

## *Full Length Research Paper*

# **The Application of New Wars Theory to African Conflicts Since 1960.**

**Nnuriam Paul Chigozie**

History and Strategic Studies, University of Lagos.

Author's E-mail: [ambassadorgozie@gmail.com](mailto:ambassadorgozie@gmail.com)

**Accepted 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.**

**The notion that 21<sup>st</sup> century conflict is distinct from the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been immensely debated. Various terms have been used to explain contemporary conflict including; 'wars among the people', 'wars of the third kind', 'hybrid wars', 'privatized wars', 'post-modern wars' as well as 'new wars'. But it is the term 'new' that seems to have become a major thrust among the scholars and policy makers. New Wars are the wars of the era of globalization; the term enables one to understand the logic that is inherent in contemporary conflicts and what makes them different from 'old wars'. Against this background, this paper will examine the propositions of New Wars theory, and its application to explaining African conflicts since 1960.**

**Keywords:** New Wars Theory, African Conflicts.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The development of international relations as a discipline owes much to the international tensions that began from Europe in the 19th century and spilled into the 20th century, culminating in the First World War. The war was a watershed event in human history because it generated widespread intellectual interest in international affairs. Basically, policy makers were interested in the kind of expertise opinions that the intellectual communities were willing to offer to achieve international security and peace. To this end, the pursuit of international peace and security after the war as well as the formation of international relations dogma can be seen as integral to the early development of the discipline and as a background for all other theoretical framework that has evolved to explain international relations phenomenon. Meanwhile, since the mid-1990s, a number of analysts and academics have argued that the world is witnessing changes in the nature of conflicts and therefore it is unavoidable to think in categories of the 'New wars'. In Clausewitzian terms, war was deemed "an act of violence intended to compel opponents to fulfill will, led by states, between states and in order to achieve state interests with use of national forces characterized by clear vertical structure and hierarchy"<sup>1</sup> Geopolitics and ideology were the main reasons pushing states towards the war whereas the goal of the conflict

was to strengthen power by defeating state's enemy and gaining its territory. Today's conflicts, according to 'New Wars' theories, are different, mainly due to the process of globalization influencing contemporary politics and economy. They are based on the identity politics and are stimulated by personal or group interests and greed. Mary Kaldor has for some years been arguing that the current period of globalization features a new type of organized violence that she describes as 'New Wars'. Kaldor's New Wars thesis is most fully realized in her work "Old and New Wars" published in 1998 and expanded and revised in a second edition released in 2006, though she has elaborated on the central idea in various other publications. Kaldor does admit that new wars are not necessary new, in that they have no precedent in history; however, she insists on keeping the term because there is still a definite need for new policy responses. Since 1960, however, the continent of Africa has been highly susceptible to intra and inter-state wars and conflicts. These conflicts, considering its nature, cause and course it followed could be explained using New Wars Theory.

## CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

**Conflicts:** The term Conflict refers to a confrontation between individuals or a group resulting from opposite or incompatible ends or means. A situation that arise when individuals or groups identify a goal they want to secure in order to satisfy material interests, needs or values, and these perceptions lead to actions that come up against the interests, needs and values of others. T. Woodhouse gave the definition of Conflict as a situation that arise when individuals or groups identify a goal they want to secure in order to satisfy material interests, needs or values and these perceptions lead to actions that come up against the interests, needs and values of others.<sup>2</sup> And according to Boulding, Conflict is a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions that is incompatible with the wishes of others.<sup>3</sup>

**New Wars Theory:** New wars theory is a theory and term advanced by British academic Mary Kaldor to explain warfare in the post cold war era. This type of warfare is characterized by: violence between combinations of state and non-state networks; fighting in the name of identity politics as opposed to ideology; attempts to achieve political rather physical, control of the population through terror and fear; and conflict financed not necessarily through the state, but through other predatory means that seek the continuation of violence. Other terms used for the concept include 'wars among the people', 'wars of the third kind', 'hybrid wars', 'privatized wars' and 'post-modern wars'. The term encompasses all modern warfare that does not meet the level of violence found in old wars.

