 7 (DRC, RoC and Angola);
- Zone 8 (DRC, Zambia and Angola);
- Zone 9 (Tanzania, DRC, Burundi and Zambia);
- Zone 10 (DRC, Burundi and Rwanda);
- Zone 11 (Tanzania; Rwanda and Uganda);
- and Zone 12 (Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi).

Of these 12 zones, zones 1, 3, 5, 8 and 10 have been singled out as pilot zones, meaning that in these zones activities should be initiated as soon as possible so that lessons could be learned.

These zones are not built around the states as complete units, but their provinces and districts bordering each other. In theory, this is a good idea, and clearly each and every one of these border zones come with their own set of security dynamics and challenges that are important in their own right. However, every observer of the region would also easily make a list of areas as top priority and other areas of less immediate concern for regional stability. Clearly, the most tense and dangerous situation is the one that prevails in Zone 1, and one would therefore believe that this was the area receiving the most attention from the ICGLR's zoning approach, but this is not the case.

This area also falls under the Tripartite Plus arrangement and at least two of the countries involved – Ugandan and Rwanda – have expressed resistance to any attempt at placing their difficult and controversial relationship with Eastern Congo under the supervision of a regional multilateral forum such as the ICGLR. The Tripartite Plus is a confidence-building arrangement that was established by the United States in 2006 to facilitate dialogue and understanding between the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, and with the explicit aim of curbing the activity of what was defined as ‘negative forces’ (e.g. rebel groups). As complex and embedded relationships obviously exists between the member countries and so-called ‘negative forces’, they (and, in particular Rwanda and

Uganda) prefer the control of events that the Tripartite Plus arrangement offers them to the possible openness and transparency of ICGLR. What one therefore is left with is a situation where the ICGLR most innovative approach is kept at bay by some of its core member countries in one of the most tense and difficult parts of the region. Zone 1 should ideally have constitute the very heartland of ICGLR's zoning approach, but here it is kept at an arm-lengths distance by two of its most prominent member countries.

This clearly raises some questions concerning the ICGLR's ability to market itself as the most relevant institution for peace and security in the region. Thus, suggesting that we in addition to focusing on the ICGLR and its own activities also have to look into the role of this institution *vis-à-vis* other regional initiatives.

3.0 The Conference and other initiatives

The Great Lakes Region is not only full of tension, suspicion and violence, but also home to a remarkably high number of regional initiatives and organisations. The most well-known, apart from the aforementioned Tripartite Plus, are the East African Community (EAC); SADC; the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the Common Market for Eastern and Southern African States (COMESA); Communauté Économique des Pays des Grand Lacs (CEPGL); Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique Centrale (CEEAC); and Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC).

None of these include all the countries in the 'larger' Great Lakes Region area or have an explicit focus on peace and security only. However, all of them also have these issues on their agenda (directly or indirectly). There is therefore undoubtedly a multitude of overlapping agendas with obvious possibilities for duplications of efforts and initiatives. The result is therefore a 'spaghetti bowl' of regional organisations (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars 2008).

Nonetheless, we should also add that even if all these organisations have peace and security on their respective agendas, their collective record of peacemaking is not very impressive. For example, SADC has an Organ on Politics, Defence and Security with a mandate to promote peace and security in the region through political, military and security co-operation and peaceful settlement of inter- and intra-state conflict. However, in most domestic crises it has refrained from critical comment and diplomatic activity (Nathan 2006). IGAD on the other hand has generally failed to resolve conflict among its members, but in 2005-2006 it helped broker peace agreements for Somalia and Southern Sudan. The former agreement failed, and even if the agreement for Southern Sudan ended Africa's

longest lasting running civil war it was also a proximate cause of the rebellion in Darfur (Nathan 2008). As this list of failures easily could be extended, the fact that other initiatives exists is not a valid argument against the ICGLR *per se*, but this overview clearly illustrate problems of coherence and co-ordination that the ICGLR must confront if it is to succeed in this mission.

Table 1) Membership in other regional organisations (major ones)

	CEPGL	CEMAC	CEEAC	EAC	IGAD	Tripartite	COMESA	SADC
Angola			X					X
Burundi	X		X	X		X	X	
CAR		X	X					
DRC	X		X			X	X	X
Kenya				X	X		X	
RoC		X	X					
Rwanda	X			X		X	X	
Sudan					X		X	
Tanzania				X				X
Uganda				X	X	X	X	
Zambia							X	X

Each and every one of these organisations have their own unique historical trajectories as their very existence is linked to colonial history and its legacies in terms of language as well as external orientation and administrative tradition. They have also been created at different times under different circumstances. They organise different countries for different purposes. However, even if none of them has exactly the same mandate as the ICGLR or organise all the countries under that particular umbrella, all the ICGLR Core countries are member of at least three other regional organisations active in the Great Lakes Region and involved in issues concerning peace and security.

Thus, if we add to this picture the broader ICGLR agenda, the possibility of duplication of efforts is very high. According to the Secretariat, the danger of duplication of effort is minimised by Memorandums of Understanding signed with other regional organisations (with IGAD, EAC and ISS in the Zone 3 project on disarmament of armed pastoralists; with CEEAC on Early Warning Mechanisms; and with COMESA on trade and conflict resolution). Such attempts at co-ordination should be viewed positively, but does not fundamental change the fact that what both donors and regional countries are left with is a ‘spaghetti bowl’ of initiatives competing for attention, finances and not the least human

capacity. This is the environment in which the ICGLR must prove that it can add value to the region, and contribute independently to the promotion of peace and security.

4.0 The relevance of the Conference for peace and security

The Great Lakes Region is as we have argued a ‘spaghetti bowl’ of overlapping regional initiatives also within the field of peace and security. The question is therefore in essence, ‘what can the ICGLR offer the region that does not exist already’.

