The Role of the East African Community in Promoting Peace and Security among Partner States: The Case of Rwanda and Uganda

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Abstract

This study is an assessment of the role of the East African Community (EAC) in ensuring and restoring peace and security between partner states using Rwanda-Uganda standoff which recently led to border closure as a case study. The study used a qualitative approach in data collection and analysis as it was mainly a study of a social phenomenon. Both primary and secondary data were used whereby the researcher collected information using interviews and documentation. The study found out that, EAC has played a great role in restoring peace and security among member countries especially in the case of Rwanda and Uganda. However, EAC still has a long way to go to ensure faster protocol ratification, enhancement of its legitimacy and its ability to resolve conflicts among its partner states. The EAC still lacks an adequate institutional framework to effectively deal with possible interstate disputes and regional security threats. Thus, the study gives recommendations to the EAC and its partner states on how its policies and protocols should be implemented effectively which can increase the performance of the regional integration and reduce the occurrences of interstate conflicts.

Keywords: East African Community; Regional Integration; Conflict; Peace; Security.

1. Introduction

Regionalized conflicts are characterized by a complex interaction between localized rebellion, a clash of interests among countries of the region, and a weakened capacity or political will of international actors to avert humanitarian crises.

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The history of the co-operation in East African region can be traced back to as early as the era of "The East Africa common market" which dates to the late 19th century and early 20th century. It is evident that even before any of these member states gained independence, there existed a common idea of how East Africans would form a centralized governing system that would incorporate all tribes and cultures for the common good of all, [1]. Further, according to AU's [2] memorandum of understanding with African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) on Peace and Security, no single factor has contributed more to socio-economic decline on the continent and the suffering of the civilian population than the scourge of conflicts within and between African states. The idea of integration in East Africa and more specifically the establishment of the East African Empire stretches back to the late XVII century during the time of the first Emissary to England F. Lugard. At that time the Secretary for the Colonies in England said that he could foresee the day when a great federation of Eastern Africa will come to existence. The establishment of The East African High Commission was the colonialists' way of governing the region with intentions to possess absolute power specially to legislate trade in the East African region. This commission also became the basis for a supposedly strengthened customs union and a unified income tax. The next major step in pursuit of regional integration in the region is when The East African High Commission which functioned during the colonial era was succeeded by The East African Common Service Organization (hereinafter the EACSO) following the end of the colonial period. The East African Community (EAC) was formed out of that context to become an intergovernmental organization that is composed by six countries found in the African Great Lakes Region. The organization was first founded in 1967 but due to some misunderstanding and conflicts between partner states in that time, particularly the war between Uganda under Idi Amin and Tanzania under Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, it failed and collapsed in 1977. Since the community was revived in 2000 and expanded from its original three partner states (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) to include Rwanda and Burundi by accession in 2007 and later South Sudan in 2016; the EAC has been the best performer among the eight RECs recognized by the AU as building blocks of the African Economic Community. However, a long history of war and conflict in some of these countries has become a thorn in the foot that has slowed down progress towards deeper integration. These conflicts have sometimes spilled over internal borders and had a regional dimension. Under Article 124 of the Treaty, the Partner States agreed that peace and security are pre-requisites to social and economic development within the Community and vital to the achievement of the objectives of the Community (EAC, 2013). Even though the EAC has taken bold steps to create a framework and structures to address issues of Peace and Security, the EAC itself concedes that the effectiveness of the structures has been hampered by the absence of clear strategic direction on the critical areas of co-operation. Insecurity in East Africa especially in Rwanda is caused by different factors including political, social and economic factors. The criminal and obscure activities undermined the good governance and security, with negative impacts on the rule of law, economic activities and growth, human rights, and general societal and cultural advancement with the sub-region. Some of these activities are illicit trafficking of small arms, human trafficking especially women, using children as soldiers in arm conflicts, transnational syndicates involved in crimes such as peddling on narcotics and armed robbery, smuggling of goods. Conflicts in East Africa is a serious regional as well as international problem that affects the whole region. These conflicts and insecurity have been aggravated in the region after the war among Uganda-Rwanda and DRC, which has had long lasting ramifications. Sources of conflict in East Africa can be categorized in eight categories, which are interstate conflicts, intrastate conflicts, insurgencies, crime and corruption, epidemics, environmental

degradation, and ethnics/religious hatred. East African Community since its formation, has been fighting against these conflicts in the region as it was among its main objectives.

