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## **Compliance vs the ragged threat: problem-solving security in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

### **Abstract**

The securitisation of development in the post-Cold War era has introduced two security perspectives into the work of northern donors working in the global south. One is the assertion of a commonality of interests: this is embedded in neoliberal notions of security based on consensus, and is consonant with the mechanics of a free market; it is also supported by various advocacy and activist groups who push for transparency and accountability. The other is a realist perspective that the global south poses threats from underdevelopment and poverty, AIDS, climate change and other phenomena.

There is an element of contradiction between these perspectives. The first promotes compliance with a neoliberal ideology through mechanisms such as technical support and capacity-building; the second implies the existence of a ragged threat and conflicting interests, and the need to confront, contain or protect against them. These two contradictory perspectives have been combined in northern policy to address underdevelopment and potential insurgency simultaneously through interventionary programming. The approach is one of problem-solving that specifies how to deal with insecurity, rather than enquiring into the mechanisms that reproduce it.

This paper examines northern security-oriented interventions, bringing evidence from the province of Katanga in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It finds that policies promote, but do not achieve, compliance with neoliberal ideology and order. The Congolese state has accommodated extroverted processes of liberalisation, but domestically it resists and distorts the interventionary austerity and forestalls distribution of power to the population. A realist agenda is pursued through the timing and manner in which interventions are carried out, including the violence that is overlooked in order for liberalisation to proceed.

The article concludes that the interventions made in the name of development and security in fact promote insecurity in two ways. Firstly, in defining the 'solution' to the problem of insecurity, they foreclose alternative approaches and shut down the participation of sections of the Congolese population or the state. Secondly, by overlooking conflicting interests, the interventions perpetuate regressive practices that ignore, rather than addressing and negotiating, political difference. The outcome is that there are some short term gains for some parties but ultimately the programmes compromise all concerned and the legitimacy of the donors to intervene.

### **Introduction**

Northern intervention in African countries and the promotion of development, particularly in areas affected by violence, has become practically synonymous with the promotion of security. But whose security? Security studies in academe has been dominated by northern writers and northern concerns (Croft 2010, 196), and power differentials between donors and recipients mean that interventions can be imposed on developing countries with relative ease. What, though, are the

outcomes for people in countries where these programmes are implemented if priorities are contradictory, or if relevant perspectives are routinely excluded from the formulation of what development and security is and how they are achieved?

Congo experienced two major interconnected and international wars in the late 1990s and Northern development programmes implemented in the country incorporated implicit and explicit security elements. Whilst these policies emerged from mainstream development discourse and conform in many respects with accepted 'good practice', there is a fundamental contradiction in the approach, which combines elements of neoliberal and realist agendas. This paper aims to unpack the contradiction and to see who wins from it and how, and to explain how and why this contradiction generates insecurity.

The province of Katanga provides a relevant case study. The presence of enormous mineral reserves and a relatively stable operating environment (compared to other mineral-rich areas of Congo) has put Katanga at the heart of the liberal project for business-led post-conflict recovery. However, compliance with neoliberal tenets has not been comprehensive and the pattern of coercion and oversight can be examined with reference to a northern realist agenda.

## **Neoliberal, realist & critical perspectives**

The state and population of the Democratic Republic of Congo are profoundly insecure and the level of development is emphatically low: Congo is ranked 168 out of 169 on the Human Development Index 2010.<sup>1</sup> The evolution of northern policy through the 1990s has generated approaches that link these phenomena, perceiving insecurity and underdevelopment as intertwined and addressing them together (Duffield 2001). Within these approaches there are elements of neoliberalism, which identifies the possibility of collaboration, and realism, which views the likelihood of conflict.

### **NEOLIBERALISM – possibility of collaboration**

Congo presents a set of development issues that liberal observers persistently find perplexing: vast mineral wealth alongside appalling poverty. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative refers to the 'paradox of plenty', commenting "Extremely rich in natural resources (80% of world wide resources of Coltan, 10% of world wide resources of copper), the population suffers of (sic) extreme poverty (80% of the Congolese population lives of less than US\$ 0.20 a day)."<sup>2</sup> PACT, an American NGO working on the mineral trade, similarly observes: "Despite its abundance of resources, the DRC remains one of the poorest countries in the world" (PACT n.d., 1).