First and foremost is the fact that it organises 11 countries that to varying degrees are important stakeholders in the many conflicts of the region. By providing them an institutionalised multilateral forum with secretariat functions it can also help to bridge the crucial gap between the Anglophone and Francophone countries of the region. The importance of language differences should not be underestimated in this regard. It is difficult for people who do not understand each other to find mutual ground. Representatives from the Anglophone countries do not speak or understand much French and *visa versa* and *ad hoc* translation services for bilateral meetings are expensive as well as of varying quality.¹⁰ The Norwegian support to strengthen the capacity to translate documents, but not the least translation during regional meetings is therefore of significant importance for the ICGLR.

Decreasing the level of suspicion and mistrust caused by inadequate translation capacity is not a sufficient condition for the promotion of peace and security, but most likely a necessary one. The Norwegian funding may therefore contribute to the gradual making of the ICGLR as a relevant regional organisation within this particular field. However, in order to really be considered relevant by regional as well as extra-regional stakeholders the ICGLR must also be intimately involved in the most serious conflict in the region, namely the one in Eastern Congo. In fact, this part of the Great Lakes Region should be well-suited to ICGLR's zoning approach, but not much has happened in the regard.

There is no doubt that the Secretariat and Ambassador Mulamula has worked hard to offer the main countries concerned (e.g. DRC, Rwanda and Uganda), the services of the Conference. The Pact was part of the basis for the Ngurudoto agreement in 2007 between

¹⁰ As the ICGLR also includes Lusophone (e.g. Angola) and Arabic speaking countries (e.g. Sudan), translation services should formally also be extended to these languages. It is the view of the Review Team that this should be avoided as similar attempts in the African Development Bank (AfDB) yielded no benefits, only substantial higher costs. See Bøås and McNeill (2003).

DRC and Uganda over oil exploration in Lake Albert, and the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat has actively supported the work of the Special Envoys Obasanjo and Mkapa in their efforts to find a solution to the crisis in Eastern Congo as well as numerous other initiatives.¹¹ This is helpful and positive, but none of these efforts can be defined as home-grown ICGLR initiatives. On the contrary, as the main countries concerned, prefer to handle the most tense and controversial parts of their agenda through the Tripartite Plus, that makes it is difficult for the ICGLR to achieve full implementation of its most innovative tool, e.g. the zoning approach, in its most crucial subregion. Thus, the issue is not that the Secretariat ignores this subregion, but that the politics at play makes it difficult for the Conference to be fully involved.

The Tripartite Plus was created by the United States, and based on the interviews conducted in the region it is quite clear that the U.S. position is that the Tripartite Plus agenda ideally should be handed over to the ICGLR. The Tripartite Plus was originally established to achieve three specific tasks, namely to get the parties involved to discuss: (1) negative forces, (2) return of negative forces that are returnable, and (3) full return to diplomatic relations. And since these conversations have started they should be placed in an institutional structure with a broader mandate and longer time horizon. The problem is, however that the parties concerned do not want to empower the ICGLR with this task. They simply resist, claiming among other things that the ICGLR is too big an organisation to deal with the delicate problems of their relationship.

What this shows is that suspicion and tension are still high in the region and the only thing that works is what the governments want to work. The regional structure cannot offer anything more as it has little if any power in this regard. Another example including the same countries are as equally telling. At a recent meeting under the Tripartite Plus arrangement, representatives from DRC suggested a working group on illegal exploitation of natural resources, the reply from Rwanda and Uganda was swift, short and stopped all conversation on what undoubtedly is an important issue very much in need of a region solution: ‘the lack of governance in Eastern Congo is a Congolese problem that Kinshasa should deal with, it is not a regional issue’. Even Burundi, the host country, has at times showed some reluctance and resistance towards ICGLR involvement in certain issues. The Secretariat tried to involve itself in the peace process in Burundi that led to the agreement

¹¹ The crisis in Eastern Congo was also the main theme of the 2nd ICGLR Extraordinary Heads of State and Government Summit held in Addis Ababa 31st January 2009. See also ICGLR (2009a)

on the disarmament of the Forces for National Liberation (FNL), but were met with a cold shoulder from the host government.

Regional organisations and initiatives therefore have clear limitations in this part of the world. This is, however, not unique to ICGLR, and the most recent organisation on the regional matrix also has its supporters as well. The United States is generally supportive and its willingness, almost eagerness to hand the Tripartite Plus agenda over to ICGLR constitutes a vote of confidence. The German aid agency GTZ is also interested in the ICGLR, seeing it as an important platform for a region-wide Programme on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources.¹² The question is, however, if this programme will be met by a more productive response from Uganda and Rwanda than the one the U.S. received when it tried to use the Tripartite Plus arrangement to address this issue.

Uganda is among the most active member countries and its national co-ordinating mechanism has developed a fairly elaborate agenda for Uganda's involvement with the ICGLR (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uganda 2009). Uganda is genuinely interested in the ICGLR, but for the time being mainly with regard to activities in Zone 3. The war in the Acholi regions is not formally over, but as the battlefronts has been moved to the DRC and even CAR, Kampala has turned its attention to the Karamoja region, even making President Museveni's wife, Janet Museveni, the new state minister for Karamoja.

As the cross-border dynamic of cattle-raiding obviously constitutes an important part of the problem in Karamoja, Kampala must add a regional dimension to its pursuit of an end to insecurity in Karamoja. Some years ago IGAD would have been the natural choice as regional partner organisation, as it comprises all the relevant neighbouring countries, e.g. Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan, but that is not the case anymore. Uganda is together with Burundi one of the few African countries that has sent troops to the AU mission in Somalia. This is a mission that not only has spanned controversies within in IGAD, but also led to criticisms of Uganda from fellow IGAD member countries. Thus, making the ICGLR and its zoning approach emerge as a better-suited partner for Uganda in the Karamoja border region than IGAD.¹³ Uganda is therefore relatively actively involved with ICGLR, and Kampala clearly sees ICGLR as a relevant framework for Karamoja. The

¹² GTZ supports three ICGLR components: capacity building; regional initiatives on natural resource management; and trans-border development basins.

