Abstract

The West Africa region is arguably the most turbulent region in Africa; from the civil wars of Liberia and Sierra Leone to the political disputes in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and recently Mali; the region has hosted the highest numbers of the United Nations (un) peacekeeping missions with mixed results. While the responsibility of peace, security and ensuring human protection resides with governments, Civil Society Organizations (csos) have demonstrated their capacity to complement government's efforts in peace and security; and political leadership across the world has come to realise the strength of csos in anticipating, preventing and resolving conflicts because of their in-depth knowledge of context and expertise in working closely with communities. This paper assesses the contributions of csos towards the promotion of human rights protection, mass atrocities prevention and civilian protection in conflict-affected areas in West Africa; and argues for continued involvement of csos in human protection.

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