A neoliberal position assumes that commonality of interests can be found through market transactions, and that this will generate shared economic gains and common security; its model of perfect information and equal power. The framework holds that "there is no analytical distinction between the realms of security and the economy, and that institutions help to create a focus on absolute, rather than relative, gains" (Croft 2010, 205). This has its philosophical roots with Kant and the notion of perpetual peace, and is subscribed to by those who believe in the free market.

According to Duffield, "Liberalism proceeds on the basis that 'Others' are the problem to be solved" (Duffield 2007, 117-8; Evans 2010, 420). The neoliberal approach in Congo views underdevelopment through the lens of the opportunities offered by expansive markets: it demands compliance with the institutional rules. Its mooted 'absolute gains' notwithstanding, it is a fundamentally competitive framework. It establishes its conditions for inclusion and exclusion, supported by a codification of

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<sup>1</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD.html> (accessed 19 May 2011).

<sup>2</sup> <http://eiti.org/DR Congo> (accessed 19 May 2011).

what constitutes appropriate activity. A normative vocabulary legitimises some forms of behaviour (market transactions) and delegitimizes others. The terminology is that of 'corruption', 'lack of transparency', rather than 'the purposeful strategies of rulers' (Reno 2000, 434).

Neoliberal success leads to disaster for some: it establishes a competitive model with no safety net, placing those redundant to the world economy at the bottom of the pile. Policy failures also generate victims: the market does not have an arbitrator, so there is no one to ensure the institutional norms and, when there are conflicts over goals or means arise, the promise of economic gain can aggravate the situation (ICG 2006, 11): markets become violent in direct and structural ways. Parties in the south and the north meddle with the mechanisms of the market, profiting from - and institutionalising - its imperfections. Competition, when perfect information and equal power does not obtain, is economically and politically divisive, exacerbating the inequality that the neoliberal perspective finds threatening.

### **REALISM – pursuit of politics through force**

A more Clausewitzian position also detectable in northern policy in Congo holds to realism and the pursuit of politics through force. The realist strategy is based on 'capabilities and weapons systems' (Van Ham 2010, 218) that uses conventional forms of power to reproduce and reinforce advantage. The realist perspective sees the global South as a source of threats from instability, AIDS, terrorism, organised crime and migration in need of containment.

The UK government's Africa Conflict Prevention Pool is a joint fund held by DFID, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence, strongly suggesting that British interests are at stake, and the perception of a 'ragged threat'. The combative discourse is also indicative: in 2005, DFID's strategy was 'fighting poverty to build a safer world' (DFID 2005). Four years later it asserted, 'many of the problems which affect us – conflict, international crime, the trade in drugs and the spread of diseases – are caused or made worse by poverty in developing countries' (DFID 2009).

These threats do not draw military fire from the north as they are small and distant, but they are met with policies of containment. Realism is manifested both through the coercive use of political superiority and through the strategic oversight of violence, and structural violence, whereby systemic processes prevent people from fulfilling their needs (Galtung 1980) by reinforcing the political economy.

### **CRITICAL SECURITY STUDIES – how dominant forms of security are reproduced**

Critical security studies aims to examine the mechanisms by which dominant forms of security are maintained and perpetuate forms of insecurity for others (Fierke 2007, 14). Duffield identifies a tension at the centre of neoliberalism in his work on global governance: southern governments are expected to comply voluntarily with the demands of the governance agenda. If they do not, northern governments abandon the collaborative approach of liberal peace and adopt – where military commitment can be mustered – an approach of liberal war; otherwise they simply adapt to policy failure (Duffield 2001, 261). Dillon and Reid, in their 'Liberal war' thesis, similarly argue that "in proclaiming peace... liberals are nonetheless committed also to making war" (Dillon and Reid 2009, 2).