¹³ It should, however, also be noted that even if ICGLR plays an important role in this process, it is part of a larger framework. The regional conference in 2008 about pastoralist conflicts in the border areas between Sudan, Kenya and Uganda was initiated and led by African Leadership Institute supported by the EU. It was this conference that facilitated the activities that are to be implemented in Zone 3.

process itself is, however, mainly bilateral between the presidents and their trusted ministers and advisers.

As much as the high level of involvement of the ICGLR with Uganda in Zone 3 should be noted as a positive sign of engagement, some questions concerning the realism of some of the plans made should also be addressed. At a donor meeting in Kampala 25th February 2009 the ICGLR (see ICGLR 2009b) presented its plans for Zone 3 activities, just adding the figures mentioned in this presentation (and not all suggested activities were presented with costs) makes up a total funding need of USD 19,428.200, of which apparently only USD 130,000 is pledged by the South African-based Institute for Security Studies (ISS). This presentation is undoubtedly thorough and professionally made, but the realism of the budget can seriously be questioned. There seems to be a level of discrepancy between what is possible and what the ICGLR would ideally like to achieve.

Concerning the other core countries in this part of the region, their interests with regard to the ICGLR can be summed up as follows. Officially, the Rwandan view is that the ICGLR is an implementing body and an important mechanism as it offers solutions through a regional platform: its very existence shows that the member countries recognise the huge level of inter-dependency in the region. It is relevant, and it can work if it does what it is supposed to. However, it is understaffed and has too few resources. This is an observation that all representatives from regional member countries interviewed agreed to. When we asked about the mandate, they agreed that it was wide, but also added that this was the only way forward as what makes ICGLR unique is its ability to combine peace and development issues.

In Rwanda as in Uganda, Zone 1 activities are steered through Tripartite Plus, but the Rwandan National Co-ordinating Mechanism claim that they have recently started a programme of establishing cross-border youth networks in this zone. However, on the contrary to most other ICGLR member countries, the national co-ordinating mechanism in Rwanda is located in the Office of the President and not in the foreign ministry, meaning that President Kagame and his group of trusted advisors keep the process firmly under control, setting the limitations for how deeply they would like to be involved.

Burundi, on the other hand, tend to ally itself with Uganda in this type of regional affairs, and also lacks the capacity to develop a full agenda of its own towards the wider region. With regard to DRC, Kabila's government must know that any solution to the Eastern Congo quagmire needs a regional as well as a national solution. However, a combination of issues – capacity-wise as well as politically – makes it difficult for the DRC government to give regional organisations and solutions the attention they deserve. The

question is therefore if any of these have a vision for the region that can offer the ICGLR leadership and direction.¹⁴

The two strongest core states, at least with regard to state capacity are Rwanda and Uganda. Both President Kagame and President Museveni have their respective regional visions and none of them would mind assuming the mantle of regional leadership. Their challenges, however, are that 1) they lack regional legitimacy and they do not actively seek to redress this situation; 2) their regional visions are generally not shared in other neighbouring countries; and 3) they cannot even agree among themselves.

It should, however, be noted with interest as well as some concern that when Rwanda and Uganda re-entered the Congo for their respective offensives against the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in early 2009 they used the Pact as their platform to legitimate their interventions, thus suggesting that these countries in some cases see not only the relevance but also ICGLR's usability.

5.0 Effectiveness and capacity: policy coherence and co-ordination

There are many factors that determine the effectiveness of regional organisations in relation to regional security and the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. The nature and the intensity of conflict will have a huge impact. The economic and administrative strength of member countries plays an important role. The leadership (or lack of such) of presidents and heads of states cannot be ignored. The presence or not of countries that can claim the status of hegemony is an important dimension. Extra-regional actors (state and non-state) can also play a role (positive as well as negative). Each and every one of these factors will contribute to the effectiveness and capacity of the regional organisation in question, and thereby also determine its ability to establish priorities that can enhance policy coherence and co-ordination

As we have already underscored, the intensity of the conflict in the region is very high. The economic and administrative capacity of the member states differ, but no member country achieves a high score on this variable. None of them can therefore make a credible claim for the status of hegemony. National leaders (presidents and heads of states) are also generally more concerned with regime security than promoting regional peace and

¹⁴ Kenya is not only one of the stronger countries in the region, but also an outsider to the core conflict, and as such it could have provided some leadership on some of the most difficult issues. However, Kenya is in general not too interested in the Great Lakes Region, and is also for the time being caught up in its own mess of internal problems as it tries to find a way of living with the consequences of election violence in 2008.

stability. Ideally they should see the interlinkages between these dimensions, but that is rarely the case in this part of Africa. Alliances are made and broken relatively haphazardly, even if some relationships of enmity and amity are more steadfast than others.

It should, however, also be mentioned in this regard that also the donors' level of coherence and co-ordination could have been better. The GoF has collapsed and no country has stepped forward to resurrect it through assuming leadership. There is a general feeling in the region that the donors were more interested in the establishment of the ICGLR than its internal constitution and maintenance.

The question is then what role a regional institution can assume. This will depend on the material strength of the institutions, but also its human capacity to lead, direct and supervise. In most case, it is very rare that the strength of a regional institution is any larger than the combined sum of its member states. In fact, usually it is much less. However, entrepreneurship is always possible suggesting that the composition and human capital of the Secretariat also matters.

It is undoubtedly under-staffed and has too little resources at its disposal. However, the resources that it does have could have been utilised better if it had been able concentrated on a few things where it could have contribute real value added, and not tried to please all member states simultaneously. Visibility is important for relevance, but the question can certainly be asked if the Secretariat has been too preoccupied with gaining access to ongoing processes started by other stakeholders, instead of spending more of its resources on developing its own approach to the region.

