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# Access to Resources and Predictability in Armed Rebellion: The FAPC's Short-lived "Monaco" in Eastern Congo

Kristof Titeca

**Abstract:** This article discusses the impact of economic resources on the behaviour of an armed group. The availability of resources, and the presence of "lootable" resources in particular, is presumed to have a negative impact on the way an armed group behaves toward the civilian population. The case of the Armed Forces of the Congolese People (Forces Armées du Peuple Congolais, FAPC) in eastern Congo strongly suggests that it is necessary to look beyond this monocausal argument so as to witness the range of other factors at work. In this vein, first, the article demonstrates how the political economy literature underestimates the ease of accessibility of lootable resources. The paper then shows how the behaviour of this armed group was tied to a particular economic interest: In order to access these lootable goods, the FAPC was dependent on pre-established trading networks, so it had to increase the predictability of economic interactions through the construction of a minimum of social and economic order. Second, the article reveals how the political economy literature can underestimate the specific conflict dynamics. Military security in particular has a strong impact in this context.

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**Keywords:** Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda, armed conflicts, armed forces/military units, informal cross-border trade

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Economic factors have a specific impact on conflicts and armed movements.<sup>1</sup> As Berdal and Malone (2000: 2) argue,

economic considerations often shape the calculations and behavior of the parties to a conflict, giving rise to a particular *war economy* and a distinctive dynamic of conflict.

This contribution aims to explain the impact of economic resources on the actual behaviour of an armed movement, through a discussion of a former militia called the Armed Forces of the Congolese People (Forces Armées du Peuple Congolais, FAPC).<sup>2</sup> This militia, which was led by Commander Jérôme Kakwavu, existed from February/March 2003 until April 2005.<sup>3</sup> It was created with the support of the Ugandan government, which wanted to protect its interests in the area. During this period, it was in control of the localities of Aru, Ariwara and the northern part of Mahagi in northeastern Congo (van Puijenbroek 2008; UN 2005a, b; Human Rights Watch 2005). This area has been continually economically important and resource-rich: It has a great number of natural resources, such as gold mines and timber; it is also an important trading centre, and the authorities control the regional trading routes leading to it as well as the local customs institutions (and the consequent taxation possibilities).

As I will demonstrate, the political economy literature on the behaviour of armed groups predicts that a negative relationship will exist between the presence of natural resources and the behaviour of armed groups. Although the FAPC was operating in an economically important and resource-rich area – and contrary to other groups that were operating in the area under similar circumstances, it was characterized by relatively disciplined behaviour

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- 1 The author wishes to thank Zachariah Mampilly, Nelson Kasfir, Ana Arjona, Joost Van Puijenbroek, the participants of the 2009 seminar “Rebel Governance” (Yale University) and the 2010 “Militias and State-building” panel (ASA annual meeting), as well as the two anonymous reviewers and the editors of this journal for their helpful comments. The usual disclaimers apply. The field research for this article was financed by the Research Fund of the Institute of Development Policy and Management (University of Antwerp) and the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO).
  - 2 This attention to economic factors has been inspired largely by the “greed and grievance” debate, which was sparked by Berdal and Malone’s (2000) volume of the same name. Their work sought to understand the “economic dimension” of conflict “in order to better understand the causes and persistence of conflict”.
  - 3 The FAPC surrendered to the UN in April 2005; Commander Jérôme (as he was commonly referred to) was integrated as a general into the new Congolese army, the Kinshasa-based FARDC. The majority of the rebels chose disarmament and community reintegration, while a minority were absorbed into the FARDC.

– the FAPC did “not live off the land”,<sup>4</sup> but rather tried to create a certain degree of predictability by constituting a basic form of social and economic order. The comparative discipline of its combatants constituted an important aspect of this. The core question that this article seeks to address is why this was the case. Why did this armed movement behave in this way, particularly in a territory where resources are seemingly readily available?<sup>2</sup> Moving beyond a strictly economic approach, the article argues that two factors played an important role in this being the case: First, the political economy literature underestimates the ease of accessibility of these “lootable” resources, and also does not distinguish between the exploitation of and the actual trade in these goods. In accessing these goods, the armed movement was to a certain extent dependent on pre-established trading networks, which affected its behaviour. In order to access these networks, as well as to attract as many traders as possible, it had to increase the predictability of economic interactions. Second, the article shows how specific *ex-ante* conditions – such as the availability of resources – are not the only factors that can influence the behaviour of armed movements; instead, the article seeks to illuminate how conflict itself creates particular dynamics that impact the latter.

## Resources, Conflict and Armed Groups

The political economy approach advanced by the “greed and grievance” debate has proven to be particularly influential in the analysis of conflict (Collier 2000a; Collier and Hoeffler 2002). This argument posits that the availability of natural resources – which are then exported as primary commodities – provides an incentive for the formation of armed groups and, as a consequence, violent behaviour. In this context, it is proposed that “mineral resources are also easily captured” and that resources are “seen to act as a ‘honey pot’ that provides incentives for profit-seeking groups to engage in violent actions” (De Soysa 2000: 115; Collier 2000b: 95).

Not all resources have the same effect though: Lootable commodities, in particular, are presumed to have an effect on the behaviour of armed movements. Ross (2003) argues that a distinction has to be made between “lootable” and “obstructable” resources: Whereas the transportation of obstructable resources can be easily blocked, lootable resources can be mobilized without problems. Primary commodity exports are a good example of the latter as they do not “depend upon complex and delicate networks of information and transactions, as with manufacturing”. Moreover, they are

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4 E-mail interview with a UN area expert, 22 May 2010.

“easy for an organized military force to impose predatory taxation on, by targeting these trade routes” (Collier 2000b: 93). Lootable resources – such as drugs, gemstones, agricultural products or timber – therefore increase, from this perspective, the likelihood of war. In seizing these lovable goods, combatants often act in a socially destructive manner in which violence against their own communities is committed (Collier 2002). Also, the trade in these lovable goods becomes a source of conflict and predatory behaviour. While it can sustain armed groups, this trade becomes a target for violent activities which are part of broader socially destructive processes, negatively impacting the wider population (Collier 2000a). This outcome was, for example, particularly prominent in the 1991–2002 war in Sierra Leone, where the control of diamond-mining areas – and the diamond trade – played an important role in the strategies of all armed forces (in other words, both government and rebel forces) (Reno 2009: 314; Keen 2005).<sup>5</sup>

Instead of taking as a starting point the nature of the resources, the relationship between resources and violence can also be explained by taking the armed movements and their individual members as the primary unit of analysis. In this context, Jeremy Weinstein (2007) argues that the strong availability of resources has a negative impact on the behaviour of rebel movements. In doing so, he distinguishes between “opportunistic” and “activist” rebellions. Opportunistic rebellions emerge from resource-rich environments or with support from outside patrons who keep all the benefits to themselves and who commit high levels of violence against the local population. In contrast, activist rebellions emerge in resource-poor contexts, and its participants commit fewer abuses while also employing violence selectively and strategically.<sup>6</sup> In other words, the strong availability of resources may create a “resource curse”, in which the movement is flooded with opportunistic actors, which has detrimental consequences for the affected population.