Congo's lack of military capability would appear to make it a case for adapting to policy failure, and to a certain extent an accommodation with elites is reached. There is another layer that needs analysis though: while it may be ideologically inconsistent to accommodate southern governments that do not comply with neoliberal tenets, northern policy has not necessarily failed in Congo. A critical angle needs to include an investigation of what forms of violence are overlooked or institutionalised, with reference to northern strategic and economic interests. Schaffer and Clay's

assessment that ‘policy is... what it does’ challenges the nominal boundaries between what constitutes success and failure (Schaffer 1984, 189). The choice of how to respond to *prima facie* policy failure is not random in nature or function. The fact that the choice exists is manifestation of the power differential; realist means and priorities can define how, when and the kind of ‘neoliberal’ market that is established.

Examining the neoliberal and realist elements of northern intervention side-by-side exposes further contradictions that can be explored through the lens of critical security studies, to investigate how dominant versions of security are maintained and reproduced. This perspective interrogates the realist position by exploring the nature of the faultline between the global north and the global south (Dannreuther 2007, 3). This reframes the ‘illegitimate’ activity of corruption and spoilers as a conflict of interests between north and south, or – for a more detailed analysis – between various constituencies in the north and south. Opening this conflict to analysis allows for the dynamics and mechanisms of the conflict and the accompanying northern policy to be scrutinised.

### **Katanga: central to – & distant from – Congo’s political economy**

Katanga harbours the contrary logic of Congolese politics. It is the Presidential homeland and its vast mineral concessions are overseen by key politicians in the capital (Lutundula Commission 2005, 3; Global Witness 2006, 44) but Lubumbashi, Katanga’s provincial city, is 1000km from the capital and has a history of evading Congo’s formal political infrastructure. With the assistance of Belgium it seceded just after Independence, sparking the Congo Crisis, a severe blow to the country’s national security for the next five years. There were secessionist movements through the 1970s and 1980s and in 2005, politicians, businessmen and army officers were arrested in Lubumbashi on suspicion of plotting to secede (ICG 2006, 11).

The political situation has a commensurate economic aspect: despite being central to Congo’s economy, Katanga has maintained economic and political distance from the capital and much of the rest of the country. Before Independence the mining giant UMHK<sup>3</sup> was regarded as a ‘state within a state’, providing a modicum of development for its employees and others and profiting from easy trade routes to Zambia. At Independence, UMHK became a national company, known as Gécamines,<sup>4</sup> which continued both to support the state economically and to contribute to processes of informalisation that enabled the population to avoid contact with the state (MacGaffey 1991).

The collapse of Gécamines in the late 1980s and its associated informalisation, together with the pillage of the rest of the economy in the early 1990s, were government-led contesting the usual distinctions between formal and informal activities. Lubumbashi’s informal trade was founded on the bones of Gécamines and, despite the violence at the end of the decade, Petit and Mutambwa argue that in Lubumbashi the lines of trade were not significantly re-ordered by the wars. In their study of terminology referring to the economic crisis they find that with the exception of the phrase ‘war wounded’ to refer to tattered bank notes, there was no reference to the war in slang relating to informal activity in Lubumbashi (Petit and Mutambwa 2005).

In security and strategic terms, Katanga played a key role in the wars of the late 1990s. On embarking on the first Congo War at the end of 1996, Laurent Kabila took Lubumbashi early, knowing the province to be of prime significance. In the second Congo war, which started in 1998, the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) occupied the northern part of Katanga, and the pressure

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<sup>3</sup> Union Minière du Haut Katanga

<sup>4</sup> Général des Carrières et des Mines

this exerted was a major contributing factor to the Congolese government's agreement to accept the terms of the peace in 2002.

