Confidence Building Measures Among East African Community for Strengthening Peace in the Region

Ravoavy Setriny Mahatsangy¹*, Yoedhi Swastanto², Jonni Mahroza³
Universitas Pertahanan Republik Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Ravoavy Setriny Mahatsangy ravsetrini@yahoo.fr

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ABSTRACT

The East Africa Community (EAC) comprises various instabilities, including violence, humanitarian crises, environmental issues, and conflicts, both within and between states. In response, these countries have established defense diplomacy, which involves the non-violent utilization of military resources to pursue peace and stability in the area. Their goal is to create a unified force to address common threats that endanger peace and stability within the region. Defense diplomacy encompasses a strategic engagement, Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), Capacity Building, and the cultivation of international reputation. The fundamental question arises: How can the EAC engage in security cooperation amid the multitude of issues faced within the region? Our article aims to comprehend the implementation of CBMs among member states, focusing on enhancing interoperability within a case study of regional security cooperation aimed at implementing peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Our research employs qualitative analysis using the concept of Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBM) and applies DIME theory to illustrate the process of establishing and strengthening trust among member states in the region. The primary outcome of this study underscores the critical role played by diplomacy and military strategies in resolving peace and security issues in the DRC.
INTRODUCTION

Across various realms such as politics, economics, and social welfare, the present-day EAC represents a revival of dissolved integration from 1977, which initially involved Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Despite EAC achieving advancements, particularly in socio-economic aspects, tensions and disputes persist among member states. These conflicts hinder the Community's central objective of regional advancement and unity: elevating the populace's living standards through increased trade, competitive value-added production, as well as trade and investment expansion, all aimed at fostering sustainable development within the region. (Mulindwa, 2020) The member states of the EAC encounter various challenges that impact both the stability of their individual states and the broader region. Nevertheless, the ongoing situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) remains a significant concern for the regional organization. The persistent and unresolved conflict occurring in the Eastern part of the DRC poses a threat to unity and peaceful coexistence within the EAC. The primary issue identified for this research is the inadequacy of cooperation concerning peace and security matters within the EAC, revealing a lack of effective regional mechanisms to systematize and formalize interstate collaboration on matters related to managing conflicts (Ekpootu, 2018) to address this issue, the query we pose is: How might the EAC effectively engage in security and defense cooperation to fulfill the objectives of the regional institution? Security plays a pivotal role in bolstering and advancing regional integration, ultimately aiming to secure economic advantages and enhance the well-being of the populace. Within this context, defense diplomacy serves as a foundational framework through which states can foster cooperative relationships, engage in dialogue, and form partnerships, thereby safeguarding their respective national interests. Defense diplomacy encompasses strategic engagement, Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), Capacity Building, and the cultivation of international reputation. (Fetic, 2013) This paper will focus on defence diplomacy activities conducting among EAC state members for achieving their national interests and seeking for peace and stability in the Region. For more understanding, we emphasize more in CBM within the case study of peace resolution in DRC using DIME theory. To make this research more simple, the author need to respond the following questions:

- What are the key issues happening in the region undermining peace and stability in East DRC?
- How to implement CBM among the EAC member states regarding these issues?
- What are the challenges for CBM and maintaining peace and stability in this area?

The novelty of this article is to show the importance of CBM among regional organisation while addressing severe conflict and humanitarian crisis in the Region.
LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Muthanna (2011), defense diplomacy is characterized as the establishment of enduring cooperative relationships designed to cultivate trust and prevent conflicts. It involves the introduction of transparency in defense relations, the cultivation and reinforcement of shared perceptions regarding common interests, the alteration of partner mindsets, and the facilitation of cooperation in various other domains. (Muthanna, 2011) Tan and Singh (2012) similarly define defense diplomacy as the combined utilization of peaceful and/or cooperative measures by national defense institutions and military professionals to foster confidence, build trust, prevent conflicts, and potentially resolve existing disputes. (Tan, Singh, 2012) Furthermore, Rodon Pedrason (2023) stresses the significance of employing multi-track diplomacy rather than a singular approach for implementing peace prevention and resolution. He suggests that regional organizations like ASEAN should intervene in ways that respect the sovereignty of member states to ensure security and stability, enabling humanitarian access in conflict zones, as observed in the case of Myanmar. (Rodon Pedrason, 2023)