In addition, according to the author in [3], "the inequality in distribution of market interests among the cooperating countries and the challenges continued to decrease the pace of collaboration and cooperation among member countries that gain nothing in common market and make the integration be dormant". The lowest level of collaboration in regional arrangements largely involves at least trade, but deeper integration goes further and covers issues other than trade. The weakness of the states of East African Community directly affects their ability to manage conflicts. As weak states, they cannot adequately protect minority groups or vulnerable ethnic groups or reconcile rival groups; manage democratic institutions effectively; provide checks and balances in their governing systems; or establish transparent governing procedures. The broad goal of the EAC is to widen and deepen cooperation among the Partner States in economic, social, and political fields although much of its activity to-date has been in the economic arena. The EAC established a Customs Union (CU) in 2005 with the goal of creating a Common Market in 2010 and Monetary Union in 2012. Following the establishment of the CU the 'Third EAC Development Strategy' (EAC-DS) 2006-2010 was developed to facilitate the creation of the EAC Common Market in 2010. This included strategies targeted at improving agriculture products' competitiveness and food security in EAC Partner states through regional harmonization of SPS measures, food safety standards, and food safety policies. The TCB project objective, development goal and overall project design is in line with the goals and strategies of the EAC DS [4].

Since the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) launched a guerrilla war from Uganda against the Rwandan government in 1990, Rwanda-Uganda cross border movement by citizens of bother countries has remained a subject of controversy especially due to the political misunderstanding. During the 1990-1994 war, the border remained a conflict area involving some international military border monitoring mechanisms such the OAU's expanded Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG) and the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR) in 1993. Their verification would focus primarily on transit or transport, by roads or tracks which could accommodate vehicles, of lethal weapons and ammunition across the border, as well as any other material which could be of military use [5].

The border situation would have been expected to improve since RPF seized power in Rwanda in July 1994 but subsequent Congo wars in which both Rwanda and Uganda were involved since 1996 complicated the relations between the two countries. Compounding this is Uganda's adherence to post-colonial borders that cut across traditional tribal and community catchment areas and have never been officially demarcated. While these issues are long-standing and complex, their resolution must be a priority for Uganda and Rwanda to be able to manage and monitor the movement of people and goods in and out of its territory. A fundamental responsibility of all governments is too reliably, identify its citizens and residents. A national of Uganda is a person who, both by birth or naturalization (cf. Uganda Citizenship Act, 1962), owes allegiance to the community and thus entitled to enjoy all its civil and political rights and protection, is a member of the State and as such entitled to all its privileges. The southern border with Rwanda was especially affected during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, which led to thousands of refugees fleeing their homes. Consequently, a large community of Rwandans has settled in Uganda. "The government of Uganda has taken Rwandan people who have been born there, those who

live there legally and those who do business there, accused them to be spy of Rwanda or informal" [6]. Insecurity between Uganda and Rwanda is increasing pressure of and has impacted both countries socially, economically, and politically. The border closing and cease of economic interaction led to the problem of security and increased political tension with reported incidents of shooting by the police of citizens of the other country having illegally crossed the border. Some efforts have been made to resolve the matter through bilateral diplomatic means and through attempted mediation by the Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta who visited both countries presidents and gave a reconciling speech on 11th March 2019. International mediation effort by both DRC and Angolan presidents were attempted as well. However, the border tension has since intensified posing a risk of escalating into armed conflict.

2. Research objectives and Methodology

In general, this study aims to examine the role of the East African community (EAC) in promoting peace and security between Rwanda and Uganda. The following are the specific objectives:

- To assess socio-economic and political impact of the conflicts between Uganda and Rwanda,
- Identify the determinants of insecurity and violence between Uganda and Rwanda.
- To find out different approaches and strategies used by the EAC to solve the conflict between Uganda and Rwanda for restoring peace and security in the region.