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5 Other research has also shown how conflict tends to concentrate itself in particular geographic locations: As economic opportunities – and more precisely resource extraction – are spatially fixed, they are a focal point in conflict situations. The presence of mineral resources, in particular, creates a narrower geographical scope during conflict (Buhaug and Gates 2002).

6 This distinction is similar to Olsen’s (1993) distinction between “roving” and “stationary” bandits: The former do not settle down in the area, but occasionally raid the population and steal everything. This leaves little incentive for the population to keep producing. In contrast, a stationary bandit settles down in a particular area and steals from the population by taxing them, but also limits theft in the area. In doing so, the population continues to have an incentive to produce, which allows for further taxation.

Resource-rich rebel groups offer short-term rewards, or payoffs, to motivate participants. Resource-constrained rebel groups rely on promises about the selective benefits that individuals will receive in the future (Weinstein 2007: 603).

Because of the presence of economic endowments, groups attract opportunistic consumers who have a particularly short-term perspective and who are mainly interested in their own personal enrichment. These opportunistic rebellions tend to be detrimental to civilian populations, as the participants turn the movement into “destructive, violent and state-destroying rebel organizations” (Weinstein 2007: 53).

In this way, Weinstein illustrates how individual actions have a strong impact on the character of an armed movement as a whole; in other words, much depends on the motivations of individual fighters. A related argument has been coined by David Keen, who reveals how violence in this context can be the result of “top-down” and “bottom-up” actions. Violence can be mobilized in a top-down fashion by political leaders and entrepreneurs for both political and economic reasons; it can also be the consequence of those bottom-up initiatives wherein a variety of actors (both military and civilian) embrace violence as a solution to their problems. These might not only be psychological but also economic – in which case violence becomes violent private accumulation (Keen 2000: 25). The latter can be an especially attractive motivation for joining a particular rebel movement.

Through a case study of the FAPC, this article will add nuances to some of the findings about the links between the presence of resources and the behaviour of armed groups. Although this armed movement operated in an environment rich with resources – a “honey pot” with, consequently, the strong potential for there to be a resource curse – and was supported by an external patron, it exhibited a rather different attitude toward the population. The next section explains the history of the movement and will also explain why the FAPC decided to cooperate with the local trading community. I will show that contrary to what might be expected – and contrary to other active groups in the area with similar characteristics – this particular armed group engaged in disciplined behaviour within its centres of control.

The findings herein are based on field research undertaken in eastern Congo in July/August 2009 and January/February 2010, as well as on long-term ethnographic field research carried out along the Congolese–Ugandan border between 2004 and 2011. Interviews were conducted with traders, former combatants, civil servants, civil society representatives, journalists and representatives of international organizations.

## History of the FAPC

An important factor in the creation of the FAPC was the role of Uganda, which has supported armed forces in eastern Congo (and in Ituri in particular) to protect its interests. Since 1999,

every Congolese rebel in charge of Ituri was enthroned by Uganda, then replaced by another of its creatures (International Crisis Group 2003: 3).

Uganda, and more specifically Ugandan military officials,<sup>7</sup> were strongly involved in the economic exploitation of eastern Congo (such as illegal trade and the exploitation of natural resources) (International Crisis Group 2003, 2004; Human Rights Watch 2003, 2005; UN 2001, 2005a, b). It was impossible for Uganda to protect its economic and security interests on its own, and it therefore relied on cooperation with these armed groups (Veit 2010). Uganda not only trained and armed these groups, but was also directly involved in the violence (International Crisis Group 2003).

After strong international criticism of its engagement in eastern Congo, Kampala signed an agreement with Kinshasa on 6 September 2002, in Luanda, which consented to Uganda's withdrawal from northeastern Congo within three months as well as to a pacification commission for Ituri that would involve Uganda (International Crisis Group 2003). Uganda did not honour this timeline, but did finally withdraw from eastern Congo in April/May 2003. However, Uganda still wanted to preserve a degree of economic influence over the district.<sup>8</sup> In order to do so, it needed a minimum form of control over the violent and quickly changing circumstances in Ituri, as a result of which Uganda continued to support local armed groups; of the ten armed groups active in Ituri in May 2003, every single one of them had been supported (that is, armed, trained and/or politically supported) by Uganda at some stage of its existence (Human Rights Watch 2003: 14-15). The creation of the FAPC has to be scrutinized in light of these circumstances: Uganda wanted continued control over Ituri, and when

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7 Cf. UN (2001, 2005a, b). Also, the Ugandan Porter Commission, established by the Ugandan government to look into allegations of Ugandan involvement, argued that Ugandan army officers had "lied to protect themselves" and that "officers at very senior levels, and men of the Ugandan army, have conducted themselves in the DRC in a manner unbecoming" (Porter Commission 2002: 202, 207).

8 This, for example, manifested itself in the quiet diplomacy between UPDF (Uganda People's Defence Forces) General Salim Saleh (the brother of President Museveni) and Kinshasa, directly after the Luanda agreement (International Crisis Group 2003: 7).

one of its proxies – the UPC<sup>9</sup> – turned to Rwanda for support, Kakwavu was approached by the Ugandan government with the request to form his own group (International Crisis Group 2004: 10; Human Rights Watch 2003: 16, 2005: 10). In this context, a report by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) claims that “Ugandan General Salim Saleh created the FAPC [in] early 2003, when he tried to broker a truce between [the] UPC and [the] FNI”<sup>10</sup> (MONUC 2005: 4).

Before he founded the FAPC, Jérôme Kakwavu had a long history of involvement with other armed groups. Originally, he was part of the Zairian army under Mobutu; when this was dissolved, he joined a number of other armed groups. First, he was a member of the AFDL,<sup>11</sup> but he subsequently allied himself with a broad range of movements in the quickly shifting landscape of regional coalitions and armed groups: After the AFDL, he then joined the RCD<sup>12</sup> and the RCD-ML.<sup>13</sup> Jérôme commanded the RCD-ML in the gold-mining region of Durba, from where he was pushed back by two other armed groups (the RCD-N and the MLC) in September 2002. After this, he retreated to the economically important areas of Aru and Ariwara, where he took control of the border posts. From there, he and his troops became part of the UPC, with whom he again attacked the Mongbwalu area (Human Rights Watch 2005: 25-29). During these attacks, the UPC – as well as Jérôme’s troops – received weapons from Rwanda (Human Rights Watch 2005: 25). At the end of February 2003, Jérôme terminated his links with the UPC and started his own movement, the FAPC, with the support of Uganda. In this context, Jérôme can be seen as a “mercenary leader” (International Crisis Group 2003: 9) who “joined whatever armed group happened to control the region in which he was stationed” (Veit 2010: 130).