Non-Coercive Defence Diplomacy is rooted in principles such as transparency, integrity, and maintaining a positive reputation, employing nonviolent strategies. This approach involves persuasion, negotiation, aligning interests, and working towards common ideals, as well as endorsing mutual political commitments and enhancing defense cooperation. Its focus lies on past or potential adversaries and established or potential allies and partners, rather than current adversaries in an adversarial relationship. Contrary to coercive defense diplomacy, Non-Coercive Defence Diplomacy presents an alternative approach that avoids the use of force. Its objective is to cultivate, reinforce, and expand defense partnerships to influence situations, attitudes, and behaviors, ultimately fostering trust and confidence. (Blake & Spies, 2020) Additionally, collaboration in defense can enable participating governments to exchange intelligence, conduct joint military drills, and synchronize endeavors aimed at addressing shared security issues. According to Masalu (2023), this collaborative approach is pivotal for orchestrating joint activities and promptly responding to security threats. Within the East African Community, defense cooperation stands as a crucial step towards achieving the envisioned East African Federation. Sharing communication infrastructure could enhance the capability of member nations to engage and communicate effectively. Such capability is vital for coordinating cooperative endeavors and swiftly addressing emerging security apprehensions. (Masalu, 2023)

Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) encompass strategies designed to mitigate, prevent, or resolve uncertainties among nations. CBMs may take official or informal forms, ranging from unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral approaches, whether in military or political realms, involving state-to-state or non-governmental interactions. The primary aim is to prevent undesired escalations of hostilities and cultivate mutual trust. These measures hold particular significance in confronting and seeking resolutions for prolonged political deadlocks. (Said, 1999) The continuously broadening practical utilities of
confidence-building measures undeniably underscore their significance and efficacy in bolstering international security, strategic and regional stability, and averting conflicts. These measures prove valuable not only in finalizing and enforcing disarmament accords and aiding in sustaining strategic stability but also due to their widespread applicability, as they can potentially deter areas prone to arms escalation, avert strategic upheavals, and mitigate the onset of regional conflicts and volatile circumstances. Persistently enhancing confidence-building measures and addressing primary obstacles hindering the establishment of trust within the military sphere represent areas necessitating future attention and efforts. (Shcherbak, 1991)

- Military cooperation serves as a symbol of readiness to engage broader cooperation,
- It fosters mutual trust and commitment to work for managing differences
- Military collaboration can serve as a method to enhance transparency in defense relations, specifically concerning the intentions and capabilities of state
- Defence diplomacy serves as an approach to establish or strengthen shared perceptions for common interests
- Military cooperation may change overtime the mindset of partner states’ militaries
- Collaborative military efforts can facilitate specific and tangible defense reforms within partner nations.
- Defence assistance may be used as an incentive to encourage cooperation in some area.


In the 1990s, confidence-building measures (CBMs) evolved in Africa to address the numerous issues produced by the end of global bipolarity. They are part of larger institutional initiatives aimed at establishing continental and sub-regional security and development agencies. African CBMs, anchored in the architecture of integration, actively try to overcome the inadequacies of previous organizations. In Africa, where the state is under great strain, CBMs are envisioned as comprehensive institutional frameworks to control state implosion and mitigate the implications of such implosion on adjacent states. CBMs are prescribed as long-term devices to restore stable and predictable connections in sub-regional contexts, in addition to their application in present conflicts. (Khadiagala, 1996)

Against this backdrop, Defence diplomacy is to develop trust, which in turn can prevent conflict by reinforcing views of shared interests with former or potential adversaries. CBM aim to share vision, enhance interoperability and understanding, bolster confidence and friendship between soldiers, implement self-reliance during the mission. As a result, mutual trust and understanding can be developed, and a greater area of collaboration may be attained. DIME Theory
is an integrated part of CBM standing for Diplomacy, Information, Military and Economy. The present environment, centered around the concept of confidence-building, has steered us away from considering alternative applications of defense diplomacy, some of which persist but are, in reality, outdated or obsolete. Primarily, defense diplomacy continues to serve as a platform for military discussions and represents a field of expertise shared among a diverse community of actors from various national backgrounds. (Charillon et al., 2020)

Different interpretations of defense diplomacy illustrate the utilization of force and military channels in alternative, less aggressive manners to communicate intentions. The military is no longer solely employed as a tool for warfare, but is increasingly utilized for diplomatic objectives. Consequently, defense diplomacy can be perceived as a nation's endeavor to foster collaboration and engender trust with other countries in the defense realm to serve its own national interests. (Riyadi & Dewi, 2022)