The ICGLR needs leadership and a stronger sense of direction, but it is highly unlikely that the member countries will be able to provide this now. It must therefore be grown internally through the development of a clear cut agenda based on priorities set and thereafter followed. In this regard, the Team is of the opinion that the Norwegian contribution could have been used even more strategically as well as more swiftly than what has been the case.

5.1. ICGLR (and UNDP) management of the Norwegian contribution

As indicated previously, Norway has in collaboration with the other countries that make up the GoF been supportive of the Secretariat since the beginning and during the preparatory phase with financial and technical support. On 5 December 2007, the Norwegian Government made a contribution in the amount NOK 3 million (\$546,444) to the ICGLR for a one-year project entitled 'Strengthening and Capacity-Building of the ICGLR Secretariat'. The expected outcome of the project was as already mentioned to strengthen

the capacities of the ICGLR Secretariat to allow it to realise its mandate in accordance with Article 26 of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development of the Great Lakes Region.

Due to the infancy of the ICGLR, the Norwegian contribution was channelled through a third party cost-sharing agreement with UNDP Burundi. Under the agreement, the UNDP office in Burundi manages the Norwegian contribution and responds to ICGLR requests for disbursements. In the original project proposal submitted through UNDP Norway was asked to contribute to three items:

1. reinforcing organisational, financial and managerial capacity of the ICGLR as indicated in the PACT;
2. setting up of a documentation centre and a conference centre for member states and the general public; and
3. the acquisition of equipment for simultaneous interpretation for ICGLR meetings and conferences.

However, as the final funding agreement only covers items 2 and 3, this makes it strange that as we will see below the Norwegian funding has also been utilised for activities related to item 1. There is nothing that indicates any wrongdoing, but it raises some questions concerning the Secretariat and UNDP's ability to adhere to agreements made. This may be a consequence of the confusion created by the fact that the funding is controlled by UNDP and disbursed on request to ICGLR (an issue we return to later in this section of the review).

At the end of March 2009, the execution rate of the project has been of 61 percent:

- eight financial and managerial manuals have been elaborated. From the \$76,700 allocated, \$ 61,288 has been utilised;
- the ICGLR has recruited an interpreter, a media expert and a library assistant. The documentation centre is being set up;
- modern simultaneous translation/interpretation equipment has been acquired for a total amount of \$131,268.

The money has, however as indicated above, not been used in full and subsequently a request for a no-cost extension has been forwarded. This is a direct result of the considerable time the Secretariat has had to spend on constituting itself and organising its relationship to UNDP, but also a consequence of the lack of an agenda based on clear priorities between different needs and demands. Thus, as of April 2009, the balance is of \$212,425 and will according to the ICGLR Secretariat be used for the following:

- six month contract extension for the three national experts (\$60,000), including for managing the documentation and translation project;

- acquiring office equipment of the Documentation Centre (\$20,000);
- ad hoc payment for interpretation and translation services (\$30,000);
- the acquisition of four interpretation booths (\$20,000);
- the payment of interpretation and translation services during the upcoming 2 PACT meetings (\$30,000);
- the production, translation and circulation of documents to member states (US\$20,000);
- audit and evaluation of the project and audit and evaluation of the ICGLR (US\$18,000).
- UNDP managing fees (US\$14,000)

There is no doubt that the money spent has been used wisely, given the goal and objectives of the funding agreement – that is apart from the resources spent on item one in the original proposal. The equipment has been bought, it works and the documentation centre is in the process of being built. However, based on our conversations both with the Secretariat and the UNDP Office in Burundi we also must also voice some criticism. First, the conference equipment has been bought, but the boxes for transportation that are needed for its usage outside of Bujumbura had just arrived when the Team visited the Secretariat. This means that the equipment has been much less in use than what should have been the case. This has led to a situation where excellent equipment was left unused in Bujumbura whereas expensive services of a lower quality was hired for ICGLR meetings elsewhere in the region. This is not in line with the spirit of the agreement for funding or the original proposal. These boxes should therefore have been bought together with the rest of the equipment and not a long-time after. Secondly, contrary to what has been agreed, the ICGLR has not submitted trimester reports on the use of the disbursed funds, and it has not produced an evaluation report. This can partly be explained by the delay in the implementation of the project, but still such reports should have been produced and forwarded as nothing else had been agreed or communicated.

The interaction between the Secretariat and the UNDP Office in Burundi should also be streamlined. In particular, the Team is of the opinion that UNDP should request the ICGLR to:

- submit a procurement work plan at the beginning of each trimester;
- produce a trimester report as to how the funds have been used;
- submit an annual work plan;
- provide a report on the impact of the fund on their work;
- set up a joint UNDP-ICGLR trimester meeting; and finally

- the ICGLR should have a programme officer responsible for this particular part of its operation that travels less and is more available on site in Bujumbura.

The ICGLR has requested UNDP to modify the mode of implementation but this is not possible as they have to adhere to the same procedures as for national projects. The ICGLR has also suggested the funds be directly allocated and managed by the Secretariat. However, as UNDP follows specific guidelines when it comes to procurement operations this is not possible under the current arrangement.

With regard to possible future Norwegian contributions, an assessment should first be made concerning ICGLR's internal capacity to conduct procurement. At least, the Team found that the ICGLR conducts its financial operations according to its managerial manual. Its financial management system seems reasonably sound as its financial management manual includes procurement regulations, anti-corruption measures and codes of conduct.¹⁵ However, although there are internal auditors, the Secretariat does not have external auditors and has not conducted an external audit to date. That said, the current arrangement with UNDP is not only bureaucratic, but also not properly understood by everybody involved on both sides. The UNDP country office in Burundi is in principle only supposed to deal with national counterparts (state and non-state), and not a regional organisation such as the ICGLR. This has contributed to confusion as well as unnecessary delays, making it difficult to suggest that Norway should continue supporting the ICGLR through UNDP.