The FAPC was never a rebel group which sought to overthrow incumbents, nor did it organize its activities to do so. Its only political aim was to pacify the area – something that Commander Jérôme did on several occasions. The movement also produced T-shirts and calendars carrying this message (they displayed a picture of Commander Jérôme with “*pacificateur*” written next to it). However, none of the citizens, traders, civil servants or collaborators in the area was aware of this or had ever seen a political mani-

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9 Union des Patriotes Congolais.

10 FNI or Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes.

11 Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre, or, Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaïre.

12 Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie, or, Congolese Rally for Democracy.

13 Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Mouvement de Libération, or, Congolese Rally for Democracy – Liberation Movement.



festo; because of this, it was considered to be largely rhetorical. The FAPC can, therefore, be described as a militia, and one which was started by Uganda.

The FAPC consisted mainly of people foreign to the area under its control: The military staff was formed predominantly by those from Rwandophone ethnic groupings of the Kivu. Jérôme Kakwavu, for example, a Congolese Tutsi, did not speak any of the local languages (such as Alur or Lugbara), but instead relied on the use of the national languages, Swahili and Lingala. The high command of the FAPC consisted of a number of officers – about seven people – originating from Rwandophone ethnic groupings of the Kivu, with whom Jérôme had been working in his previous movements (Veit 2010: 130). There was no structural link with Rwanda; these officers can be considered to be mercenary elements that followed Jérôme in his struggle. The movement itself was ethnically mixed; it also contained remnants of the previous movements of Commander Jérôme, as well as locally recruited combatants. In contrast to other groups in the area, the movement did not have an ethnic agenda.<sup>14</sup> There are no exact or reliable figures on the precise number of combatants active within the movement, but local estimations range between 2,000 to 3,000 people.

Even from the inception of the movement there were negotiations for a peace agreement, in which the movement itself was also involved. Negotiations with the armed groups in Ituri resulted in the Dar-es-Salaam Accord of 16 May 2003,<sup>15</sup> as well as the Acte d'Engagement signed in Kinshasa on 14 May 2004. By signing the latter, the armed groups agreed to the programme of Disarmament and Community Reinsertion (DCR) that was led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and supported by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) (International Crisis Group 2004: 10). The leaders of the armed groups were promised high posts within the national army. All of this had only a limited effect, though, as fighting continued to rage on and because disarmament proved to be an unsuccessful venture: Hardly any combatants showed up for this process. However, things changed after nine Bangladeshi peacekeepers were killed in Ituri in February 2005. MONUC reacted strongly, increasing its military offensive by attacking some of the armed group's camps and arresting some of their leaders, who had moved to Kinshasa in the meantime. Jérôme, who had stayed in Ituri, remained outside of MONUC's reach, and thus was not arrested. Finally, MONUC issued an ultimatum to all fighters that they had to lay down their arms by 1

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14 Interview data 2009–2010, as well as Van Puijenbroeck (2008), Human Rights Watch (2005: 21).

15 DRC: Ituri Factions Recommit Themselves to Peace, *IRIN News*, 16 May 2003.

April 2005. This proved to be successful; by June 2005, more than 15,000 combatants had handed in their weapons (Veit 2010: 156-160). The FAPC started its reintegration at the beginning of March;<sup>16</sup> the last FAPC fighters were officially disarmed on 11 April 2005, which signified the actual end of the movement.<sup>17</sup> After this, Jérôme Kakwavu became an army general, based in Kinshasa.<sup>18</sup> A number of his fellow combatants were absorbed into the Congolese army, while others reintegrated into civilian life. A small group – among which were a number of generals – fled to Sudan and Uganda.

## The FAPC and Its Economic Activities

In contrast to its hazy political agenda, the movement had a very clear economic agenda: It settled itself in economically important areas and showed a direct interest in profiting from the available resources there. In this context, Veit (2010: 130) describes Jérôme Kakwavu as a “business soldier”; in other words, trade was at the centre of the FAPC’s activities. Concretely, the movement had its main base in the important trading markets of Aru and Ariwara in northeastern Congo, on the border with Uganda. These markets connect eastern Congo with regional and international markets and are also used as distributional points for goods into eastern Congo (Meagher 1990; Titeca 2009a). Many of the goods that arrive in the area are also subsequently smuggled back into Uganda; in other words, Aru and Ariwara act as mere *entrepôts* for these items, whose final (illegal) destination is Uganda, where additional profits are readily made (Titeca 2009a). Moreover, they are also important areas for mineral resources: Timber can be found here, while the area also borders mineral-rich regions to the west and south, and also includes the important Kilo Moto (Mongbwalu) gold mines (UN 2005a: para. 117). Ariwara is, therefore, an important gold market, where gold is

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16 DRC: Who’s Who in Ituri – Militia Organizations, Leaders, *IRIN News*, 20 April 2005.

17 As reported by the Commission Nationale de Désarmement, Démobilisation et Réinsertion on Radio Okapi. Also, “Bunia: désarmement de derniers miliciens FAPC”, Radio Okapi, 11 April 2005 and “Ituri: le délai du processus de désarmement ne sera pas prolongé, d’après la MONUC”, Radio Okapi, 1 April 2005. In contrast to other groups, the FAPC was disarmed during the first phase of disarmament, with all heavy weapons being handed over to MONUSCO. See also, Human Rights Watch (2005) and Van Puijenbroek, Elela and Malolo (2008). These document how combatants from other groups continued to be disarmed up to November 2006 and beyond.

18 In April 2010, however, he was the first Congolese army general to be arrested on war crime charges of rape and torture (Human Rights Watch 2011).

bought from the surrounding mines and taken to markets in Kampala, Nairobi, Dubai and elsewhere. In other words, for an armed group that is looking for profit or simple survival, Aru and Ariwara are excellent locations in which to settle.