### The Basic Assumptions of New Wars Theory

New Wars as a term is advanced by British academic Mary Kaldor to explain warfare in the post cold war era. Other supporters of the New Wars theory are; Herfried Münkler from Germany, Martin van Creveld from Israel, and Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou from Mauritania. It means the wars of the era of globalization. The theory states that forward-looking ideas such as Democracy, State-building or Socialism are anachronistic. That contemporary war are based on identity politics, on "movements which mobilize around ethnic, racial or religious identity for the purpose of claiming state power," but which in fact are fragmentative, exclusive and backward-looking.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, political leaders apply identities to justify autocratic decisions and to have support by increasing fear and insecurity. The higher the feeling of insecurity, the higher the polarization of society, the less is the space for alternative integrative political values.<sup>5</sup> New wars happen where authoritarian nations have been highly weakened due to its opening up to the rest

of the world. In such sense, the difference between state and non-state, economic and political, public and private, war and peace, and even external and internal are reducing. However, New Wars have a meaning that is different from the meaning of what Mary Kaldor call 'Old Wars': the idea of war that predominated in the 19th and 20th centuries. The basic propositions of the New Wars theory in her first version of argument include:

**Actors;** Old wars were fought by the regular armed forces of states. New wars are fought by varying combinations of networks of state and non-state actors (regular armed forces, private security contractors, mercenaries, jihadists, warlords, paramilitaries).<sup>6</sup>

**Goals;** Old wars were fought for geo-political interests or for ideology (democracy or socialism). New wars are fought in the name of identity (ethnic, religious or tribal).<sup>7</sup> Identity politics is quite different from geopolitics or ideology. According to Kaldor, the objective is to have access to the state for particular groups rather than to carry out particular policies or actions for public or state interest.

**Methods;** In Old wars, battles were decisive encounters. The act of waging war comprised of capturing territory through forceful or military means. While, in New Wars, battles are few and areas are captured through political means, or control of the population.<sup>8</sup> Violence is waged against the civilians as a way of controlling territory rather than the enemy forces.

**Forms of Finance;** Old wars were largely sponsored by states. In New wars especially among the weak states, revenue is falling and new kinds of predatory private groups and methods are used to finance and sponsor violent conflicts, they include; loot, Diaspora support, kidnapping, or smugglings of oil, diamonds, drugs, or people. Significantly, New Wars theorists equally argue that New Wars are motivated by economic gain. Furthermore, Old Wars economies were typically centralizing, autarchic and mobilized the population, while, New Wars are part of an open globalised decentralized economy in which participation is low and revenue depends on continued violence.<sup>9</sup>

**Displaced Population;** In New Wars, the overall total displaced population has increased. Indeed according to UNHCR, the figures for forcibly displaced people in 2010 were at their highest in fifteen years at 43.7 million, including 15.4 million refugees, some 27.5 million internally displaced persons and 837,500 individuals whose asylum applications had not been processed.<sup>10</sup>

**Mutual Enterprise;** War could either be a 'contest of wills' as is implied by Clausewitz's definition or it could be a 'mutual enterprise'.<sup>11</sup> A contest of wills explains that the enemy must be destroyed making wars to be extreme, while a mutual enterprise means that both sides need the other in order to continue the war. Thus, this shows that war tends to be long and often inconclusive in New wars. Unlike in Old wars, the parties involved in New wars are concerned in the

enterprise of war rather than winning or losing due to political and economic aims. What's more, Old wars were linked with state building, New wars are the opposite; they tend to bring to the dismantling of the state. It is from this idea that Kaldor understands as the key difference with Old wars; where she analyzed if New wars are Post-Clausewitzian. Clausewitz was an example of old wars theorist. For him, war was a contest of wills.

Subsequently, Mary Kaldor argues that there are some new elements of contemporary conflicts and wars. According to her, the main new elements have to do with globalization and technology; Firstly, the increase in the destructiveness and accuracy of all kinds of military technology has made conflicts and wars increasingly destructive and therefore difficult to win.<sup>12</sup> The first Gulf war between Iraq and Iran (1980-88) and the First World War (1914-18) that lasted for years and killed millions of people were good examples of symmetrical wars. A new form of communications (information technology, television and radio, cheap air travel) is another element which has had effects in New Wars. Even though most contemporary wars and conflicts are local, international connections are more extensive, involving criminal networks, Diaspora links, as well as the presence of international agencies, NGOs, and journalists.<sup>13</sup> Communication continues to be a tool of war, paving the way for the spread of fear and panic than earlier times. Finally, globalization has led to the transformation of nations and states. The major important aspect of this transformation is the changing role of the state towards conflicts and violence. More so, the monopoly of violence is eroded from states as some states are increasingly surrounded in a set of international institutions and laws, while other states become weaker under the impact of globalization.