It should also be noted that representatives from member countries interviewed for this report (e.g. Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, but also Tanzania and external stakeholders, (GTZ, DFID, EU, the Netherlands, the U.S. and Norway) all recognise the problem of translation and interpretation among member countries. According to the National Coordinating Mechanisms in Rwanda and Uganda, the Norwegian support has helped with translation and interpretation, and thereby clearly increased the efficiency of the meetings in Bujumbura. The same parties (a view also shared by most external stakeholders) are, however, much more uncertain about the documentation centre. They do not visit the Secretariat too often and question the relevance of placing a regional documentation centre in a place as little frequented as Bujumbura. The documentation centre will never become a regional hub, suggesting that it will only become relevant for external actors if it is turned into an electronic documentation centre. So far, the ICGLR does not have the resources needed to implement this fully.

¹⁵ We must, however, add that the Team have not looked in detail into the degree to which they have been followed as the Norwegian contribution was channelled through UNDP.

It has taken time to get the ICGLR fully operational, and even if it is making progress much work still remains. However, it should also be noted that external stakeholders with a presence in Bujumbura notice that things finally have started to happen around the Secretariat.

5.2 Other policy issues: gender, conflict sensitivity and the environment

Gender and gender relations are crucial issues in a region where sexual violence has reached alarming proportions in conflict areas such as Eastern Congo, and seminars on sexual and gender-based violence like the one that the Secretariat organised in Goma in 2008 is therefore much needed. Challenges related to gender also feature prominently in the Pact and one of the regional protocols of ICGLR deals specifically with 'prevention and suppression of sexual violence against women and children'. The ICGLR has a programme officer and an assistant officer on gender issues, and it is supposed to be a cross-cutting issue in the organisation. However, even if important steps have been taken and novel seminars such as the one in Goma has been organised, it is the view of the Review Team that gender as a priority issue is yet not fully mainstreamed in the organisation or in its policies. There is no reason to believe that this is due to a lack of understanding or that this issue is not taken seriously. The lack of progress on this issue-area is therefore first and foremost a consequence of the amount of time spent on constituting the Secretariat. The increased cooperation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) foreseen by the Secretariat should contribute positively to further mainstreaming.

Conflict sensitivity and the 'do no harm' principle are important topics for debate among organisations working in conflict zones. Programmes and policies should do no harm and the whole agenda and project portfolio should be conflict sensitive. This is undoubtedly an important issue for the ICGLR as it operates in a complex environment where all serious observers know only all too well that the member states are just as much a part of the problem as the solution. However, even in its most well-developed projects (e.g. Zone 3 activities) we find no traces of any attempt of a critical discussion about the 'do no harm' principle and conflict sensitivity. This is a weakness as past heavy-handed approaches by governments in this part of the Central African region has only increased the problem as well as the human suffering. One vivid example is the previous Ugandan attempt at disarmament in Karamoja that was heavy-handed as well as biased and thereby caused alienation and a new 'arms race' by those that lost a lot of weapons and thereby

suddenly found themselves at the mercy of those that had been able to keep most of its stock of armoury.¹⁶ As the Team reads the situation, the ICGLR has few if any guarantees against this happening again, and even if a conflict sensitive methodology is not an effective barrier against wrong policies and approaches at the very least it could decrease the chances of doing harm as it could help initiate debate in member countries through the national co-ordinating mechanisms.

Environment, HIV/AIDS and human settlement issues are gaining importance in the region as some (not all) member countries increasingly are concerned about these questions. Just as gender, environment, HIV/AIDS and human settlement are defined as cross-cutting issues by the ICGLR. They have, however, so far not received much attention by the Secretariat. This may change as it starts to work more normally, but it may also be the case that these issue-areas are best dealt with by other regional and international institutions.

5.3 The Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development (SFRD)

The SFRD is supposed to be the financing instrument for the implementation of the Pact and its projects and protocols. It was created in accordance with the Protocol on the Specific Reconstruction and Development Zone. It is placed under the supervision of the African Development Bank (AfDB) that acts as the treasurer, secures its administration and disbursement. The SFRD is therefore managed as a trust fund under the rules of the AfDB and will have its own Governing Committee. This committee consists of representatives from regional member countries, Angola, DRC, Kenya and Rwanda; the AfDB and representatives of development partners. This committee is much talked about and rumours circulate about what nonregional countries that have been asked to be on it. However, as no official document seems to exist about this particular matter, we can only conclude that the Governing Committee for the SFRD is yet to be formally established with development partner representatives. The Governing Committee has, however, already held its first meeting in Bujumbura to consider its operational guidelines. As we have no other information we assume that this meeting was conducted without any nonregional donor country representatives present.

¹⁶ The 2001-2002 disarmament attempt failed miserably (see OPM 2005). It collected some weapons, but due to the haphazard manner in which it was implemented it also led to new imbalances of military might, that all armed parties sought to test by raiding those thought to have emerged out of the process as less well-armed (Knighton 2005).

In theory, the SFRD is supposed to be financed by contributions from the member countries and their international partners. Currently there are about 2.5 million USD in the fund, most of which has been contributed by member states. Nonregional donor countries have so far been quite reluctant to support this part of the ICGLR process. This is not a surprise because as we have seen the GoF countries were sceptical towards this part of the process already prior to the establishment of the ICGLR. During interviews with the Secretariat, it was informed that almost all the money in the fund would go to establish a regional centre in Lusaka on democracy and good governance.¹⁷

Most donor representatives interviewed by the Team failed to understand how another regional centre, this time in Lusaka would effectively strengthen the ICGLR. Other regional organisations in Africa has earlier attempted a strategy of giving member countries the responsibility for specific issue areas (SADC is one example), but it is hard to find examples of successful implementation and it is equally hard to understand why this should work for the ICGLR. There may be several good reasons for a ‘Marshall’-plan for this region, but it is difficult to see how the ICGLR in the short to medium term horizon could be the answer to the developmental problems in the region. Rather, this seems just to further underscore the problem of agenda-setting and prioritisation we already have identified.