Qualitative approach was used as the research strategy to achieve the research aim of investigating into the role of EAC in promoting peace and security between Rwanda and Uganda. The study used interview and documentation. These approaches were satisfactory tools for collecting data for the sample population to investigate the topic under study. Qualitative research is a formal, objective, systematic process in which the researcher uses the quality instead of numbers; and asks question related to the study. The study used qualitative research strategy because it is the study conducted in social science field. The study was also an exploratory study, which uses social issues. The Qualitative research also is defined as a market research method that focuses on obtaining data through open-ended and conversational communication. This method is not only about "what" people think but also "why" they think so. The core property of qualitative research is that it examines the way people make sense out of their own concrete real-life experiences in their own minds and in their own words. The researchers targeted the population who live near the border between Rwanda and Uganda because they are the ones who experience more than others; leaders and security agencies in charge of securing borders also were consulted to make sure the information provided is accurate. These people revealed the accurate information about interaction between people of Uganda and Rwanda; and how they experience the hardship of border block. The category of age is from 18 years and above because it considered being also in the active populations. Purposive sampling method was used to select respondents among the people who live by the border of Uganda and Rwanda, these people selected are the ones who have been experienced on the consequences of this conflicts. The government officials or agencies that assigned to protect borders also were consulted to get accurate information about political security. Both interview and documentary data were used. The collected data were thematically analyzed using a predetermined data analysis plan in line with the research objectives.

3. Literature review

According to the author in [7], the major causes of conflict in Africa over decades have included culture and practice of violence, poor democracy and absence of democratic structures, unstructured political systems, growing populations and lack of security, in addition to failure in the administration of justice. Currently, serious conflicts affect many countries in the continent such as Nigeria, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Kenya, as well as some areas in Southern Africa and Central Africa among others, [8]. On the other hand, the author in [9] emphasizes the colonial roots of interstate border conflicts in Africa. The conflict between Rwanda and Uganda began to surface in DRC city of Kisangani in 1999 with a series of military confrontation which continued till 2000 climaxing with what is known as the "six-day war". Even after the major party part of both armies had withdrawn from DRC, tensions between the two neighbors continued with sporadic occurrences of both nations amassing heavily armed soldiers near their shared border. The last straw was in 2019 when heads of states publicly accused each other of maltreatment of nationals and supporting rebels which also led to Rwandan officials issuing a travel advisory warning citizens against travelling to Uganda because "we cannot guarantee their security in Uganda". It is important to note here that Rwanda was not yet a member of the EAC when its conflict with Uganda began. Tensions between the two countries were expected to be diffused followed the accession of Rwanda to the EAC treaty 2007; however, it was not the case. On recent developments in Rwanda-Uganda relations, the author in [9] notes that a regional approach to managing such tensions must be sought with urgency, before the region is overwhelmed with and weakened by disputes that may tear the efforts towards building the regional block. He also concludes his study on Interstate Border Conflicts and their Effects on Region-Building and Integration of the East African Community by stating that, interstate squabbles and tensions emanating from colonial borders on the one hand, and failure to harmonize and manage such disputes constructively on the other hand, continue to stifle cohesion among member states and hence derail region building and integration processes of the EAC. The tensions reached the point where both regimes suspected each other of training their enemies. The Rwandan Defense Force (RDF) suspects that some Ugandan officials are training RPA deserters and other recruits to fight against RPF regime, while UPDF accused the RPA of supporting the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).

At the time, Rwanda and Uganda helped President Laurent Kabila come to power in the DRC (then Zaire) in May 1997, any critical observer would have anticipated that Uganda and Rwanda had become formidable allies. And no one, at that time doubted that a big regional force of these two allies had emerged, which force was strong enough to reckon with. It seems, it is the realization of the existence of this force that prompted Southern African allies, namely Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola and others to intervene in the war in the DRC on the side of Kabila. In the minds of the Southern Africa allies, the alliance between Uganda and Rwanda was poised to play a dominant role in the DRC- the third largest country on the African continent, rich in minerals and natural resources and geographically (and strategically) centered in the heart of Africa [7].

Just slightly over a year of Kabila's stay in power, there was uneasiness between his government and his supporters (the Rwandese). In the month of August 1998 Kabila expelled most of the Rwandese office holders in his government as well as their soldiers. According to the Rwandese government, Kabila was acting in a very "irresponsible" manner and was also ungrateful for the support they rendered to him, that enabled him to capture