Going forward, Kaldor maintains that the aim of the adjective 'new' does not have to do with any given feature of contemporary conflicts, but it has to do with the model of war and how the model is distinct from the hitherto models that underpin both policy and scholarship. It is a model that shows a specific political, economic and military idea. Thus, the distinction between New and Old wars, is a contrast between ideal types of war rather than a contrast between actual historical experiences.<sup>14</sup> Practically, the wars of the 20th century, especially in Europe were close to the Old war ideal and the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are closer to her description of New wars.

### **The Application of New Wars Theory to African Conflicts since 1960**

Though Mary Kaldor did not often mention African in her New Wars thesis, however, New Wars theory could be used to describe the causes, courses,

nature and even the effects of African conflict since 1960 following the independence of most African states. On a first note, New Wars are fought in the name of identity (ethnic, religious or tribal). According to Mary Kaldor, Identity politics has a different logic from geopolitics or ideology.<sup>15</sup> The goal is to have access to the state rather than to carry out particular programs for public interest. In Rwanda, for example, the whole population was linguistically and culturally homogeneous and cooperative despite the division between the two major groups; the Hutu, and the Tutsi. However, this was changed under the rule of Europeans- Germany and Belgium. The Tutsis were favored and granted much more political power over Hutus who were the majority. In effect, the post-colonial history of Rwanda was full of violence; particularly in the 1990s when the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF; mainly Tutsi) began new civil war as a response to government's inability to deal with economic and social problems, and to defend Tutsi ethnic group. This culminated to infamous April 1994 Rwandan Genocide which killed about 800,000 Tutsis together with moderate Hutu.<sup>16</sup> Thus it can be argued that the Rwanda conflicts which started in 1959 was instigated by identity politics. In a similar fashion, the Darfur conflicts since 2005 was caused by ethnic and religious differences. The Darfur's long identity has been both 'African' and 'Arab' with no sense of contradiction between the two. All of Darfur's ethnic groups are Muslim, all of them share strong cultural bonds, most speak Arabic and, finally, all of them share the same way of life, being both farmers and nomadic herders. The division into Arab and non-Arab groups is therefore more about political support for government in Khartoum and Arab belief of their supremacy over black population of Sudan. This later division indirectly instigated by Government of Sudan led to series of conflicts in Darfur. Furthermore, the Liberia conflicts are as well rooted to ethnic division. The first group of freed American slaves landed in Liberia in 1822.<sup>17</sup> The U.S settlers called themselves Americo-Liberians and maintained their American values and discriminated against the Africans who lived in the area they colonized. From 1930s, the Americo-Liberians enslaved some of the Africans from the interior of the country.<sup>18</sup> Comprising about 5 percent of Liberia's population, they ruled and dominated the other groups until 1980. The major ethnic groups are the Kpelle (20 percent), the Bassa (14 percent), Gio (9 percent), Mano (7 percent), and the Krahn (5 percent).<sup>19</sup> In the late 1970s, Liberia's economic problems heightened tensions between the privileged Americo-Liberians and the other ethnic groups.<sup>20</sup> In the 1980, William Tolbert, the Americo-Liberian president was overthrown and murdered by a group of soldiers led by Samuel Doe from the Krahn group.<sup>21</sup> Once in power, Doe allowed the Krahn to dominate the country like the Americo-liberians. Doe and Krahn were soon challenged by an alliance composed of the Gio and Mano groups. In the late 1990s, Doe was captured and tortured to death