**METODOLOGY**

The methodology adopted in this study involves qualitative research, emphasizing in-depth exploration of phenomena derived from the interpretation of contemporary social events within the scope of literary studies. Qualitative research is an approach that seeks to understand the significance attributed by individuals or groups to social or human issues. In this approach, the author utilizes qualitative data and information as essential instruments to validate research findings and compile an extensive research report. Researchers involved in qualitative studies collect data firsthand by examining documents, observing behaviors, or conducting interviews with participants. While they might utilize a protocol for recording data, it's the researchers themselves who gather and interpret the information. (John W. Creswell, 2018) In order to bring more inputs to the article, the author analyses secondary data collected from journal articles, official documents, newspapers and magazine articles, reports and analysis form scholars. Therefore, Qualitative research can be applied in defence science since it is affiliated to social science. The interpretation and analysis of threats and vulnerabilities are the basis of defence studies. (Deschaux-du tard, 2021) To respond to the proposed problem formulation, the author first seek the description of the study theme and then present supporting evidence from literature results. The findings of comparing prior study results serve as the foundation for debating the formulation of presented concerns.

In this article, the author is keen to demonstrate the role-playing by defence diplomacy in implementing CBM as measures to address, prevent, reduce uncertainties among EAC states addressing the specific case study of East DRC conflicts. CBM seeks to increase trust, confidence and understanding in order to implement peace, prevent war between states or factions. After analysing strategic environment and threats in the region, the author will scrutinize

- the diplomatic ways and actions conducting to foster trust among them,
- the quality of Information
- Defence or military activities such as meetings, multi-lateral exercises part of capacity building
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Strategic Environment

The security environment in DRC remains uncertain, volatile and complex since 1960 after independence. Local, regional, and international actors, drive and perpetrate the conflicts in this country through political, social, and economic motivations. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the largest country in Eastern Africa, yet it remains the poorest. Despite its wealth in natural resources, forests, and biodiversity, the country faces numerous challenges such as conflicts, wars, humanitarian crises, and natural disasters. In Eastern DRC, more than 120 armed groups exacerbate the region’s ongoing insecurity, causing the displacement of millions of citizens due to the atrocities they commit. These armed groups possess varied interests and goals, with their proliferation stemming from a 25-year history of persistent conflict over land and resources. Moreover, struggles for political and customary power, involvement of foreign intervention, have significantly contributed to this situation. Military leaders have deeply engaged in the conflict and its associated economy, leading to a crisis in governance. The reform should commence within the Congolese state itself. Meanwhile, groups such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO), and the M23 persist in destabilizing the security landscape in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). (SAWYER, 2022) In the absence of a reliable security source, civilians remain extremely vulnerable, with approximately 26.4 million individuals (an equivalent to 30 percent of the population) requiring protection and humanitarian assistance. Moreover, armed conflicts in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces have resulted in the internal displacement of about 4.5 million people. Notably, women and civilians have been specifically targeted amid the varied dynamics and drivers of conflict across the eastern provinces. (Akompí, 2022) Conflict stemming from the contest for control over illicit mining sites serves as a primary trigger for armed confrontations among various groups in Ituri. This situation results in direct targeting of civilians by the ADF, CODECO, and Zaire militias. Participants emphasized the gravity of the security crisis, citing the CODECO attack on the Lala internally displaced person’s camp in June 2023, resulting in the tragic loss of at least 45 civilian lives. In North Kivu, the ADF consistently perpetrates attacks on civilians, while the M23 engages in ongoing conflicts with the Congolese armed forces, aiming to expand its territorial dominance. In South Kivu, both foreign and local armed groups contribute to the perpetuation of insecurity, further complicating regional tensions along the border with neighboring Great Lakes countries. (Dizolele, 2022)

The humanitarian emergency in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has notably deteriorated since the beginning of 2022, primarily attributed to a surge in violence, compelling millions to evacuate their residences. This crisis is further aggravated by climate-induced calamities and repeated occurrences of disease outbreaks. Moreover, there has been a
distressing escalation in incidents of sexual and gender-based violence. Additionally, food shortages and the absence of viable means of livelihood have heightened the susceptibility of exploitation and abuse, particularly impacting women and adolescent girls. (Mayindu, 2023)

- **Diplomacy**

On April 8th, 2022, the Democratic Republic of the Congo joined the EAC. Becoming part of a robust, politically sound, and thriving regional alliance, established for more than two decades, holds the promise of lessening poverty and driving progress within the DRC, impacting both its economic and sociopolitical aspects. However, the DRC's arrival brings several lingering political issues, prompting concerns about whether the benefits it may bring will outweigh the risks to regional stability and the ongoing pace of integration. (Bar, 2023)