Trade in natural resources became an essential component in the FAPC regime: The important timber areas and gold mines (such as Alur Djuganda in northern Mahagi and Kilo Moto) soon came under the control of the FAPC (Van Puijenbroek 2008; UN 2005a). Control over these different mines gave the FAPC a rich income from the sale of gold. Moreover, all the gold produced in the surrounding gold mines passed through Aru/Ariwara (Van Puijenbroek 2008). According to Human Rights Watch (2005: 104), in 2004 the value of this gold trade was between 1 million and 2 million USD per month. As they did with other armed groups in Ituri, certain Ugandan elites collaborated closely in the gold trade: Gold was being heavily exported to Uganda, where it was sold to Kampala-based businessmen. Once the gold arrived in Uganda, it became Ugandan property and was subsequently sold as Ugandan gold on the world market.

The movement also started levying taxes on regional trade. Upon arriving in the area, the FAPC took firm control over revenue from the customs points. According to the *Textes Relatifs au Mode de Règlement des Dettes vers l'Etat*, collected custom duties should normally be transferred to the Office des Douanes et Accises, as well as to the public treasury and the Ministry of Finance. Naturally, the customs points were no longer controlled by the state but by the FAPC, for whom it was a major source of revenue through the establishment of “parallel customs, taxation and duty-levying mechanisms” (UN 2005a: para. 96). These came to mimic

the official customs regime, in which customs officials [were] instructed not to release or permit the passage of goods until confirmation of revenue payment by the trader [had] been received (UN 2005a: para. 110).

Everyone who passed through the customs points had to pay taxes to the FAPC. Crucial to the success of this was the fact that these taxes were significantly lower than the official government taxes and the taxes in other areas as well. The reason for this was simple: The FAPC wanted to attract as many traders – read: tax revenue – as possible. The Aru/Ariwara areas therefore soon became a regional tax paradise – an African “Monaco” as it were – which attracted traders from distant locations.

Central to the FAPC’s customs apparatus was a so-called “pre-financing system”, in which the traders paid a certain amount of money beforehand. This payment permitted the privileged import and export of goods – in other words, no custom duties or levies had to be paid for a certain

amount of time (between three and six months).<sup>19</sup> For example, a trader who paid 6,000 USD was allowed to import a certain amount of goods (for example, one trailerful) a certain number of times (for example, four). This pre-financing system was developed in close collaboration with the local trading association, the *Fédération des Entreprises du Congo* (FEC), the local branch of the national/provincial FEC. The main advantage of this arrangement was that it supplied the FAPC with a stable income. In contrast to other movements in the area, this financing allowed the movement to have a regular supply of food and medical treatment for its combatants. The regular income also allowed the movement to purchase weapons and ammunition.

Additionally, the movement participated in the regional contraband trade: It was active in both importing goods into Aru/Ariwara and smuggling wares back into Uganda (such as cigarettes or batteries), as well as in exporting natural resources. In none of these cases did it do so alone, but rather organized this trade alongside local (Congoese) traders and Ugandan actors, both of whom played an important role in these trading activities. As argued above, this movement was started to protect Ugandan interests in the area, and particularly the interests of Ugandan military officials. The latter participated actively in this contraband trade, either directly or by using Ugandan traders as proxies. In this situation, the most profitable commodities – such as cigarettes, gold, ivory and timber – in the regional contraband trade were traded by a coalition of high-level actors, consisting of Ugandan traders and military officials, selected Congoese traders – such as the chairperson of the local trading association – and FAPC officials such as Commander Jérôme. This “closely knit network” (UN 2005b: para. 70) was protected by Ugandan officials on the Ugandan side of the border and the FAPC on the Congoese side. Uganda’s significant role notwithstanding, the FAPC also conducted economic activities in which Uganda was not directly involved. Uganda did not, for example, control the pre-financing system that was used by the FAPC to sustain itself.<sup>20</sup>

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19 This system was not invented by the FAPC; it had previously been used in other areas. See, for example, Raeymaekers (2007: 126), who describes how the RCD-ML – a rebel movement in another area in eastern Congo (Butembo) – used a similar tax arrangement, one that “evolved from a simple technical note to fully institutionalized back payments or loans from the businessmen to the rebels”. See also Raeymaekers (2010).

20 A report by the UN group of experts documents how the income from border taxation was used by the FAPC to buy military emergency supplies, combat rations and motorcycles (UN 2005a: para. 109).

According to the political economy approach of Collier and Weinstein, this ready availability of resources – minerals, timber, illegal trading opportunities – and the support of an outside actor should lead to violent behaviour in which the “constant demand for short-term rewards also drives combatants to loot, destroy property and attack indiscriminately” (Weinstein 2007: 10-11). This was effectively the case for most armed groups in Ituri. Similar to the FAPC, they controlled mineral resources, trading centres, land and other income opportunities, and were also engaged in widespread looting and numerous human rights abuses in which the “civilians bore and continue to bear the brunt of the casualties” (Human Rights Watch 2003: 19). One armed group, the Nationalist and Integrationist Front (Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes, FNI), can be considered typical in this regard, in that it was engaged in arbitrary, irregular taxation; it also used “arbitrary arrests, beatings and other forms of cruel and degrading treatment to obtain the maximum possible payments and services from civilians” (Human Rights Watch 2005: 48). For most groups, this behaviour manifested itself through both top-down and bottom-up violence (Keen 2000); in other words, this violence was both instructed by the leadership and materialized through violent private accumulation by individual fighters. The violence was committed by loosely organized armed groups (for example, the Lendu and Ngiti militias) (International Crisis Group 2003: 10) as well as in groups with a stronger authority over their members. As a UN report on the Congolese conflict summarizes, the result was that:

Armed conflict has spread throughout society, as economic and personal insecurity reach extreme levels. [...] Widespread armed activity is characterized by opportunistic and chaotic encounters. Children are killed, adult victims are eviscerated, women are raped, property stolen, houses burned, churches demolished and whatever infrastructure exists is laid waste (UN 2002: para. 1215).

In sum, the FAPC was led by a “business soldier” or mercenary who had in the past engaged in undisciplined and violent behaviour;<sup>21</sup> it had a rather minimal political agenda while at the same time showing a direct interest in economic activities. Similar to other armed groups in the area, the FAPC would, therefore, have been expected to engage in undisciplined and predatory behaviour. In reality, this was not the case: In its centres of power, the trading areas of Aru and Ariwara, the FAPC was fairly disciplined, and, regionally, the area was considered relatively peaceful. For example, it con-

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21 He had been involved in massacres in the area, such as in Durba, where he was stationed as an RCD-ML officer, and where, for example, he had carried out a number of public executions (Human Rights Watch 2005: 87).

tinued to attract refugees from neighbouring areas, as it was considered a safe haven by those fleeing violence perpetrated by other groups. In his communication with the local population, Commander Jérôme continually emphasized how he wanted to pacify the area, and how his troops therefore had to be disciplined. For example, in an interview with Human Rights Watch in 2004, he argued:

We are here to satisfy the population. We need popular measures to maintain discipline (Human Rights Watch 2005: 87).