by Prince Johnson and members of the Gio group.<sup>22</sup>The war continued after Doe's death as different factions struggled for power. More than 150,000 people (out of a population of 3 million) were killed, while 800,000 became refugees in neighboring countries.<sup>23</sup>More so, the Chadian conflict of 1966 to 1990 began as a revolt by an alienated Muslim north against the central government, which was dominated by the westernized Christian south.<sup>24</sup>Later, the conflict turned into a struggle by several nationalist factions from both the North and the South for the control of the central government in Ndjamena. While the conflict was essentially an ideological conflict, it was heightened by external involvement in support of various factions considered likely to maintain the interests of the different interventionists. France who ruled Chad made no attempts to achieve national integration in Chad. France's colonial policy of assimilation had some success in the South but failed woefully in the north. The north had been islamized before the imposition of colonial rule; in effect, the north refused to be westernized and held on to Arabic and Islamic traditions. At the independence, France gave power to a government dominated by the westernized and better educated Christian southerners, with Francois Tombalbaye as the president. President Tombalbaye government didn't try to bridge the gap between South and North. Thus, deprived of effective participation in the government, opposition groups from the north in 1966 formed the Front National de Liberation du Chad (Frolinat) in Sudan under the leadership of Ibrahim Abatcha.<sup>25</sup>The formation of Frolinat marked the beginning of an organized armed rebellion and civil war in Chad.

Secondly, in the New Wars, the legitimate violence is not the state's monopoly any longer. As New War theorists suggest, New Wars are characterized by multiplicity of types of fighting units, public and private, state and non-state actors. This form of warfare also changes goals of the conflicts, which aims to gain support of the local population rather than capturing territory from enemy forces. The new wars and conflicts equally involve regular foreign troops operating under the auspices of international organizations and self-defense units composed mainly of volunteers trying to defend their localities. For instance, soon after the conflict began in Northern Darfur, the Arab Janjawid troops were transformed into semi-regularized or paramilitary forces with serious support from Government of Sudan. What's more, Government of Sudan started to create militias in other parts of Darfur based on both Arab and non-Arab groups and equally commenced a major recruitment into the Popular Defense Forces (PDF). These forces operate autonomously with a loose tie with Government of Sudan command. On the opposite, there is the Sudan Liberation Army and several self-defense groups mostly established on a tribal basis. Similar situation as well

took place in Rwanda where political leaders of Movement Revolutionnaire National pour le Development (MRND) created militias which carried out attacks on civilian population.<sup>26</sup>The most important among them was *Interhamwe* which was the first civilian militia officially created for tasks of social interest, and which later became the main perpetrator of genocide.<sup>27</sup>*Impuzamugambi* is another one which fully complies with the description of paramilitary group stated by Mary Kaldor. *Impuzamugambi* tended to recruit its soldiers mostly among the poor, homeless and unemployed. For them, genocide was the best thing that could ever happen to them. They had the opportunity in the form of authority to take revenge on powerful people as long as they were on the wrong side of political fence. Their main rival was forces of the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF).

Another application is that in New Wars theory the main victims of war are innocent civilians. In Rwanda for instance, the killing of Tutsis in 1994 was directed by the political and military leaders, whose main political goal was the destruction of the Tutsi as a group. The Human Rights Watch depicts the scale of atrocities:

*In such places as the commune of Nyakizu in Southern Rwanda, local officials and other killers came to 'work' every morning. After they had put a full day's 'work' killing Tutsi, they went home 'singing' at quitting time . . . The 'workers' returned each day until the job had been finished – that is, until all the Tutsi had been killed.*<sup>28</sup>

In Darfur, the effect of Janjawid raids on non-Arab villages, according to the estimation of different organizations, killed 200,000 to nearly a half million people.<sup>29</sup>Another category mentioned by Kaldor is ethnic cleansing, Sudanese military and Janjawid attacks certainly aim to clear areas of non-Arab original inhabitants; they destroy their villages and loot other belongings. The third technique is 'rendering an area uninhabitable', which can be done physically (attacking civilian targets), economically (forced famines and sieges), and psychologically (systematic rape and sexual abuse). During the genocide in 1994, Hutu militia groups subjected Rwandan women to sexual violence on a massive scale and often brutally killed them afterwards. Also in Darfur, Janjawid attack not only villages but also internally displaced camps where women are beaten and raped, men are tortured and murdered.

Furthermore, in 'New Wars' the increase in the destructiveness and accuracy of all forms of military technology has made wars increasingly destructive and therefore difficult to win. Kaldor states:

*The new type of warfare is a predatory social condition. Violence spreads very easily, especially among neighboring countries which are the most immediately affected. It has economic and political effects: the lost trade, the spread of illegal circuits of trade, the spill-over of identity politics are just few of possible consequences for the region.*<sup>30</sup>

For instance, Darfur Crisis caused a regular proxy wars between Chad and Sudan, mainly due to Sudanese support for the Chadian opposition in order to overthrow Idriss Déby and avoid the situation when Chad would be the operating base for international forces intervening in Darfur.