6.0 Conclusions and policy recommendations

The period between 2009 and 2010 will be crucial for the ICGLR. The next donor meeting will be held in Bujumbura later this year, and the 2009 ICGLR summit was supposed to have been held earlier this year in Kinshasa. However, given the state of affairs in the region this was not feasible. The Summit was therefore moved to Lusaka, initially planned to take place from 21st-24th June, but now postponed to a later date in July 2009. Both the summit and the donor meeting planned to take place this year will take place amidst uncertainty and unanswered questions. The GoF has as previously mentioned almost collapsed and nobody seems willing to spearhead this process from the development partner side. The ICGLR, however, still has friends and supporters, but it needs to act swiftly in order to prove its value added in the region. The next year is also the end of Ambassador Mulamula's four year non-renewable term, suggesting that the search for a new Executive Secretary must start as soon as possible. The member countries must further

¹⁷ It was decided already in Nairobi in 2006 that Zambia would be allocated The Regional Centre for the Promotion of Democracy and Good Governance, Human Rights and Civic Education.

agree among themselves what kind of leader they want for their organisation: an efficient administrator or a strong experienced politician? Choosing the latter may increase the political clout of the organisation, but may also sacrifice some much-needed long-term institution-building. The Secretariat and the organisation are still not properly constituted and much internal administrative work therefore remains.

Some questions concerning the sustainability of ICGLR must be asked related to the institutional, intellectual and financial capacity of its member countries. There is clearly the danger that the ICGLR could end up as yet another externally-financed donor driven institution if large amounts of funding was made available. This should be avoided. However, on the other side, the Great Lakes Region is undoubtedly a dangerous and violent region, and an organisation that brings the various countries together may contribute to less human suffering and insecurity. None of the countries in region can prosper on their own, and some of them in fact desperately need the region. This is for example clearly the case for core countries such as Rwanda and Burundi. They are simply too small to be sustainable on their own in the long run, and the governments in Kigali and Bujumbura are starting to realise this. In the future they will have to become net importer of food as well as non-food items such as charcoal.¹⁸

In order to survive and have a sufficient level of meaningful engagement with its region, the ICGLR needs to have its own core funding as well as commitment and leadership from leading regional countries. As we have seen, some countries show this kind of commitment and leadership, but only within certain sectors and issue-area (e.g. Uganda with regard to Zone 3 activities in Karamoja) and not necessarily in general. The danger is therefore that the ICGLR is turned into an organisation from which member countries and nonregional donor countries pick certain items of interests, without giving the necessity of a coherent agenda much thought. An inter-regional organisation is supposed to be demand-driven, but given the complicated situation in the region this may lead to a haphazardly implemented regional portfolio. The ICGLR therefore needs internal leadership and vision to complement demand from member countries and nonregional donor countries. The question is where it could turn for such leadership.

In other parts of the world, host countries often assume leadership, but in this case, the ICGLR's very base in Burundi is more of a problem than an opportunity. Bujumbura

¹⁸ Charcoal production is already almost made illegal in Rwanda and subsequently the country therefore imports most of what it needs from Eastern Congo and particular from North Kivu. This may not have been problematic had not been for the fact that this trade is controlled by different armed forces. The ICGLR could potentially play a role in facilitating a more transparent regime for this trade than what is currently the case (see also Bøås 2009).

lacks the centrality of places such as Kampala, Nairobi and even Kigali, and among the core countries Burundi is the weakest one in terms of institutional capacity. And as we also have seen none of the other member countries are in the position to assume the status of hegemony. Not only do they lack the capacity to provide the public goods necessary, but to the extent that they have regional visions these tend to divide more than they unite.

One hard question potential donors as well as the member countries therefore have to ask themselves is what do they want from the ICGLR. Do they want broad and comprehensive plans encompassing almost all aspects of peace and development in the region or an organisation concentrating on a few basic issues and build its future strength and sustainability through this? There is obviously a discrepancy between the reality on the ground and some of the plans of the Secretariat. The Secretariat may feel forced by the Pact to construct all these programmes that few will fund or believe in, but some hard choices must be made as the ICGLR needs to produce visible results. As one donor informant bluntly told the Team. ‘in less than two years the ICGLR needs some concrete results, if not it is dead’.

It is the opinion of this Team that the ICGLR has initiated some promising programmes, in particular its zoning approach to border security. Almost all the crises in the region have started in borderland areas, and the ICGLR has a unique tool in the zoning system that it has developed. Putting this at the very forefront of the organisation will increase the relevance of the ICGLR, strengthen it, and thereby also help it deal with its capacity issue and provide an answer to the question of policy coherence and coordination. We would therefore recommend that donors interested in continuing their support to the ICGLR focus on this core area. This may furthermore contribute to setting clearer priorities. Such an approach may be useful, but there is clearly a danger that identification of priorities becomes completely donor driven. There needs to be a balance the external requirements and an internally driven process to elaborate an overall implementation strategy.

We would, however, also like to point out that such support to ICGLR must take the needs of the national co-ordinating mechanisms into consideration. One example is the aforementioned Uganda's National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uganda 2009). This is a solid document, drawing the attention to several potentially important projects, but do they have the ability to follow-up; to implement, supervise and report? Priorities must certainly be made also at the national level, but if the ICGLR's national partners are not funded or are under-funded nothing will happen.