### **Elements of neoliberalism in the intervention**

Mainstream development policy in Congo espouses neoliberal ideals: the market is firmly in the driving seat of development policy (DFID 2008), and the IMF introduced extensive liberalisation projects from 2001. This was despite the country's dismal record as far as liberalisation is concerned: in the 1980s a disastrous episode of IMF-imposed liberalisation wrecked what was left of a faltering economy. The neoliberal model is essentially optimistic and perceives underdevelopment and its associated insecurity as the result of incapacity and lack of markets. The 'solution' to underdevelopment offered by neoliberalism is more markets and more compliance; the precise mechanisms by which this is linked to development or security are obscure. Katanga, with its vast copper and cobalt deposits, is widely cited as the engine for growth by northern donors and NGOs, so much so that DFID portrays the market as an inevitability:

"There will inevitably be a move towards industrial mining in some areas, notably Katanga and the Kasais, where machines will replace miners. There will need to be action to help families diversify from mining to alternative livelihoods, potentially most profitably back into agriculture. There is a risk of conflict at the work places as these transformations take place."(DFID 2007, 8)

Referring to neoliberalism, Bauman writes, "Selecting out those ways of life that are fittest by design inevitably writes into that very script those lives that are retarded, backward, degenerate, wasteful and ultimately dangerous to social order" (Bauman 1991; Evans 2010, 425). Processes of industrialisation have been violent in the past, and globalised processes multiply the dimensions in which lives can be deemed 'degenerate, wasteful and ultimately dangerous.' In Duffield's terms, "Culturally coded racism striates the world of peoples, separating good from bad, useful from useless in terms of their contribution to international security" (Duffield 2007, 227). If the 'inevitability' of industrialisation is accepted the majority of the Congolese population is rendered 'useless.' The 'risk of conflict' identified by DFID is offset by neoliberal aspirations:

"Better management of trade in natural resources will lead to more sustainable incomes and livelihoods for the poor, support transparent revenue raising for legitimate governments and play an important role in bolstering regional security." (DFID 2007, 7)

The discourse is not empirically based in Congo and it disregards the politics of power and of mineral extraction and trade: artisanal mining is not a relic of a former pattern of production it is a response to the form of domestic and international governance that the population has been subjected to. It is also not an incidental detail: artisanal mining accounts for 90% of Congo's mineral extraction (PACT & USAID 2007, 9) and employs 150,000 people in Katanga (Global Witness 2006, 5). They are encouraged back to agriculture by DFID: in Duffield's terms, they are encouraged to be 'self-reliant' in a globalised world (Duffield 2007, 18-9).

The priorities of the liberalisation are evident: the Mining Code of 2002 was drafted by the World Bank and set the tone for the re-engagement of bilateral and multilateral donors in Congo. It introduced low tax rates for foreign companies to attract investment, and established standard guidelines for contracts that established environmental, labour and financial conditions (Govt of DRC 2002); in doing so, the Mining Code recognised that there were domestic and international aspects

to mining. The code is linked to development, again through ideological donor discourse rather than a political assessment of Congo. DFID asserts,

“A more regulated and formalised trading regime would benefit the government at national and provincial level from greater revenue collection. It would also benefit the people at large both from these revenues being used on service delivery but also in the creation of wealth through growth.” (DFID 2007, 8)

The means of regulation and formalisation are not elaborated, and some indication of the extent of established practices of informal trading is given by the fact that Zambian authorities record roughly double the amount of copper arriving in Zambia that Congolese authorities record as leaving (DFID 2007, 25). Despite this, and despite the involvement of political elites in the alternative market, compliance is displayed as consensual. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) claims:

“The Government of the DRC early on identified the EITI as a tool to resolve the paradox of plenty. At the EITI Conference held in London on 17 March 2005, the DRC officially announced its endorsement of the EITI principles to strengthen transparency and good governance of the extractive industries sector. Following this public statement the country embarked on the implementation of the initiative.”<sup>5</sup>

The northern donors’ neoliberalism is extended through activities of lobby groups, NGOs and other bodies working in and on Congo. The Extractive Industries Network (EIN) takes as its goal, to “Promote sustainable and equitable social and economic recovery in Katanga and the Democratic Republic of Congo.” It, too, explicitly links security and development, continuing,