Another validation of the New Wars theory to African conflicts is the issue of increased displaced population. One of the attendant effects of wars and conflicts in Africa is the emergence of numerous numbers of displaced persons who have become refugee in different nations across Africa. This has become a problematic issue. UNHCR gave the figure of 2.1 million refugees from Rwanda by mid-November 1994; 1,244,000 of them fled to DR Congo, 577,000 to Western Tanzania, 270,000 to Northern Burundi and about 10,000 to Uganda.<sup>31</sup> Adding to the above circa 1,500,000 of internally displaced gave number of 3.5 million which constitutes half of the Rwandan population in early 1990s.<sup>32</sup> Again, in Darfur case, at the end of 2007 UNHCR noted 1,250,000 internally displaced and about 523,000 refugees in neighboring countries, mainly Chad and CAR.<sup>33</sup> In Liberia, the 2004 report of the Global Coalition for Africa noted that an estimated 700,000 were internally displaced as at 2003.<sup>34</sup> The spill-over effects of the Liberian conflicts were felt in neighboring countries through increased refuge flows. About 3000 Liberians were hosted by Nigeria at the height of the crisis while appreciable number of them also became refuge in Guinea.<sup>35</sup> In Sudan, an estimated 4.7 million Sudanese were displaced during the nation's prolonged civil war.<sup>36</sup> As at 2004, the total number of African refugees was put between 15 and 20 million.<sup>37</sup> They become refugees in neighboring countries in the region.

In another development, whereas Old wars were associated with state building, New Wars are the opposite; they tend to contribute to the dismantling of the state. A good example is Somalia's civil war which erupted in full force in January 1991 after Siad Barre fled Mogadishu.<sup>38</sup> The central government collapsed and Somalia joined the growing ranks of failed states as two powerful warlords, Mohammed Farah and Ali Mohammed battled for control of the capital. Subsequently, the presence of Al-shababb militants has continued to threaten the existence of government and peace in Somalia. Similarly, in Nigeria, the Boko Haram militancy has often crippled the northeastern part of Nigeria, and cause instability in the region. Against this, Gerard Prunier concludes;

*The effects of these new conflicts are even more devastating than in the case of traditional cross-border wars. They strike at the very heart of a nation's social fabric . . . threatening its political and economic development. In the new wars environment,*

*when the states are disintegrated, markets are shut down as a result of fighting or blockades imposed by outside powers, the production is physically destroyed or economically collapsed, both governments and military groups have to find another sources of funding their activity. They have several options, the most common of which is loot, robbery and extortion, but also levying of taxation and tribute.*<sup>39</sup>

Rwanda and Darfur can serve as ideal examples of the above.

Furthermore, in New Wars, the war effort would not be able to sustain without external assistance in forms of remittances from abroad to individuals, direct support from the diaspora living abroad, assistance from foreign governments and humanitarian aid. In other words, the economy of New Wars is decentralized and highly dependent on foreign resources, support of which is not based on geopolitics any more, but on ideology and/or ethnic and religious identity. For example, in early 2003 the Darfuran rebels were supplied militarily by Eritrea and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, and most of the weapons and all the vehicles used by the rebels were brought by deserters or acquired through Chadian and Libyan networks. It is commonly known that because of its economic interests, China supported Sudanese government, including military shipments despite the UN arms embargo during Sudanese crisis. In Rwanda crisis, the Rwandan Patriotic Front found its ally in Uganda which was providing weapons, ammunitions and other military supplies. The RPF could also count on support from their nationals holding power in Burundi as well as temporarily used Tanzanian military bases situated close to the border with Rwanda. Finally, there was noticed ambiguous France's involvement on Habyarimana regime's side in Chad. Thus, it is right to state that in the new type of globalised war economy, external flows are its integral part.

