

## International Actors' Roles towards Belligerent Parties and their Outcomes: the Cases of Sierra Leone, DRC and Burundi

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We propose to present the main results of a comparative study (to be published in 2011) that intended to assess the outcomes of international peace efforts in the light of some specific **social roles** international actors assume towards the belligerent parties in three Sub-Sahara African armed conflicts since the 1990s: Sierra Leone, DRC and Burundi.

Indeed, conforming to a particular sociological framework exposed elsewhere\*, we elaborate on the notion of social role, as a conceptual tool designed to offset the frequent discrepancy between analyses on international peace initiatives' effects by International Relations' scholars on the one hand, and in-depth, field-driven analyses on armed conflicts rooted causes by anthropologists and social scientists on the other hand. The main stance that drives our analysis is to take a step aside from bureaucratically-rationalized goals and accord a major importance on regular, repeated practices and collective expectations between deployed international agents and local political and military actors on the field.

The approach raises practical lessons concerning the actualization and the combination of **three important roles: armed protection, third party mediation / facilitation and institutional transformation**. The multidimensional aspects and the plurality of international actors and configurations involved in our three study cases provided with valuable tests to identify such regularities and lessons.

This comparative work leans on three doctoral theses (defended at the *Institut d'études politiques* of Bordeaux) supported by interviews collected during field missions in Bujumbura, Freetown, Bo, Ottawa, and New York, from 2002 to 2008, with local political and rebel leaders, international officers, national diplomats and military\*\*.

\* Ambrosetti D., *Normes et Rivalités diplomatiques à l'ONU. Le Conseil de sécurité en audience*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2009.

\*\* D. Ambrosetti's thesis (2005) has been published in his 2009 book mentioned above. Anouilh P., *Sant'Egidio et les métamorphoses de la fabrique de la paix: une étude comparée Mozambique-Burundi*, 2010; Cathelin M., *Le rôle international d'un État: construction, institutionnalisation et changement. Le cas de la politique canadienne de maintien de la paix en Afrique*, 2008.