The situation in Eastern DRC rises a particular concern for the EAC state members. The rapid escalation of the security crisis in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) poses a significant threat of rekindling interstate conflict in the Great Lakes region. (Vogel et al., 2021)

Efforts to enhance peace and security in the East African region need to be highly effective and efficient. It is crucial to have peace processes led by the region to diminish the threat posed by armed groups to a level that the Congolese authorities and forces can manage. Notably, the Luanda dialogue process, overseen by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), holds significant importance in enhancing relations between DRC and Rwanda, thereby ensuring stability across the region. Similarly, the Nairobi peace process, under the guidance of the East African Community, continues to serve as the most promising approach for mitigating internal violence and facilitating disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of both local and foreign armed groups. Both of these peace initiatives serve as beacons of hope for civilians in the region. (Hoinathy, 2023)

The Nairobi peace process aims to expedite the ongoing regional endeavors towards achieving lasting peace and security in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), as outlined the diverse initiatives of the Heads of State from the East African Community (EAC). It is now crucial to ensure the effective implementation of the peace process and its corresponding roadmap. This involves reviving the joint intelligence team to delineate practical arrangements and setting up regional mechanisms aimed at combating the illegal exploitation of natural resources (HUANG, 2023)

In fact, the Nairobi Process outlines two distinct approaches to bring stability to the region. One involves a political strategy centered on fostering discussions between the DRC government and various non-governmental armed groups, such as the M23, operating within the area. The other approach involves a military initiative suggesting the deployment of a regional force to assist in combating hostile entities. (Russo, 2022)

The EAC faces several challenges in carrying out its mandate effectively, and it must continue to work with member states and other stakeholders to address these challenges. (Sabala, 2023) EAC, SADC, UA and other stakeholders joined force to achieve a ceasefire then establish a durable peace in the region. All these organizations may further emphasize the importance of prioritizing political
solutions and implementation of military tracks in support of such political solutions. Furthermore, it is essential to uphold the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and adhere to the standards set by International Humanitarian Law and human rights laws while executing military operations. (Ilunga, 2022)

- **Information**
  - **Language**
    In East Africa, Swahili is employed as a ‘bridging’ language and operates as a means of communication between different ethnic units and nationalities who don’t share the same mother tongue. Many nations in the region advocate for Kiswahili to be adopted as the official language within the East African Community (EAC). Its usage greatly facilitates communication among participants “As East African Community we need to create a shared sense of identity within a highly diverse linguistic society and promote East African unity,” said Uganda Prime Minister, adding that for « Uganda to smoothly integrate in the EAC, it should consider the crucial role of Kiswahili in promoting the regional integration agenda for sustainable development ». While only a minority of Ugandans speak Swahili, the Ugandan government advocates for its inclusion in school curriculums. Shared a language among partners significantly enhances mutual understanding and confidence. Moreover, considering that most member countries are part of the Commonwealth and Francophonie, both English and French are recognized as official languages alongside the push for Kiswahili in the region. (Huaxia, 2023)
  - **Intelligence sharing**
    Mapping and preventing conflicts within the Region stands as a critical endeavor. As security challenges have amassed, posing a structural threat, African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) implemented Regional Early Warning Systems (REWS), which emerged as a fundamental component for integrating security across the continent. However, disparities among these REWS pose a hindrance to achieving security integration. Within the East African Community (EAC), the establishment of the EAC Early Warning Mechanism (EACWARN) has been a pivotal step. This Early Warning System involves the comprehensive collection and analysis of a wide array of information spanning various thematic areas. These encompass aspects such as terrorism, cross-border criminal activities, inter-ethnic tensions, and human rights issues. (Lutz, 2021)
  - **Volunterism for peace in East Africa**
    Community-based volunteers in EAC have the potential to be valuable allies in fostering social unity, fostering trust among community members, and ultimately empowering and rallying individuals for peaceful endeavors. Volunteers might possess a more genuine outlook and less discouragement when confronted with the challenges inherent in peace-building efforts. Despite their potential for impartiality, it remains crucial for these volunteers, as outsiders, to align with the core values of the groups they collaborate with. While a mix of perspectives and social variety can potentially reduce conflicts, differences in values and other forms of diversity might intensify existing conflicts. (Lough & Mati, 2012)
Military
The regional military has meticulously planned annual and periodic joint activities within a structured calendar. Despite political tensions between certain member states, these activities persistently take place. Such engagements encompass various activities such as joint exercises, cultural and sporting exchanges, student exchange programs involving military schools, colleges, and academies of partner nations, cross-border disaster response initiatives, high-level visits, and mutual facilitation for unimpeded passage through each other’s territories. (Kabugi, 2017)