power in Kinshasa, [7]. According to the US Assistant Secretary of State Susan Rice speech to the US Congress. "(The Congo) crisis which has internal as well as external antecedents, threatens not only to undermine any hope of early reconstruction and reconciliation in the Congo, but also to engulf Central Africa. The Great lakes Region in a bloody and protracted regional war, a war that could leave Congo divided and the neighboring states openly hostile to one another for years to come", [10]. Indeed, the predictions of Susan Rice have been proved true, over time. Congo was not on the path to democracy. The prediction in Susan Rice's speech was that the Congo conflict would leave neighboring states hostile to one another. Ironically, Rice's predictions have been proved by the most unexpected neighbors, namely, Uganda and Rwanda. Uganda stated that it was in Congo for preventing the continuous genocide that Congo was unable to prevent. Uganda also wanted to expel the rebel that wanted to attack Uganda from Congo. On other hand, the Rwandan authorities had serious concern for security probably far greater than Uganda. Following the genocide of 1994 in Rwanda, the perpetrators of genocide, mainly Hutu extremists (Interahamwe) had found refuge in the Congo. For a Tutsi led government, these dangerous elements could only be contained by having the RPA right inside the Congo. On this point, both Rwanda and Uganda shared a similar view. In fact, the international community has not been keen on condemning the two countries for their invasion of a third country and violating its territorial sovereignty simply because the issue of genocide would come up again and again [11]. Rwandan authorities were of the view that since Kabila's motives were unpredictable, their small; country, neighboring the larger Congo territory would be vulnerable if they did not take extra precautions in their security concerns. Uganda and Rwandan armies and leaders seemed to harbor expansionist tendencies, which means that Kabila could have sensed danger in keeping them around himself. This expansionist tendency gives these two countries an obsession towards dominance and egocentric approach towards other leaders. This egocentrism has escalated the accusations between Uganda and Rwanda accusing each other to destroy the security of other countries seeking how they can be trusted. The tension flared up undermining expressions in pro-government newspapers on both sides. Authors in [12] focusing on the capacity of regional peace and security systems in Africa, stated that in Africa, regional organizations such as the ECOWAS, SADC, Great Lakes Region and EAC do lack both functional and operational capacity in terms of expertise to deal with complex conflict situations. As such, simple conflicts easily escalate to full blown civil conflict [13]. Two regional integration theories could, at least partially explain the behavior of RECs to regional conflicts. These are intergovernmentalism and Neo-functionalism. The clearest difference between these two theories is the role of the state. In the intergovernmental theory, the role of the state in the integration process is comparatively stronger. By comparison, in the neo-functional theory the role of the state is diluted as decision-making power is gradually transferred to the center of the bloc as the integration process proceeds. In an intergovernmental system, a nation-state retains power, advocates its own interests, and comes to unanimous consent through machination and bargaining. By contrast, in a neo-functional system, power is transferred to key functional bodies in a process that drives the interests of the process gradually, at times even overriding nation state policy initiatives in favor of the common good of the bloc [14, 20]. The nation-state gives up this power by gradually increasing cooperation with the center as the process proceeds. Authors in [12], on role of regional international organizations in conflict management, stated that regional organizations have significant power and influence in managing regional conflicts, however, the study noted that Great Lakes Region Organization and ECOWAS had significant challenges in their scope of operation and internal capabilities to effectively manage regional conflicts such as those in Burundi, Rwanda,