“The EIN is a forum for collaboration on three key governance issues in the mining sector in the DRC. The first is improving the transparency of revenues paid to the state, particularly in relation to the mining royalties, which are intended for social benefit. The second focus area is to ensure that human rights are respected in security arrangements for the mining sector. And thirdly, to address the major challenges of transition from the informal, largely illegal and dangers (sic) artisanal mining sector into a regulated mining industry” (PACT & USAID 2007, 9)

Global Witness, in assessing the Mining Code in Katanga, advocates greater adherence to the neoliberal codes and principles and more robust penalties for defaulting (Global Witness 2006, 51). PACT follows the same line, working in conjunction with mining companies and northern donors to support a raft of initiatives in Katanga. The language is that of transparency and capacity; PACT has developed an ‘Economic development and Governance Road Map 2008-2015,’ (PACT et al n.d.) echoing on the terminology of the US-led interventions in Afghanistan.

The liberalisation of the mining sector has been successful in creating the conditions for foreign investment. In practical terms, nearly all the Gécamines concessions were sold off during the Transitional Period from installation of the transitional government in 2003 to the presidential elections in 2006. There are also signs of institutional success, according to the EITI which notes: “On 14 December 2010, the EITI Board designated The Democratic Republic of Congo, as an EITI Candidate country that is “Close to Compliant.”<sup>6</sup>” The implementation of liberalisation had made

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<sup>5</sup> <http://eiti.org/DRCongo>

<sup>6</sup> <http://eiti.org/DRCongo>

provision for trade to take place relatively unhindered. The neoliberal position assumes there is no political contention, simply technical obstacles to compliance. What are the costs of this assumption?

### **Elements of realism in intervention**

The time frame is short for quantitative evaluations, but the HDI records a modest improvement in Congo's GNP.<sup>7</sup> This improvement, though, dates from the late 1990s – from the episode of most intense fighting of the Second Congo war, when two thirds of the country was under occupation by Rwanda and Uganda – not from the liberalisation of the economy or its accompanying programmes. This suggests that there is a more profound realist agenda influencing and impacting on the economy and that political and economic gains can be made from violence.

In assuming that there is no contention to the market model, the neoliberal position does not problematise power, and as such it overlooks the differentials of the political economy. In Congo, this involves overlooking violence, as state and non-state actors routinely express and contest power violently. The realist perspective, on the other hand, accepts elements of the politics of poverty, including the likelihood of conflict between parties, and seeks to profit by whatever means from political advantage. It perceives threats from insurgency, instability, illegal trade and other forms of disorder arising from state failure, non-state networks and underdevelopment; the policy response is pursuit economic and strategic interests in such a way as to stem or contain the threat.

Duffield and the liberal war theorists identified non-compliance with the northern agenda as a challenge or contradiction for neoliberalism. Katanga throws some light on how the contradiction is resolved by donors: the lack of compliance is problematic ideologically for the liberal agenda, but it does not need to be problematic in practical terms as the power disparity allows northern governments to ride the storm of Congolese 'corruption' whilst not compromising their interests. This gives a clue to what is going on: realism provides the means to respond to non-compliance with neoliberal policy, and in doing so it realigns the goalposts.

In the first instance, northern interventions are born of the ability of these donors to intervene at a time and in a manner that suits their interests. Tracking their involvement in Congo, the choice of when to intervene is not causally connected to underdevelopment, which preceded the intervention and has not been alleviated by it. It was also not directly connected to the insecurity experienced in Congo: although the liberalisation was implemented at roughly the same era as the Peace was signed, the wars were still raging in the Kivus, and Ituri, and the fighting in Katanga increased significantly five years later.

The choice to promote liberalisation in 2001 came after a ten year absence of northern bilateral and multilateral aid to Congo. In terms of timing and strategy this is most straightforwardly linked to the presence of the Chinese investors, whose influence increased rapidly in many parts of Africa in the late 1990s. Chinese companies secured vast longterm concessions in Katanga and in doing so posed a threat to the economic supremacy of the USA and the established northern influence in Africa (Marriage 2010). Whilst this investment brings some material returns to Congolese people hired in the installations, the Chinese involvement, like the northern interventions, is not structurally linked to development in Congo and with the end of the commodities boom, forty Chinese companies left.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD.html> (accessed 11 May 2011).