Another aspect is economic gains. According to New Wars theorists, the New Wars is characterized and motivated by economic factors. The struggle for mineral resources especially diamond fuel crisis in Liberia and DR Congo are good examples. The Congo crisis for instance began when Laurent Kabila's forces launched a successful war that overthrew Mobutu Sese Seko in 1997.<sup>40</sup> The war dragged in about eight countries and numerous ethnic groups. It is argued that the crisis was heightened by the operations of multinationals especially in eastern DR Congo. Another example is the Morocco-Western Sahara conflict since 1975. What amounted to the sellout of Western Sahara by Spain took place in Madrid on November 14, 1975, when Spain signed a tripartite agreement with Morocco and Mauritania in which Spain agreed to withdraw from western Sahara in 1976 and transfer the territory to a joint Morocco and

Mauretania administration.<sup>41</sup>A takeover of Western Sahara would enable Morocco not only to check the adverse effect which increased phosphate mining in Western Sahara could have on the Moroccan economy, but also to gain a monopoly of the product. The annexation of Western Sahara would also give Morocco complete control over the iron fields of Western Sahara. Thus, the eventual occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco caused a long series of crisis even till today. In Sudan, there has been fight over oil boundary. The ethnic and religious conflict in Sudan which led to crisis of 1956 and Sudan Civil war of 1984 was complicated by the claims of both sides to territory that contain huge oil reserves in Darfur.

In another vein, there are more civilian deaths in the New Wars. A greater number of Africans have lost their lives in various wars and conflicts in Africa since 1960. For instance, in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, about 800,000 Rwandans were reportedly massacred.<sup>42</sup>Similarly, the Burundi civil war claimed over 200, 000 lives as at the year 2000.<sup>43</sup>In Liberia, over 250,000 lives were lost in the country's civil war between 1990 and 2004.<sup>44</sup>The same may also be said of Sierra Leone in which an estimated 200,000 people were killed during the nation's civil war between 1991 and 2001.<sup>45</sup>But perhaps the most pathetic situation occurred in Sudan. The civil war in Sudan has been one of the longest and costliest on the continent with an estimated twomillion lives lost to the war.<sup>46</sup>

Finally, according to New War theorists, there is spread of violence or conflicts in modern wars. The Liberia civil war broke out in December 1989.<sup>47</sup>Not surprisingly the civil war had serious consequences for Sierra Leone and Guinea. Guinea for instance had to bear the burden of an influx of refugees, and it was not long before the conflict in Liberia spilled over into Sierra Leone. It is significant that the presence of Sierra Leonean rebel forces along the border of the other two countries helped the spill-over of violence into Guinea and Liberia, and the growth of region wide conflicts which led to the creation of Manu River Union. The DR Congo crisis has dragged in about eight countries and numerous ethnic groups. Many of the ethnic groups involved were supported by Governments. For instance, the Ugandan government supported the Sudan People Liberation Army (SPLA) which has been fighting the Sudanese government since 1983.<sup>48</sup>Uganda supported the ethnic group that fought against Laurent Kabila. In light of these alliances, the Sudanese government helped Kabila. Ethnic rivalries in Rwanda and Burundi spilled over into Congo crisis. Governments in Rwanda and Burundi are involved in the Congo crisis because the ethnic groups that threaten their stability operate from the Congo and are participating in the Congo war. Moreover, in 1959, as decolonization was proceeding, the Hutu in Rwanda carried out a violent revolt against their traditional and Tutsi overlords and established a Hutu dominated republican government. The violence

that accompanied the revolt led to a large wave of migration of Tutsi across the border into Burundi. That same year Burundi became independent under a constitutional monarchy with the Tutsi aristocracy still much in control. In November and December 1963, the Tutsi forces invaded Rwanda, seeking to overthrow its government.<sup>49</sup>The Rwandan government accused Burundi of aiding and abetting the attempted invasion. The incident led to further violence against the Tutsi population in Rwanda and the aggravation of the refugee problem especially in Uganda. More so, the militancy of Boko Haram in Nigeria has led to instability in neighboring countries, Tuareqs in Mali has been causing insecurity in Malian neighboring countries, and Al-shabab Islamic militants in Somalia has as well spread their terrorism in eastern Africa neighboring countries and borders.