and DRC. Regional bodies on the other hand lack effective conflict management capacity but have recorded significant conflict management successes due to their proximity and understanding of regional politics and political dilemmas inherit within conflicts [15]. Article 4 of the EAC protocol on Peace and security spells out mechanisms to ensure conflict prevention, management, and Resolution. The Partner States undertake to develop an East African Community conflict prevention, management, and resolution mechanism; Partner States shall manage and seek to resolve any dispute or conflict within and between two or more Partner States or with foreign countries by peaceful means. The Community may, in consultation with the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, offer to mediate in disputes or conflicts within and between two or more Partner States or with foreign countries [16]. However, the implementation of other activities within its conflict prevention portfolio is also hampered by the lack of adequate resources. For example, EAC had envisaged convening, on an annual basis, forums for dialogue with political parties, national human rights commissions, national assemblies, anti-corruption agencies, electoral management bodies and chief justices. However, only the last four forums have been convened regularly. There is a lack of strong institutional capacity across the EAC region and is prevalent among all EAC institutions. For example, the East Africa Legislative Assembly (EALA) has trouble solidifying its gains; there are insufficient institutional structures between the regional and national parliaments to promote implementation and correspondence; there are limits on imperatives as an after-effect of an extended mandate. An absence of independence in money-related and administrative issues; a lack of assets needed to execute the business of the Assembly, coupled with insufficient human resources; poor oversight and knowledge management because of high turnover among elected members. "Differences in parliamentary frameworks among the partner-states, especially with regard to the confirmation of Burundi and Rwanda, which practice a French parliamentary framework" (EAC, 2013)**.** The EAC has not yet developed the institutions needed for market integration. Trade disputes are still resolved in national courts. There has been insufficient pooling of sovereignty. For the EAC to attain middle-income status, it needs to create more interdependent economic activities and activities that are subject to economies of scale. Regional integration ensures that these two outcomes are realized. The population of Africa is smaller than India, but it is spread across a much larger area [4]. Three issues need to be addressed when thinking about a trade reform agenda for the EAC: A high CET discourages trade, with adverse redistributive effects that undermine mutual gains; the so-called sensitive product list among partner states needs to be revisited. A timeline is needed to reduce this list; there is a need to replace national courts for trade; disputes with a supranational system. Despite the progress of policies and programs of economic integration and lease of barriers for EAC partner states, policies have encountered implementation challenges at member state level. For example, the Common Market has been constrained by exemptions, bans and non-tariff barriers. Except for Rwanda, political elites in EAC states lack centralized control over rents and the powers to effectively coordinate reforms, including those related to EAC integration for which there can be limited domestic constituency. As such, several EAC policies have been prone to lengthy delays and blockages to implementation by divergent interests within member states. This is most evident in the implementation deficit of the customs union. Partner states have brought in various restrictions on the free movement of goods, in particular sectors which some allege are tied to be vested interests [17]. EAC has limited capacity and authority to monitor these implementation challenges and support member states to address them. EAC institutional capacity is low and EAC institutional arrangements have not been updated to take into consideration the

increasing scope of the EAC's goals. Further, it appears that member states are not in agreement over proposed institutional arrangements which would provide more capacity but also give the EAC more supranational authority, something which the EAC Secretariat is striving for but which some member states governments appear to be against. Debate over the EAC's role continues to delay much needed institutional reforms.

4. Findings and discussion

It is difficult to discuss political causes of Uganda and Rwanda conflict, which resulted in the closing of land borders in 2019 and the chasing of many Rwandans from Uganda, but there are many political effects of border closing between Uganda and Rwanda. This was also particularly difficult for respondents to talk about political effects of border closing and the dispute between Uganda and Rwanda, but some respondents were courageous enough to offer their perceptions of this conflict and how it affected their interaction with their Ugandan friends and family members across the border. Further documentary search revealed that the conflict hindered different projects and plans of increasing transports and communication the two EAC partner states. Uganda-Rwanda dispute intensified and reduced political relationships between these two countries. Different businesses normally conducted between Uganda and Rwanda have been hampered, including education, transport and trade, which reduce socio-economic development of both countries. Much time is spent in reconciling these countries through negotiations and mediations, instead of spending this time thinking and discussing on how to increase technology or economy of the country. The conflict between Uganda and Rwanda has affected the living condition of people from both partner countries including other people from East African Community. There is relationship between this study findings and the other findings from other researchers. This was proven by the information drawn from respondents and how their responses related to those in review of related literature. Dispute resolution is one of an essential measure in ensuring peace and security. As stated earlier, concerning the capacity of regional peace and security systems in Africa, that in Africa, regional organizations such as the ECOWAS, SADC, Great Lakes Region and EAC do lack both functional and operational capacity in terms of expertise to deal with complex conflict situations. This was found in conflicts between Uganda and Rwanda where there is lack of willingness to settle conflicts that are in their relationship while it is said that when conflicts have arisen, it must be dealt with in whichever stage it is. Whether prevention of a foreseen conflicts or resolution to an already active conflicts for peace to be restored in the society. Peace envoys and deliberations, the signing of peace agreements and implementation of the accords constitute conflict resolution measures. The East African [19] newspaper reported on 2nd July 2019 that some civil society organizations had taken the matter of the dispute between the two countries to the East African Court of Justice Suing both for the loss incurred by businesspeople as a result. According to the EACJ website, the still pending case with reference number No. 13 of 2019 was filed by Eastern African Sub-reginal support initiative for the advancement of WEMEN (EASSI) against the Attorney General of the Republic of Uganda and The Attorney General of the Republic of Rwanda. The Applicants allege that the 2nd Respondents action of closing its border with the 1st Respondent contravene and violate Articles 5 and 7 (1) (c) of the EAC Treaty. The Applicants allege that not only did this action contravene the EAC Treaty; it as well violated the economic rights of women who do cross border trade. The Applicant states that the Respondents have an obligation to uphold the fundamental principles of the EAC as enshrined in Article 6 (d) and 7 (2). Although this matter is still pending ruling by the EACJ, the court's decisions have been ignored by partner states before with impunity and therefore, one would not expect