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<http://www.pactworld.org/cs/democratic-republic-of-congo/drc-news-chinese-copper-entrepreneurs-flee-drc> (accessed 19 May 2011).

Beyond this key strategic interest, the conventional threats, such as the threat of instability or insurgency posed by Congo to northern interests, is small. The realism of the northern agenda is not pursued through military intervention so much as through passive violence, defined as the violence that an actor has the ability to stop but does not, and forms of structural violence which severely curtail people's opportunities in systemic ways that do not require direct physical contact.

### **Passive violence**

Passive violence tends to be regressive in allowing those with the political or military power advantage to entrench their position by not protecting less powerful parties. In Congo, Joseph Kabila and Jean Pierre Bemba used direct forms of violence against each other and against the civilian population in the run-up to the Presidential election.<sup>9</sup> These events were decried by northern donors who were sponsoring the election process, but no political sanctions were imposed, and by allowing the violence to pass, the donors were complicit in allowing the two front-runners, who had established their status through war, to intimidate other candidates and the civilian population.

This tactic of allowing violence to take place and thereby reinforcing the political economy takes many forms in Katanga. Events in 2006, three years after the formal termination of the war, demonstrated the force of passive violence: in the north of the province, an area known as the 'Death Triangle' between the towns of Mitwaba, Pweto and Manono was established when Mai Mai militias, who had supported the government in the Second War, perceiving that they had been abandoned, turned against the government. Soldiers attacked the Mai Mai and civilians who were presumed to have been supporting them, displacing 49,000 people in an already province already home to hundreds of thousands of IDPs (ICG 2006, 4).

This was not a remnant of the war, it was a violent dynamic that was aggravated after the peace had been signed. Northern donors were implicated in that they were providing financial support and political legitimacy to the government, including funding for the security sector, at the time. The Congolese army, the FARDC, was strengthened by the northern sponsorship, but not reformed. The attacks on civilians received little attention from donors or northern NGOs, leading the International Crisis Group to label the events in Katanga 'Congo's forgotten crisis.' Despite high expenditure on demobilisation programmes across the country, there was no integration of the Mai Mai militias in Katanga (ICG 2006, 12) and the FARDC, continued to be "arguably the single largest security threat for Congolese civilians" (ICG 2006, 14).

More generally, passive violence was committed through the UN mission, Monuc; this was the UN's most expensive mission, but did not provide protection for civilians, effectively allowing various militias to prey on them. In 2006, when there were 15,000 displaced people in Katanga, Monuc had just 150 military advisors in the province and their mandate was only to protect UN personnel and property in Kalemie. In an ineffective response to the crisis, a further 800 troops were sent to Katanga shortly after, but with little to define their role or function (ICG 2006, 12-4). The population were, in Duffield's terminology, 'non-insured' (Duffield 2007, 19).

These events took place at the same time that the liberalisation of mining and promotion of foreign investment was being hailed as a success. Further forms of passive violence occurred as the accommodation between the political elites, responsible for negotiating sales of concessions, and the northern donors further marginalised an already precarious artisanal economy. This fuelled the frustration of many people living in Katanga who perceived that they are being robbed daily by foreign firms with the complicity of their government (Global Witness 2006). These conditions led to violence as public protest was met with state-led attacks: at Anvil's Dikulushi mine in Kilwa in

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<sup>9</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/node/217164> (accessed 20 May 2011).



October 2004 (350km north of Lubumbashi), 70-100 civilians were killed by the military (ACIDH & RAID 2005; ICG 2006, ). In Kolwezi in April 2006, four deaths resulted from violent clashes over artisanal mining (PACT et al n.d.).

### **Structural violence**

Passive violence is supported by structural violence. Key to these mechanisms is the fact that the political elites benefited from the mineral sales and the population did not. This occurred because the neoliberal position overlooked the politics of mining, assuming that there were only technical obstacles to compliance, and assuming that the state, on receiving increased revenue would effect a form of sustainable development for the benefit of the population. Policy success from the neoliberal perspective insitutionalised forms of structural violence.