Training
Defense forces engage in collective training focusing on peacekeeping, disaster management, and counter-terrorism. However, the decision regarding whether and how their Defense Forces would engage in operations within the territory of another member State remains a political choice to be made by the member States.

Multi-lateral exercise codenamed “Ushirikiano Imara”
Multi-lateral exercise aims to enhance capabilities in addressing intricate security challenges and aims to foster harmonious working relationships while improving military coordination among the Armed Forces of the East African Community (EAC) Partner States. These joint exercises are held alternately in different EAC member countries to address region-specific issues. Their primary objective is to enhance interoperability by refining joint planning and operational execution, adhering to EAC standard operating procedures (SOPs) at operational and tactical levels. Moreover, the exercise is designed to elevate awareness and advocacy for the EAC integration agenda. Rwandan Defence Minister Juvénal Marizamunda, speaking at the conclusion of the recent joint exercise "Ushirikiano Imara" held in Rwanda, emphasized the value of integrated exercises. He highlighted that such activities not only enhance operational efficiency but also foster strong bonds of trust and camaraderie among military, police, and civilian personnel. Minister Marizamunda also expressed concerns about the evolving security challenges in the 21st century, emphasizing the need for collective efforts to address these challenges. (Owaka, 2016)

Military games and cultural exchanges
Since 2005, these games have been hosted in different countries, commencing with the inaugural event in Kampala. The organization of these games adheres to the guidelines outlined in the EAC Protocol on Cooperation in Defence Affairs. This protocol encourages visits among member nations and sharing of information, incorporating sport, tournaments and cultural interaction among the armed forces of partner countries. Undoubtedly, this event has significantly contributed to fostering solidarity and a sense of unity among the defense forces of the East African Community and its partner states. The secretary-general of the East African Community, Liberat Mfumukeko, said the games symbolize something larger than just an athletic competition. He stated: “when our common citizens watch these events and perceive that our defense forces are working together and engage in friendly activities that project mutual trust and confidence, they inevitably garner higher levels of confidence in the East African Community project at both economic and political dimensions.” (Staff, 2019)
- **Senior leader meetings**

  EAC’s senior military leaders hold regular and extraordinary meetings with the aim of assessing the progress of collaboration in training, implementing prior decisions made by sectoral council regarding defense partnerships, and evaluating advancements in enhancing the academic capabilities of military officers attending Command and Staff Colleges. Regarding the situation in Eastern DRC, on June 6th, 2022, the Chiefs of Defence Forces (CDFs) from the East African Community (EAC) Partner States assembled in Goma, to lay down initial frameworks for a regional force intended to assist in restoring peace and security within the country. Military chiefs of the East African Community (EAC) have reached an agreement to deploy soldiers to areas formerly controlled by M23 rebels. Their mission is to supervise a gradual withdrawal and ensure the protection of civilians. Additionally, they reiterated a stern warning, indicating that all armed groups in the DRC must disarm; otherwise, they would face an attack by the combined forces of the entire region. (STAFF, 2023) The pursuit of peace and security agenda remains a fundamental pillar in advancing the integration process within the EAC. Consequently, establishing security and stability in Eastern DRC holds paramount importance for regional prosperity, fostering an environment conducive to the flourishing of all other aspects of regional integration. (Walsh, 2020)

- **Economy**

  Since 2000, East African Community (EAC) has operated a customs union and established a common market. Currently, it is actively executing a robust regional infrastructure program aimed at bolstering the creation of a unified market for unrestricted trade among member countries. To further advance integration, the EAC is aiming to establish an East African Monetary Union (EAMU) by achieving macroeconomic convergence. This involves aligning monetary and exchange rate policies, enhancing payment and settlement systems, improving financial sector supervision, and standardizing statistical practices across the region. (Ltaifa et al., 2014)