Commitment is necessary, but not sufficient, and it is difficult to see how a regional organisation in this part of the world can be anything more than the combined sum of the political willingness and institutional capacity of its member countries. This is a fact that donors need to take into consideration. It also suggests that if an initiative such as the ICGLR is seen as important patience is needed as well as support of various kinds.

The first question that Norwegian policymaker should ask themselves is therefore if they see an added value in the ICGLR. If so, support should be continued. It should be targeted, but also given with a pragmatic long-term view of what possibly can be achieved in the short to medium-term horizon. Norway could continue to give support through UNDP-Burundi, but given past experiences such an option would almost certainly continue to create problems of delays and confusion. Thus, making it a less desirable option. However, at this cross-road it is also important to keep in mind that the UNDP Country Office in Burundi has also assisted and supported the ICGLR through its stage of immediate infancy.

The second option is to support the Secretariat directly. It is an interesting option as it could give considerable influence as it would demonstrate clear commitment, but it requires the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to set aside the resources necessary to follow such contributions relatively closely, given the infancy of the ICGLR.

The third option is therefore to continue supporting the Secretariat through a heavily involved third country, for example through the German GTZ. This option is less costly with regard to the resources necessary to follow-up, but also entails very limited influence.

The fourth option is to give support through donations to the SFRD. This is an option the Team would not recommend for the time being given the uncertainties around the composition of the SFRD's Governing Committee. Thus, suggesting that the current three alternatives for Norway if it is to continue its support are (1) through UNDP-Burundi; (2) offer direct support to the Secretariat; or (3) through a third country.

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Annex I Terms of Reference

Terms of References for a review of Norwegian support to Strengthening and Capacity-Building for the Secretariat of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region – (SAF-2870 – SAF-07/021)

1. Background

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has requested Norad to carry out a review of its support to the secretariat of the Great Lakes Region. On 5 December 2007 MFA signed a third party cost-sharing agreement with UNDP Burundi for a financial contribution of NOK 3 million to ‘Strengthening and Capacity-Building of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region Secretariat’ (*the Project*). MFA has also supported the implementation of the 2006 International Conference of the Great Lakes (IC/GLR) with 300.000 USD through the ‘Group of Friends’ Multi Donor Trust fund managed by UNDP Nairobi.

In many countries of the Great Lakes Region, the populations have suffered terribly as a result of intra and interstate conflicts that have caused millions of deaths, massive human rights violations followed by millions of refugees, internally displaced persons and victims of gender based violence especially rape. In addition, the Great Lakes region suffers from a high prevalence of sexual violence against women, girls and young boys.

In an effort to find a regional lasting solution to these myriad problems that confront the region, the Heads of State and Governments came together under the auspices of the UN and the AU to begin a process that culminated in the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and the Dar Es Salaam Declaration (DD) in November 2004. The Dar Declaration was followed by the Pact on Security, Stability and Development (PACT), signed by the eleven Heads of State and Government in December 2006. The PACT materializes the determination of the leaders of the Great Lakes region to transform the region into a space of sustainable Peace and Security for Peoples of the region, Political and Social Stability, Shared Growth and Development, a space of cooperation based on convergent strategies and policies driven by a common destiny. These aims will be achieved by regional conflict management, joint problem solving and concerted common development efforts.

Under the PACT, the Heads of States and Governments from the eleven countries of the Great Lakes region namely: Angola, Burundi, Central Africa Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Rwanda, Republic of Congo, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia decided to establish the Secretariat for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The Secretariat was created to act as the technical arm for the coordination of implementation of the PACT.

The Secretariat, based in Bujumbura, Burundi, is headed by the Executive Secretary assisted by a Deputy Executive Secretary who also doubles as the Senior Programme Officer. There are five designated Programme Officers for Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration, Humanitarian and Social Issues and Cross Cutting Issues respectively. There is also a pool of support

staff headed by an Internationally Recruited Administration and Finance Officer, and that includes a Legal Counsel and a Communications Officer.

Norway like most other countries that make up the Group of Friends (GoFs) of the IC/GLR has been supportive of the IC/GLR processes since its inception and through out the preparatory phase through provision of financial and technical resources.

The *Goal* of the Project as spelled out in the agreement with UNDP is to support the Secretariat to realise its mandate in accordance with article 26 of the PACT.

The *Objectives* of the Project are to:

- (i) establish a functioning documentation centre and conference facilities
- (ii) provide capacity for translation to the Secretariat

2. Purpose and intended use of the review

The purpose of the review is:

- (i) to assess the extent to which objectives as spelled out in the agreement have been achieved and whether the Project efficiently and effectively is contributing to the achievement of the goal.
- (ii) to assess to which extent the IC/GLR Secretariat in general is progressing in terms of fulfilling its mandate.
- (iii) to make recommendations with regards to a possible continuation or redesign of Norwegian support to the Secretariat.

3. Scope of work

The review should look at the achievements made to date and should give particular attention to the following:

- o **Relevance:** The relevance of the Norwegian support shall be assessed against the intentions and stated objectives of the PACT and the mandate of the Secretariat as well as any Norwegian policies and strategies related to the GLR.
- o **Efficiency:** The review should look into the efficiency of the project, and analyse possible deviations between activities planned and activities that have actually been carried out. Further, it should look into financial statements and analyse the level of expenses in light of achievements during the implementation period.
- o **Effectiveness:** should be assessed against progress in achieving the objectives of the project.
- o **Sustainability/Institutional capacity:** Fulfillment of the IC/GLR Secretariat's mandate, including its role as a political secretariat. The review should further assess the Secretariat's ability to fulfill agreed responsibilities related to implementation of activities/programs agreed by the IC/GLR. Linkages to and cooperation with national authorities/National Coordination Mechanisms, other groups and committees set out under the PACT and relevant regional actors.

Institutional capacity building of the Secretariat. Particular attention will be paid to the role of the UNDP.