In reality, these “popular measures” were a very strict and dictatorial regime, in which discipline was strictly and brutally enforced. This discipline is evidenced in numerous examples given by former combatants, rebel administrators or the population themselves. Generally, people who disrespected the orders or who misbehaved in the urban centres of Aru and Ariwara were strongly punished. In other words, bottom-up violence in these areas was not tolerated. For example, in one incident, a combatant had thrown a grenade into Ariwara market, killing three people and injuring fifty others. After this event, Commander Jérôme asked the injured and the general population (who were gathered in the marketplace) what should be done with the guilty combatant. Some of Jérôme’s own guards asked him to spare the combatant, after which these guards were themselves whipped. Jérôme then asked the population again what should be done with the combatant, to which they responded that he should be killed. He was shot by one of Jérôme’s bodyguards.<sup>22</sup> In another incident, an FAPC combatant was accused of killing a motorbike taxi driver. Commander Jérôme gathered a crowd to decide on the fate of the combatant in question. After a number of people demanded his execution, he was shot on the orders of Commander Jérôme.<sup>23</sup>

Most of these punishments happened directly at the hands of Commander Jérôme: Even though specific conflict-resolving institutions were in place – such as the Bureau de Renseignement Militaire (Bureau of Military Advice) and Bureau Deux (Bureau Two) – he nevertheless acted as “the sole arbiter of the law” (Human Rights Watch 2005: 87). This proved to be very effective in enforcing discipline in Aru and Ariwara, as his dictatorial rule and strong punishments created among the combatants a palpable fear of their leader. A former FAPC combatant recounted the following:

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22 Human Rights Watch (2005: 86) and also in interview data 2009–2010.

23 Human Rights Watch (2005: 86-87) and also in interview data 2009–2010.

We were fearing Jérôme very much. He could punish you anytime, and very hard. If you did not do as he wanted, you were finished.<sup>24</sup>

Another ex-combatant summarized:

We were being strictly controlled; we could not go against the commands of the movement. If someone did so, he was simply shot, there was no process whatsoever.<sup>25</sup>

In other words, bottom-up violence was rare in Aru and Ariwara, and if it did occur, it was strongly punished; meanwhile, top-down violence had to be used only sporadically, but still proved vital for the FAPC's success.

This militarized rule not only manifested itself within the movement, but also in the wider resolution of conflict. This was particularly the case for economic conflicts, where rule enforcement and intervention mainly happened through the use of force. For example, in 2004 an incident occurred in which a trader owed 19,000 USD to a major gold trader. The latter, and some of his employees, abducted the smaller trader and beat him in order to recover the money. When this did not work, FAPC combatants came to assist the major gold trader in the torture of the smaller trader, who eventually died of his wounds.<sup>26</sup> In a similar case in 2003, a trader was abducted after having been accused of having stolen some gold. He was taken to Commander Jérôme's residence, where his life was threatened. After having been tortured, he was forced to pay back the amount of money in question.<sup>27</sup> The result of this militarized and brutal means of conflict resolution was that the major traders felt they were operating in a (more or less) secure economic environment, while the smaller traders lived in fear. This did not mean that the major traders were protected at all costs. Smaller traders perceived Jérôme's regime to be relatively fair because any misbehaviour by the major traders was also punished. For example, on one occasion a major trader embezzled some money that was to be invested in the gold trade from an FAPC officer, after which the trader's car was confiscated by the FAPC.<sup>28</sup>

The principal question to be asked in this context is that of why the movement put effort into constructing a relatively predictable social and economic order. Why did the FAPC not engage in predatory behaviour, and

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24 Interview with a demobilized FAPC rebel, Aru, 26 October 2010.

25 Interview with an ex-combatant, Aru, 28 October 2010.

26 Human Rights Watch (2005: 87) and also in interview data 2009–2010.

27 Human Rights Watch (2005: 87). Various other incidents occurred in which conflicts emerged between two traders, and in which Commander Jérôme ordered the torture of one of the traders (interview data 2009–2010).

28 Interview data 2009–2010.



why did it instead put considerable effort into enforcing discipline in its centres of power (in other words, why manifest long-term behaviour)? To be able to answer this, we must examine the relationship between the FAPC and the local economic space.

## The FAPC and Control over Local Economic Space

As Raeymaekers (2007: 112) highlights, a distinction has to be made between economies *of* war and economies *at* war. On the one hand, war offers a range of new commercial opportunities and ventures: It may lead to profitable price movements, or limited state control may facilitate previously prohibited trade (Keen 2000: 30). For example, various reports (Human Rights Watch 2005; UN 2005 a, b) show how the war in eastern Congo allowed for the export of minerals and the import of weapons (which were often imported/exported by the same plane). On the other hand, this is not the case for all economic activities: War is not a “blank slate” that allows outside actors to take over any economic activity. Existing trading networks have to be taken into account that were not created through military involvement or the specific conditions of conflict and which were not necessarily abolished by the arrival of military actors. Although significant attention has been paid to the economic dimensions of the Congolese conflict (cf. the reports of the UN group of experts), little attention has been paid to how these forms of organization, and the consequent strategies of the armed movements, are “hardly based on new modes of organization and control” (Vlassenroot and Romkema 2002). On the contrary, these armed movements are embedded in pre-existing economic figurations, and are, therefore, to a certain extent dependent upon these pre-existing networks. As Eric Kennes argues with regard to the Congo:

The numerous pre-existing and sometimes highly structured informal trade networks were not created by military involvement, although they have been controlled by them. Very few military groups are engaged in trading themselves. They do, however, try to exploit the existing networks for their own profit by controlling essential points of access such as airports and trading posts, in order to levy taxes (2002: 605).

In other words, external actors – armed movements – try to embed themselves in these pre-existing networks, and are to a certain extent dependent upon them. Even though these armed groups control the “essential points of access” to these trading chains, they cannot control the whole network.



Also, participation in these trading networks is not straightforward: Instead of outright domination, this leads instead to a situation of mutual dependency. As an example, the local trading community in Butembo (in eastern Congo) was certainly no weaker than the occupying RCD-ML rebel force (Raeymaekers 2007). While the traders were dependent on the protection of the rebels, the latter – as “novel political actors” – were not able to overcome their precarious financial position, which was largely propped up by taxation income from the traders who “were the only ones that were left”.<sup>29</sup> In doing so, they could not be too exploitative of the traders if “they did not want to lose the very matter from which to steal” (Raeymaekers 2007: 136).