The UN Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources record politicians close to the president intervening to ensure favourable terms for foreign companies in Congo (UNSC 2002a; ICG 2006, 8). The political elite in the Transitional Government cashed in on what was likely to be a short time in office by selling off Gécamines concessions (Global Witness 2006, 35). The Lutundula Report, supported by the World Bank, investigated sixty partnership agreements and catalogued a range of incompetence and error on the part of the state, which stood to gain nothing from many concessions (Lutundula Commission 2005, 3). It was damning of the interference of politicians in the negotiating and arranging the selling-off of Gécamines, stating that the mineral resources were, “sliced up, mostly to satisfy the immediate needs for cash of the governmental authorities, rather than to finance the revival of the bankrupt enterprise” (Lutundula Commission 2005, 11).

The Lutundula Report named politicians involved; as such it appeared to introduce a measure of accountability. It detailed evidence of the overwhelming significance of the “mining conventions that often enclose one-sided financial clauses and fiscal clauses that pose a disadvantage to the country” (Lutundula Commission 2005, 53). It was not, though, discussed in the parliament and there was not legal or political sanction imposed in as a result of the report. Meanwhile, the increase in ‘capacity’ (read: power) of the political elite gained through political and economic advantage caused an increase in corruption: top government officials have had their hands strengthened by the neoliberal processes of capacity building and the possibility to sell concessions and became more organised and better equipped to prey on artisanal miners. Global Witness reports an increase in corruption through the Transition period, with a multiplication of the number of state offices at the gates of mines, collecting per diems from the miners (Global Witness 2006, 14).

### ***Producing/reproducing insecurity?***

The neoliberal paradigm does not problematise power and Bilgin argues that this is not a blind spot but is constitutive of what security comes to mean and be (Bilgin 2010). Through the ideological (non-empirical) programming, assumptions are institutionalised that render some people’s insecurity insignificant and therefore excluded from the mechanisms that promote development and security.

In Katanga, the international elements of neoliberalism have been pursued more robustly than the domestic elements: international compliance with market norms has been – broadly – achieved, while domestic non-compliance and violence is routinely overlooked. The realist element of the interventions has supported this with strategic oversight of elements that are irrelevant to northern strategic interests, allowing the policy to be implemented in such a way as to reinforce the political economy both internationally and nationally. The power of northern donors is strengthened over the Congolese state and the power of elites over the rest of the population is strengthened domestically. The structural and passive violence disempowers both the leadership and the population in Congo (through and despite the immediate gains made by elites) and engages with the

ragged threats of instability alongside the more profound threat posed to US supremacy by the rise of China as a world power. It remains to be seen if this approach will be successful, but with respect to the power bases and interests of the north, it is strategic.

The passive and structural violence foreclose alternative approaches to the pursuit of development and security and feed into regressive practices. These mechanisms play crucial roles in the neoliberal and realist agendas, but compromise people in Congo; in doing so, they also challenge the legitimacy of northern donors to intervene.

### **Foreclosing alternatives/ feeding into regressive practices**

The assumptions of neoliberalism and the ability of northern donors to impose policy establish a differentiating power dynamic. The Mining Code was a blueprint policy that attained minimal buy-in from the political elites and, in offering little of practical significance to artisanal miners, contravened the processes by which the majority of the population in Katanga survived. Whilst being attached to the discourse of development and security, this foreclosed the possibility of a security contract. The policy was introduced from outside that had effectively no room for negotiation or accountability: it locked both the Congolese state and the population out of the mechanisms of security. There were economic incentives for the elites to be involved, but the low level of compliance and significant deviations demonstrated the instrumental nature of their association with the donors.