  East African Community (EAC) boasts a population of 153.1 million people and exhibits a relatively modest level of development, evident in its total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) standing at USD 232.5 billion. The regional GDP per capita at PPP measures USD 1516, amounting to just 43.1% of the African average. There is variability in size, population, and economic development among these member countries. EAC Common Market serves as a catalyst for bolstering economic growth by enabling the free movement of individuals, goods, and capital. This underscores the growing significance of regional cooperation among EAC partner nations, particularly in effectively managing borders to prevent and detect irregular movements, criminal activities, and terrorism. Notably, the EAC trade agreement has significantly contributed to fostering peace in the Great Lakes region. On average, this agreement resulted in a notable 12% reduction in the risk of bilateral conflicts among member countries (Mayer, Thierry; Thoenig, 2016)

  It's evident that the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has significantly expanded, enriched, and diversified the array of natural resources within the East
African Community (EAC) in terms of landmass, natural resources, and human capital. Member states have the opportunity to leverage the EAC’s infrastructure to forge new bilateral and multilateral agreements, facilitating access to and utilization of these augmented resources while concurrently mitigating potential new or heightened threats. It is important to highlight that, contrary to expectations, the assets and liabilities of the Community are joint, rather than co-owned by individual member states. Consequently, the EAC region boasts a wealth of diverse natural resources, including freshwater, marine and coastal ecosystems, forests, wildlife, wetlands, arable land, mountains, minerals, energy resources, and abundant biodiversity. EAC Partner States acknowledge that maintaining a clean and healthy environment is fundamental for sustainable development. They recognize that various development activities across sectors like agriculture, energy, industry, and infrastructure may potentially have adverse impacts, leading to environmental degradation. (Omondi, 2022)

The area has accelerated its efforts towards regional integration, marking significant advancements in institutional reforms. Furthermore, East Africa currently enjoys a notably higher level of political stability compared to recent times, with peace largely reinstated across most countries. There has been substantial investment in both local and regional infrastructure, with numerous projects planned and set to kick off in the near future. (RWIGEMA (Ph.D), 2020)

• Challenges

Despite its efforts, the EAC faces several challenges in promoting peace and security in East Africa. One of the main challenges is the lack of resources, both financial and human, to carry out its mandate effectively. Additionally, political instability and corruption in some member states pose a significant threat to regional peace and security. The EAC must also navigate the complex geopolitical landscape of the region, which includes competing interests from external actors such as China, the United States, and Russia. (Elowson & Albuquerque, 2015) Tensions between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda are escalating anew, stemming from the worsening security situation in eastern DRC. This escalation follows intensified clashes in recent weeks between the Congolese military and the resurging M23 rebels. Kinshasa alleges that Kigali is supporting the M23 rebels, while Kigali accuses Kinshasa of backing the Front Démocratique de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR). (Vogel et al., 2021)
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The situation in Eastern DRC has sparked notable concern among the EAC and other organizations like SADC, AU, and the UN. The resulting humanitarian crisis involves the responsibility of various political, social, and security stakeholders. The multitude of actors operating within this region, burdened by complex geopolitical dynamics, significantly complicates both the security and humanitarian aspects. Amidst the escalating violence in eastern DRC, the East African Community (EAC) has taken the step of deploying forces to one of its seven member states in a bid to establish and uphold peace and stability. This deployment signifies the organization's first use of forces since its inception in 1999, serving as a pivotal test of its capability to address the region's violence and contribute to stabilizing the country. This research highlights Confidence-Building Measures (CBM) as an approach aimed at cultivating reliability and nurturing trust among partners and even adversaries. The intent is to fortify unity and promote integration among states. The study underscores that Diplomacy and Defence are intertwined, as defence diplomacy is an integral aspect of foreign policy aimed at advancing national interests. (Budyanto Putro Sudarsono, Jonni Mahroza, 2018) CBM activities doing to reinforce cohesion and friendship among states is jeopardised by the conflict intra-states especially between Rwanda and DRC. As the two governments continue to trade blame, their historically strained diplomatic relationship is under immense pressure. This conflict fragilise and has an impact in the effectiveness of CBM in spite of many efforts were undertaken to overcome it. The EAC troops faced skepticism during the intervention accusing to protect economic interests not to establish peace. (Kleinfeld, 2022)

In conclusion, the situation in Eastern DRC challenges the CBM carefully established by EAC. The diplomatical efforts supporting by EAC defence forces are the effective way to get stability in the region. (Dizolele, 2022)

FURTHER STUDY

EAC also faces maritime security issues which are in the hotspot of international concerns. CBM in maritime security should be conduct to highlight this situation and enables EAC to address effectively these issues.

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