A similar set of circumstances applied to the FAPC: It was impossible for them to take over and control the whole regional trading network. This trade has a long history in the area (Titeca 2009a; Titeca and Deherdt 2010), and the rebels could not simply organize this by themselves, and certainly not from Aru/Ariwara alone. For example, the profitable cigarette trade is reliant on cigarettes that are purchased in Kenya or the Far East, traded to Aru/Ariwara and then sold inside eastern Congo or smuggled back into Uganda. In each of these locations, traders have particular arrangements in place either to buy this commodity and import it into eastern Congo or to sell it, in which case they rely on another network of middlemen or retailers. The FAPC did not have the power or means to extend its activities to all points on this trading network. The same goes for natural resources or highly lootable commodities such as minerals: It was impossible for the movement to control all mineral extraction in the area (there are too many mines, and these were also strongly contested by other groups), but the movement, instead, tried to participate in the mineral trade that was passing through Aru and Ariwara. However, in doing so, it was dependent upon the participation of local traders, who could decide whether to bypass the market and the FAPC altogether.<sup>30</sup>

The lootability argument neglects, therefore, the importance of regional trading networks, and in particular the key brokering role of traders “in providing a link between local production zones and international markets” (Jennings 2007: 21). In reality, it often proves impossible for rebel movements to control the exploitation, brokerage and sale of lootable goods – this is particularly true in such a highly violent, unpredictable and hostile environment with fast-changing alliances as eastern Congo. As Vlassenroot

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29 Interview by Raeymaekers with a former member of the RCD-ML Presidential Protection Unit (Raeymaekers 2007: 129).

30 For example, by buying in particular mines (not controlled by the FAPC) and/or by going directly to the international markets.

and Raeymaekers (2005: 13) argue with regard to rebel groups in eastern Congo,

their financial woes as well as their lack of control over the country's interior (where natural resources are exploited) ultimately make them inferior to established and pre-existing trade networks.

Moreover, the most profitable aspect of the trade in illicit goods does not lie in their production, but rather in their brokering and transportation (Naim 2005). In this context, it was therefore more advantageous for the FAPC to cooperate with the local traders (by sharing the spoils with them) than it was to try and overrule them.

Another factor that made the control of the local and regional economic space more difficult was the fact that, as noted above, the movement consisted of many people foreign to the locality. Therein lacking knowledge, control and contacts in the local and regional trade domains, the movement had no other choice than to cooperate closely with the local trading community and particularly with the organization of local traders (FEC), with whom it co-organized economic activities in the area. The UN group of experts argues that the FAPC used its control over the area to force local traders into business arrangements with them (UN 2005a: para. 96), but the situation was never that clear-cut. While, on the one hand, traders had no choice but to cooperate with the FAPC, on the other hand the movement did make collaboration very attractive: Many of the new economic conditions – such as the pre-financing arrangement – were developed together with the FEC.

More importantly, the FAPC created very profitable economic conditions in the area. As argued above, taxes were significantly lower, thus attracting a large number of traders to the area. This was not only profitable for the local traders, but also for the wider population: Through the lower taxes, commodities became significantly cheaper on the Aru/Ariwara markets. Moreover, the FAPC officers participated in another way in the regional contraband trade: Traders were not only involved in the one-way giving of large amounts of money to the FAPC (by paying tax), but the FAPC officers themselves also reciprocally invested heavily in the regional contraband trade by becoming business partners to the local trading community – which led to large profits for both traders and FAPC officers. Although the most profitable commodities were monopolized by a small number of high-level actors (Ugandan and FAPC officials and a few selected Congolese and Ugandan traders), other traders could still make significant profits from different commodities. A concrete and visible manifestation of

the economic empowerment of these traders was the fact that many hotels, shops and houses were constructed in these areas during this period.<sup>31</sup>

The FAPC also installed a variety of other beneficial measures for traders: They were given a range of positions within the armed movement and state administration. A number were also given high military ranks – for example, the FEC chairperson was given the rank of major, while another trader was nominated the assistant administrator of the area (the second-highest political-administrative function in this particular locality). The movement also started investing in the area – through a local development fund, it constructed a football stadium, co-financed the local university, and so on. By doing so, the movement demonstrated its commitment to the area. In this context, traders – as well as the general population – felt that taxes were no longer “lost” to the central government (wherein nothing was given in return), but rather that they benefited the general population. Not only did the movement make some (limited) investments in the area, but, more importantly, the combination of lower taxes and higher trading volumes in the area made market prices significantly cheaper. A small shopkeeper summarized the situation like this:

At the time of the Jérôme rebellion, the population finally managed to breathe! Not only did refugees from other places come to this area, everything became much cheaper here.<sup>32</sup>

An expression that was used several times in interviews was that the area had become *une républiquette* (a small republic), which controlled its own resources and therefore had greater input in its own development. As one trader argued,

[during the FAPC regime], things went much faster than before, when things had to be decided by Kinshasa. And more importantly, the money remained here, it did not have to go to Kinshasa! [...] At that time, the area was a Kinshasa in itself!<sup>33</sup>

In sum, the FAPC created various mechanisms to attract both traders and the wider population to their side. This could be seen as a solution to the general difficulties faced by external actors in gaining access to pre-established trading networks, and particularly in response to the specific problem of the FAPC’s position as an outsider to the area. The creation of a favourable business climate and common financial interests were, therefore, reme-

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31 There were no financial institutions in Aru/Ariwara, because of which investment in real estate was seen as being the best option.

32 Interview with a shopkeeper, Aru, 30 July 2009.

33 Interview with a trader, Ariwara, 28 July 2009.

dies for their lack of inherent connections and ties with the locality (Veit 2010: 131).

Moreover, the movement needed the traders on its side in order to receive taxes and to control trading routes. A non-disciplined armed movement could easily disrupt this relationship and the consequent revenue from it. To make the analogy with the European tax paradise Monaco again: No one would invest in Monaco if the monarchy of this republic began to engage in widespread violence or extortion. In order to *be* a “Monaco”, the armed movement had to *act* like one, primarily by being disciplined and by investing in a minimum of social and economic order. As explained above, the movement – or better, the leadership – also intervened in economic disputes. Although these interventions were militarized and personalized, these efforts were nevertheless perceived by traders as being important because they increased the predictability of economic interactions. The discipline of the movement was therefore instrumental for the trade, and the consequent tax income, to flourish: Harming trading practices in the area – for example by using violence against traders or creating a generalized situation of insecurity – would hurt not only the traders, but also the FAPC’s own economic interests. If the FAPC were to engage in large-scale violent practices, this would deter traders from entering its territory, reduce economic activity and lower customs revenues. In other words, the armed group has every interest in engaging in peaceful governance practices in the area, in order to attract traders from the wider region into its territory. Inversely, the traders had every interest in having a territory governed by rebels (“rebel governance”) – as this meant lower taxation – but not in chaotic and violent governance practices. The widespread use of violence in its territory was, therefore, simply not a rational choice for the movement, as it would also take away the incentive for future investments in local society (Olsen 1993: 567).