### Major Criticisms of New War Theory

The New Wars thesis gives an interpretation of the functioning of conflict in a globalized world but it is not without its critics. Since her initial proposition, Mary Kaldor's notion of 'New wars' has been heavily criticized especially by some who question whether the distinction between old and new wars can be made. Some critics pointed out that there is nothing 'new' about any of the elements said to be features of 'New wars'. According to them, none of what went on in the various conflicts held up as examples of 'New wars' by Kaldor are new, all have been present in various conflicts of the past. In particular, De Waal maintains that the idea of "New Wars" used by Kaldor is not a description of new conflicts but a description of conflicts in less governed countries.<sup>50</sup>More so, several areas of Kaldor's work show lack of clarity, which would not have expected of a well-defined concept. Kaldor in her book often mentions that not all new Wars are contemporary wars and that New Wars are category of contemporary war. She is not precise as to which wars are new wars. In her book, she only goes into detail about the war scenes she visited which is Bosnia. Subsequently, she discovered that the war in Bosnia had similar features to wars in Africa and perhaps also other places but fails to give concrete examples of these New Wars in Africa and other places like South Asia. Neither does she analyze these other new wars using her own framework as she did with the war in Kosovo. Thus, it looks like her entire concept of New Wars is based on a detailed analysis of just one war and that is Bosnia. The argument is that Kaldor seems to create a new category of war based on an analysis of one war; the Bosnian war, which is empirically insufficient. This lack of coherency is further espoused in her new work; "The New War in Iraq" where she tried to fit the Iraq war to suit her New Wars theory. For example, Iraq may be made up of people of various religious and ethnic backgrounds but

it is difficult to see that there has been much ethnic cleansing or displacement of peoples on the basis of identity. Some of the statistics in her book on the Iraq war contradicts her new wars theory. For instance, her figures on the Iraq war indicate that the main targets of the war in Iraq have been the coalition forces in Iraq and not civilians. About 70 percent of the attacks were directed towards the Coalition forces while only small portions of the attacks were directed towards the civilians. What's more, Kaldor relied on Dan Smith's research to support her argument on New Wars; Kaldor claims that at the start of the twentieth century, 85-90 percent of casualties in war were military. Since then the figures have changed with the proportion of civilian to military casualties in war constantly increasing, and is now at approximately 80 percent of all casualties in war. This argument is quite problematic; relying casualty figures of older wars can be risky because it is impossible to ascertain if these figures are right. Moreover, Smith in his work does not provide any evidence to support such a claim. This makes one question if Smith's data could be considered a reliable source. Furthermore, Kaldor's in her thesis claims that New Wars are much more deadly and brutal than Old Wars. This needs to be further explained. Some old wars were deadly. The Holocaust and the siege of Yang-Chou in China in 1645 by the Manchus which left about 800, 000 dead were good examples. Hence, for Kaldor to claim that new wars are more brutal is a historical. Another range of criticisms against the new wars thesis has to do with the claim that the new wars are post-Clausewitzian.<sup>51</sup> The reasons that are normally put forward have to do with the Trinitarian conception of war, the primacy of politics and the role of reason. Both John Keegan and Martin Van Creveld have suggested that the Trinitarian concept of war is no longer relevant. Other authors suggest that war is no longer an instrument of politics and indeed that the divorce of war from politics is characteristic of both pre-Clausewitzian and post-Clausewitzian wars.<sup>52</sup> In concluding this section, it is pertinent to emphasize that unlike Kaldor's proposition, some wars and conflicts in Africa were not motivated by economic factors. And the wars in Africa are seen as involving not just national but also other international actors.

## CONCLUSION

The New War theory contributes to the explanation of modern conflicts. The theory does not only describe patterns of war environment but as well aims to explain the altered causes, goals and strategies implemented during conflicts, and course and activities that takes place in globalised wars. Nonetheless, the New War theory does not regard few features of conflicts in African setting. Unlike Europe,

Africa still lacks or has less democracy and political pluralism, making the ideological agenda to still suffice in violent struggles and wars. And the role of ethnic and cultural mobilization cannot be perceived as a factor causing the war; rather it is a tool or sign to increase the nature of atrocities. However, on the whole, it is justifiable to classify some African wars as New Wars especially wars Darfur and Rwanda. Meanwhile, according to Kaldor, the aim of describing the wars and conflicts as new is to adjust the way scholars study and investigate the conflicts and thus to readily change the way policy and decision-makers see the conflicts. The one thing the critics tend to accept is that the new war proposition has been significant in opening up new scholarly analysis and policy perspectives. It has contributed to more espousal of the field of conflict and peace studies. And has had an influence on the intensive policy debates that are taking place especially within the military, ministries of defence, and international organizations.

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