- o Development partner coherence and coordination: Assess coherence and coordination of Norwegian support with other development partner support to the Secretariat and to the implementation of the PACT. Attention shall be given to the relationship to the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region, incl. the Group of Board of Trustees.
- o Gender: Policies, procedures and tools of the Secretariat to ensure gender mainstreaming and targeting of own institution and operations. Extent to which these relate to the UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- o Conflict sensitivity: Policies, procedures and tools of the Secretariat to ensure conflict sensitivity in operations, for example the extent to which conflict analysis and Do no harm tools are used. Assessment shall draw upon the OECD DAC (draft) guidance on support to conflict prevention and peace building activities.
- o Environment/climate: Policies, procedures and tools of the Secretariat to ensure environmental/climate mainstreaming and targeting of own institution and operations.
- o Administration: The review should assess the extent to which the project is executed in line with requirements stated in the contract regarding purchases, anti-corruption, reporting and audit.
- o Recommendations: shall be made with regards to a possible continuation or redesign of Norwegian support to the Secretariat. Other development partner engagement with the Secretariat and the IC/GLC shall be taken into account.

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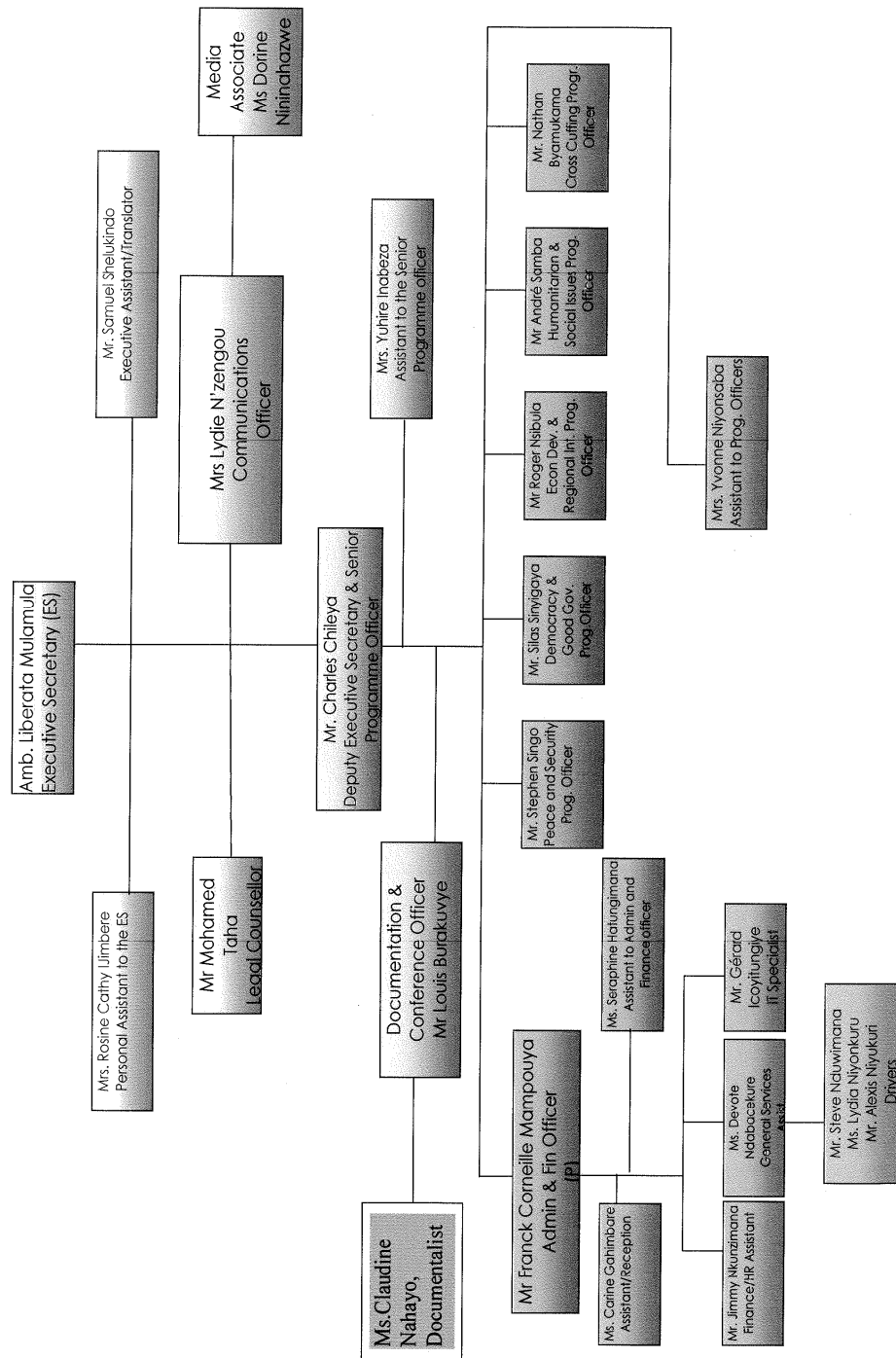
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Annex III – Institutions met

ICGLR secretariat staff	Bujumbura
African Development Bank	Kigali
African Leadership Initiative	Kampala
DFID – Department for International Development (UK)	Bujumbura
Embassy of Rwanda	Kampala
EC Delegation	Kampala
Norwegian Embassy	Kampala
Norwegian Embassy Branch Office	Bujumbura
Royal Netherlands Embassy	Kampala, Bujumbura
National Coordinating Mechanism	Bujumbura
National Coordinating Mechanism	Kampala
National Coordinating Mechanism	Kigali
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Oslo
USAID	Burundi
US Embassy	Kampala, Bujumbura
UNDP	Bujumbura

Annex IV – Organigram for the ICGLR

**ORGANIGRAM FOR THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE IC/GLR,
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