Given the engagement of Uganda with the movement, an important question to ask is whether the FAPC acted in this particular (disciplined) way because it was forced and obliged to do so by Ugandan actors. If support for the FAPC was intended to protect Ugandan interests, then did Uganda compel the FAPC to be disciplined in its behaviour? This was, however, not necessarily the case: Similar to its support for other armed movements in the area, several examples illustrate how Uganda itself was ready and willing to support, and/or even engage in, violent activities when necessary. Uganda supplied the FAPC with weapons (Human Rights Watch 2005; UN 2005a, b) and intervened militarily on a number of occasions – a UPDF camp was stationed just across the border, and thus allowed for rapid deployment. For example, according to the UN group of experts, one hundred Ugandan soldiers and intelligence officers entered the DRC again in

2004 in support of the FAPC following its defeat by the FNI in the war for control over the Djalasiga mines (UN 2005a: para. 135, 136; Human Rights Watch 2005: 85). Ugandan Colonel Peter Karim was even reported to have held a public meeting in the area to support the FAPC (Human Rights Watch 2005: 95). In May 2003, Ugandan forces crossed the border into eastern Congo to defeat a mutiny against Commander Jérôme. The Ugandan forces also helped to arrest those believed to be responsible for the mutiny, and detained some of those who had fled to Uganda in Ugandan military barracks (in Arua). These people were later handed over to Commander Jérôme (Human Rights Watch 2005: 89). According to a UN report, a Ugandan major was paid by Jérôme for various services, such as the delivery of FAPC fighters who had fled to Uganda (UN 2004: para. 137).

In sum, Uganda – or better, the complicit Ugandan military officials and traders – wanted to reap as much profit as possible, and supported the FAPC in whichever ways necessary. In doing so, their role was essential to the functioning of this regional political and economic complex; Uganda did not, however, force the FAPC to act in this particular way. The FAPC's investment in a more stable social and economic order happened instead because it allowed for the better control of, and participation in, the local economic space. This fact also helps to explain some of the movement's institutional choices, such as the efforts to reinvigorate the area's state apparatus. Before the FAPC installed itself in the area, there was a state structure already in place, albeit a weak one. The armed movement did not simply take over these state institutions, they also reinvigorated and strengthened them. On an overall level, the number of state agents increased. However, this was primarily because it was necessary in order for the regime's tax system to function as well as for regional trade to function and burgeon. For example, the movement needed to increase the number of officials working in the customs offices because of the strong trading activities in the area.<sup>34</sup> It also installed other “state-like” practices in the area: For example, for gold traders to be able to work, they had to purchase so-called “gold trade permits” (*cartes de négociant d'or*) – something that was modelled on state practices (Human Rights Watch 2005: 104). In this context, the FAPC's investments in an institutional structure can be seen as instrumental toward the fulfilment of their economic goals: Most structured governance activities (“state-like functions”) were centred around economic activities. Other sectors – such as education or agriculture – did not receive the same “attention” and institutional support.

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34 For example, a report by the UN group of experts (2005b: para. 60) indicates how even after the end of the FAPC regime, 104 ex-FAPC officers (who had been appointed during the FAPC regime) were still working in the customs offices.

The relationship between the disciplined behaviour of the movement and particular economic interests seems to be further confirmed by the fact that outside the trading areas of Aru and Ariwara the movement acted in a much more ill-disciplined manner: Individual rebels harassed the local population much more, by asking for financial contributions or by confiscating things – practices that occasionally led to hostile confrontations. Looting also happened on a larger scale – for example, after a battle with a rival force over the Mongbwala gold mines, the movement pillaged an entire hospital for fridges, furniture, vaccinations, and so on. Everything was taken as war booty. Complaints by the population to the FAPC leadership did not result in anything being done about it.<sup>35</sup>

A last important factor in the explanation of the FAPC's behaviour is military security. Throughout the existence of its regime, Aru/Ariwara remained firmly controlled by the FAPC – no confrontations with other armed movements took place, and no external threats were made to its rule in these territories. This made it easier to behave in a disciplined manner. To refer again to Weinstein's terminology (2007), short- and long-term behaviour mean very different things in situations of military confrontation. In other words, it becomes much more difficult to behave in a disciplined way when faced with strong military pressure.<sup>36</sup> This becomes clear when looking at the other wealth-generating activities undertaken by the FAPC. As mentioned at the outset, the FAPC was engaged not only in regional trade, but also in the exploitation of natural resources: At different times, it controlled a number of gold mines in northeastern Congo. While the FAPC considered it worthwhile to invest in a predictable social and economic order in the trading hubs of Aru and Ariwara, their economic centres of control, this was much less the case in these gold-extracting areas. The fact that these areas were strongly contested by other groups also played an important role in this. The uncertain and hostile environment with quickly changing splits and strategies among and between the different militias often resulted in fighting between the different groups, with strongly negative consequences for the population. Fighting over the gold mines led to a refugee movement of tens of thousands of people, and summary executions of civilians took place (Human Rights Watch 2005: 95-96). In this hostile and militarily challenging environment, it became much more difficult for the FAPC to invest in economic and social predictability, and the movement was far less disciplined. In these circumstances, it often engaged in violent activities to protect its economic interests.

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35 In interview data 2009–2010.

36 Thanks to an anonymous reviewer of the article for the suggestion of this point.

In sum, these events show the importance of the dynamics of a particular conflict: The political economy literature of Collier and Weinstein presumes that particular *ex-ante* conditions – such as the availability of resources – play a determining role, in which further changes over time are path-dependent (Guichaoua 2009: 5). Yet, conflict in itself generates particular dynamics that impact armed groups. The behaviour of the FAPC demonstrates how military security allowed the movement to make particular institutional choices in its centres of control. Throughout its uncontested reign, it was able to engage in – relatively – peaceful economic activities, and also to build a peaceful relationship with the local population. This was far more difficult in other contexts, ones of violent competition with other armed groups – where violence, instead of discipline, proved necessary to protect one's interests.

## Conclusion

This article discussed the activities of the FAPC, a short-lived armed group, which was in power from February/March 2003 until April 2005 in a small area of northeastern Congo. Similar to other armed movements in the area, it had access to many natural resources, and was supported by an external patron. Instead of becoming an “opportunistic rebellion”, though, and in contrast to other movements in the area, the FAPC was relatively disciplined: The militia did not engage in predatory behaviour in its centres of control – the economic hubs of Aru and Ariwara – but instead invested in creating a relative degree of predictability in the social and economic order, wherein misbehaviour was brutally punished.