The divergence of priorities exhibited in the suboptimal sales of concessions (including the incompetence of Congolese negotiators), the collection of predatory taxation and the continued lack of investment in service provision in Congo demonstrates that there were major differences in the interests between the northern donors and the elites (despite the accommodation that was reached) and between these sets of parties and the population of Congo. The lack of compliance to the neoliberal policy coupled with the northern enthusiasm for it allowed for further reinforcement of the political economy and more stringent foreclosure of alternative voices. The continued impoverishment of the population through taxation and unemployment is crucial in maintaining the political hierarchy and weakening the opposition.

The notion that targets are being hit and the rest can be sorted out later suggests a linear development and security. ICG quotes a diplomat in Kinshasa as saying, “We must get elections done, have a more legitimate government and then address good governance and impunity” (ICG 2006, 15) and critique his position. Events in Katanga demonstrate that such linearity does not characterise development or security in Congo: violence in Katanga increased after the peace had been signed and irregular taxation and harassment increased with the opportunities granted by liberalisation, whilst undermining its mechanisms.

### **Compromising legitimacy to intervene**

The foreclosing of alternatives and the support of regressive practices has transferred the political economy forged by war onto a nominally peaceful democracy. As northern donors promoted their version of development and security through structural and passive violence, they also implicated themselves in the direct forms of violence that their approach sanctions.

By reinforcing the established political economy, the interventions have contributed to the differentials that maintain the dominance of the political elite over the population in Congo and the strength of the north over the Congolese state. While this is helpful to a neoliberal model that overlooks the violence and other forms of power, and is a clear victory in realist terms, it fundamentally transgresses key elements of security: those of contracts and reciprocity. The intervention, and the entrenchment that it occasions undermines the international mechanisms of

security that exist in contractual agreements. The tiered system of states that is reproduced by such unequal forms of intervention is fundamentally unstable – and ultimately contributes to the perceived ‘ragged threat’ from insurgency or instability that the realist position sought to confront. By accentuating these differentials, the intervention is contributing to global insecurity and levers northern donors into a more bullish position if they are to defend their own interests.

## Conclusions

Northern development and security policy as operationalised through the liberalisation of the mining sector in Katanga combines the market ‘promise’ - and seeks to promote compliance with the international market with a project of containment of the threats posed by underdevelopment and the violence that is associated with it. These two strands have been examined through an analysis of the liberalisation that has reinforced the national and international political economy. The Congolese elite has been employed through favourable market opportunities and the majority of the population has been domestically and internationally disenfranchised: they are redundant in neoliberal terms and contained through structural and direct forms of violence that promote realist interests.

This approach serves northern interests in ‘solving’ two problems: one of lack of compliance to neoliberal norms that would hinder northern access to Congo’s resources, the other of the ragged threat - the possibility of instability or low level conflict intensifying, or refugees or disease spreading. The ‘problems’ in the problem-solving approach are defined by the northern strategic and economic agenda (rather than by the form of insecurity facing people in Congo). Pushing for compliance with the liberal agenda and containing the ragged threat allows for ‘problems’ to be solved for the north.

The interventions in Congo have imposed a solution to a perceived problem, rather than investigating how the problem arose and what maintains it. In doing so the interventions have become further integrated in producing and reproducing the ‘problems’ that they set out to solve. They have overlooked power, including violent power, and in doing to have reproduced the dynamics of predation and marginalisation that contribute to underdevelopment, marginalisation and insecurity. There are immediate costs for the Congolese and longer term costs for the global north if they are to continue to regulate a situation that they are simultaneously aggravating.

By tracking these mechanisms it has emerged that neoliberalism and realism are beset by contradictions. Neoliberalism reinforces differentiation and the pursuit of realist objectives involves further impoverishing those whose poverty has appeared threatening. It can be concluded, too, that these two approaches feed into each other: in disenfranchising parts of the population, neoliberalism contributes to the inequality and dispossession that a realist position finds problematic. Simultaneously, the pursuit of power by force that characterises realism undermines the charismatic cause of the neoliberals: according to its own ideology, compliance is not contentious and inclusion is mutually beneficial. The use (or strategic oversight) of force, then in turn contributes to the problem perceived by the neoliberal perspective.

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