the court's ruling even if in favor of the applicant to compel the two state to act differently. Other researchers have observed that Uganda and Rwandan armies and leaders seem to harbor expansionist tendencies, which means that Kabila could have sensed danger in keeping them around himself. This expansionist tendency gives these two countries an obsession towards dominance and egocentric approach towards other leaders [18]. This shows how deadly desires these countries had to enter in Congo for insignificant reasons. Uganda-Rwanda conflicts have caused much loss on the people within Africa because it is said that when your neighbor is sick or insecure, it means that you are unstable as well. There were different projects such as the use of common currency is an initiative that was stimulated by the EAC to improve the individual economies of its member states and promote economic scale in production and distribution. EAC has adopted this method after realizing that it can work on its member states. According to the above researcher, conflicts in Africa have become a serious concern to the world as its richness in resources has been of help to the other regions in the world. The above shows how difficult to reach the projected plans and programs despite different policies and cooperation; and this also shows how African communities for long time it has been in conflicts until now. Many authors concur that the conflict in East Africa can be categorized in eight categories namely interstate conflict, intrastate conflict, insurgencies, crime, and corruption, epidemics, environmental degradation, ethnic/religious hatred, and globalization. The interstate conflicts that are between Uganda and Rwanda have caused big loss to the people of EAC, but most affected people are those from these two conflicting countries. The EAC, since its formation, has put much effort into peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region as it is one of the objectives of its formation. This was stated by respondents whereby they stated different meetings and conventions that have been held to solve the tension between these countries to no avail. Though, there are different measures and strategies in conflicts resolution among EAC partner states, many regional conflicts like Uganda and Rwanda conflict keep emerging. This attest to a lack of an adequate institutional framework empowered to deal with such matters. Respondents testified to the fact that they or their relatives had been arbitrarily arrested, beaten, imprisoned in Uganda and some of them lost their lives as result. That is on top of businesses lost and family ties severed which attest to the suffering of the people especially the border community.

5. Conclusion

This study revealed that the role of the East Africa Community in Promoting Peace and Security between Rwanda and Uganda was supposed to be providing a platform for negotiation and peaceful resolution of disputes. The EAC used different mechanisms and strategies to restore peace and reduce tension between these partner states but still they have not yielded good results. Besides, the conflict that occurred in East Africa between Uganda and Rwanda has resulted in great loss and suffering by the people of both countries. The economic reduction and social destruction among the member countries is one of what characterized conflicts in both countries. People died in Uganda, others fled the country to Rwanda, properties of Rwandans who live in Uganda were liquidated others were taken by Ugandans which aggravated the situation. The EAC has not risen to the occasion and play its role as mediator. One cannot but notice that there are great legal provisions in favor of peaceful resolutions and management of internal and interstate conflicts but a lack of adequate institutional arrangement to ensure the implementation of those provisions. There are still loopholes that EAC is unable to handle and as arising some wrangles among member states which are compromising the day today activities of EAC. Despite different policies, strategies, and mechanisms of EAC to prevent conflicts among member states

or resolve conflicts in case they occur, some countries are playing role in weakening the regional integration by rising conflicts between them while they should be the ones in strengthening it. Therefore, since the EAC reacts too slowly in resolving problems that arise among its member countries until they become difficult to handle, the EAC should put more effort into conflict resolution among its members to avoid retardation of other regional integration projects. For the region to be more peaceful and secure there should be effective implementation of strategies and mechanisms. The EAC should strengthen and empower the institutions that implement and monitor regional integration programs at both regional and country level. The EACJ should be empowered to implement its rulings and decisions on partner states in breach of the EAC laws. This will act as a dissuasion mechanism to prevent power abuse by governments of partner states. The audit and watchdogs should be independent to any sector or institutions so that they can apply their activity independently. The partner states should put great efforts in strengthening the regional integration by respecting all EAC regulations. The countries should take first steps in resolving conflicts or problems that are between them and call for mediation is case the problem is beyond their understanding, but with the needs to be resolved instead of doing this for no reason.

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