The first point to note is that this behaviour can be explained, but not by the dominant way of thinking in the literature on the availability of resources (Weinstein 2007; Collier 2000, 2002), and certainly not by theories of lootable resources. This literature underestimates the accessibility of these resources and does not distinguish between the exploitation of and the actual trade in these goods. This case study suggests that this literature eventually, or more generally, overestimates the capacity of rebel movements to control the commodity chains of natural resources from their source to their eventual appearance in international markets. This is certainly the case for non-local actors, who lack the necessary contacts and knowledge to operate in a foreign location. Concretely, this article has shown how the FAPC was to a certain extent dependent upon pre-existing trading networks, which had a tangible effect on the particular governance choices of the armed movement. On the one hand, the FAPC wanted to attract as many traders as possible, because of which it manifested relatively disciplined behaviour and



strongly punished misbehaviour within the economic centres of Aru and Ariwara. On the other hand, the movement had to rely on local traders in order to control these trading networks. By investing in a relatively stable social and economic order, it managed to gain the trust of the traders, stimulated the economic activities of the area and created a common interest. This relationship between specific economic interests and the type of behaviour demonstrated by the armed movement is further illustrated by the way that the movement acted outside of these particular economic centres, where it was not necessary to construct a predictable social and economic order. In these circumstances, combatants were far less disciplined.

Second, the FAPC example illustrates how the general literature can underestimate the specific conflict dynamics. Military security as a factor has a strong impact on the behaviour of an armed movement: While a situation of high military security may enable an armed movement to establish a stable relationship with the local population (if the movement wishes to do so), military insecurity, in contrast, makes this rapport much more difficult. In the latter situation, violent behaviour may be the only way to protect economic interests.

In sum, this case study of the FAPC strongly suggests that it is necessary to look beyond monocausal economic arguments about the relationship between resources and the behaviour of armed movements. Similarly, in testing Weinstein's presumptions about "opportunistic" and "activist" rebellions, Guichaoua (2009: 34) shows how the behaviour of Nigerian militias results from a complex combination of interdependent external and internal influences which are hardly attributable to the "initial conditions" of access to finance in which the movements are created (which, according to Weinstein, would lead to a particular kind of behaviour). Concretely, Reno (2002) illustrates how the behaviour of Nigerian militias ends up being influenced by external actors – patrons – in the context of a collapse of formal state institutions. It is, therefore, "not cross-border and clandestine rackets in and of themselves that cause predatory conflict and political fragmentation", but instead the "relation of patronage to power and state collapse that shapes this social space of mass rebellion" (Reno 2002: 848). In other words, the behaviour of armed movements is profoundly influenced by the constraints and opportunities that present themselves through a variety of actors – such as the civilian population, transnational actors and networks (Mampilly 2011), and less influenced by the availability of resources, *per se*.

The activities of a particular armed group cannot, therefore, be understood without taking these different actors into account, as they do not exist independent of one another. Rather, they are what Norbert Elias (1987: 85) calls "figurations" or a "pattern which interdependent human beings, as



groups or as individuals, form with each other” (cf. Titeca 2009b). While the FAPC was founded as an intermediary for Uganda, in being an outsider to the area, it had to rely in turn on the local trading community as intermediaries in order to gain access to the local economic space. The presence of a foreign backer did not directly impact their behaviour, but rather provided the armed movement with the necessary support to safeguard the economic interests at stake. This led to a situation of mutual dependence between all those actors involved – Ugandan military officials, Ugandan traders, Congolese traders and the FAPC – which, combined with the military security of the area and situation, resulted in the disciplined behaviour of the movement.

Finally, the different behaviour of the FAPC as compared to other armed groups with similar characteristics (those with access to resources and the support of Uganda) is best explained as a result of internal and external factors, but above all by the characteristics of the Aru/Ariwara areas. Other groups had to face many more military confrontations, while the areas of Aru and Ariwara were exceptional for the paucity of military challenges made to the FAPC throughout its presence there. Second, not many other movements were confronted with a historically embedded market and pre-existing trading networks (such as in the Aru/Ariwara areas), or the opportunity and challenge of organizing customs points. This was the case for the RDC-ML (Raeymaekers 2007), which demonstrated a similar behaviour toward traders as the FAPC did. Lastly, as the main basis for political mobilization, ethnicity played a crucial role in the violence of eastern Congo, and in Ituri in particular. The FAPC was multi-ethnic and positioned itself outside of these ethnic conflicts: Commander Jérôme was not primarily interested in the constantly changing alliances between different actors and ethnic groups – instead, as a report by the International Crisis Group (2003: 9) describes, ultimately, he “was only interested in personal gain”.

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### **Zugang zu Ressourcen und Berechenbarkeit von bewaffneten Rebellionen: Das kurzlebige “Monaco” der FAPC im östlichen Kongo**

**Zusammenfassung:** Dieser Beitrag widmet sich der Bedeutung von ökonomischen Ressourcen für das Verhalten bewaffneter Gruppierungen. Angenommen wird, dass der Zugang zu Ressourcen, und insbesondere zu verwertbarem Beutegut, negative Wirkung auf das Verhalten einer bewaffneten Gruppierung der Zivilbevölkerung gegenüber hat. Demgegenüber belegt der Fall der FAPC (Forces Armées du Peuple Congolais) im Osten Kongos, dass es notwendig ist, jenseits dieses monokausalen Arguments nach weiteren Einflussfaktoren zu suchen. Der Autor diskutiert zunächst, inwieweit polit-ökonomische Ansätze Zugriffsmöglichkeiten auf Kriegsbeute unterschätzen. Er zeigt auf, dass sich das Verhalten der FAPC auf ein ganz bestimmtes ökonomisches Interesse zurückführen lässt: Um Zugang

zu vermarktbarem Beutegut zu erhalten, war die Rebellengruppe abhängig von etablierten Handelsnetzwerken. Und um deren Funktionieren zu gewährleisten, musste die Berechenbarkeit ökonomischer Interaktionen durch die Schaffung eines Minimums an sozialer und ökonomischer Ordnung gewahrt werden. Der Artikel stellt zudem infrage, ob polit-ökonomische Ansätze spezifische Konfliktdynamiken nicht möglicherweise unterschätzen; in diesem Kontext habe beispielsweise militärische Sicherheit einen hohen Stellenwert.

**Schlagwörter:** Demokratische Republik Kongo, Uganda, Bewaffneter Konflikt, Streitkräfte/militärische Verbände, Informeller Grenzhandel