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United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 55 of Security Council resolution [2612 \(2021\)](#), covers developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 1 December 2021 to 16 March 2022. It provides a description of progress made in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) since the previous report, of 1 December 2021 ([S/2021/987](#)), including towards the realization of the benchmarks and indicators set out by the Government and the United Nations in the transition plan.

II. Political developments

2. Developments related to the electoral process, provincial governance and regional partnerships marked the reporting period.

3. On 13 December, during the annual state of the nation address, the President, Félix Antoine Tshilombo Tshisekedi, reiterated his commitment to the holding of free, democratic and transparent elections within the constitutional time frame. He also urged the Government to mobilize funds to support the electoral operations of the Independent National Electoral Commission and requested Parliament to adopt outstanding electoral legislation. The most recent draft electoral law was introduced on 3 December by the Majority Deputy of the Union sacrée de la nation, Cerveau Pitshou Nsingi Pululu, in which new requirements for candidates for elected positions, including that both parents have Congolese nationality, were proposed. On 23 December, the National Assembly endorsed nominees from dissident members of the opposition Front commun pour le Congo to fill the remaining vacant Commission seats, namely the Second Vice-President, the Quaestor and a plenary member. In a letter dated 15 December, the President of the Commission, Denis Kadima, requested the United Nations to deploy a needs assessment mission to assess modalities of possible electoral assistance.

4. On 6 and 11 January, respectively, the President of the Independent National Electoral Commission appointed Thotho Mabiku as the Commission's National Executive Secretary and Marie-Josée Kapinga as his Deputy, the first woman



appointed to that position. Several members of the opposition, including Lamuka, assessed the appointees as close to the current Government and called for actions to depoliticize the Commission. On 3 February, Mr. Kadima presented an electoral road map for the period 2021–2027, which included the presidential, parliamentary and local elections in the first phase, indirect elections of Senators, Governors and other local positions in the second phase and a final phase to consolidate the sustainability of electoral processes. He identified factors that could delay the electoral process, including the simultaneous implementation of the general census, population identification and voter registration. Mr. Kadima called upon the Government to swiftly release funds to support electoral operations. On 4 February, the Council of Ministers, chaired by Mr. Tshisekedi, approved three draft decrees concerning the simultaneous organization of the identification and registration of voters, the general population census, the creation of a national identity card and a general population database. The Mission continued to engage with political actors to promote consensus regarding electoral reform and to encourage stakeholders to create a political environment conducive to a credible, inclusive and peaceful electoral process.

5. On 29 January, Jean-Marc Kabund-a-Kabund was dismissed as interim President of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social, which confirmed tensions within the party. On 5 February, the Special Adviser to the President on Security, François Beya, was arrested by the Agence nationale de renseignements over alleged participation in activities affecting national security. He was replaced by his Principal Assistant, Jean-Claude Bukasa.

6. On 24 December, the National Assembly and the Senate closed their September ordinary session. The 2022 finance bill, adopted during the session, is estimated at \$11 billion. Priorities of the new budget include defence, education, health, infrastructure and agriculture. On 17 and 18 December, respectively, the National Assembly and the Senate adopted a law enabling the Government to issue ordinance laws to extend the state of siege in Ituri and North Kivu for 15-day periods during the parliamentary recess.

7. On 22 and 23 December, Mr. Tshisekedi presided over the eighth session of the conference of provincial Governors. He highlighted the political instability following the dismissal of 12 Governors, two Vice-Governors and the Presidents of some provincial assemblies owing to no-confidence votes in the respective provincial assemblies. The Governors underlined their governance challenges, including interventions from national political actors in provincial affairs and the sporadic retrocession of revenues and payment of operating costs to the provinces. The outcome document of the conference included a two-year moratorium on the application of no-confidence motions by provincial assemblies and a vow to initiate reforms to guarantee the stability of provincial institutions. On 31 December, Mr. Tshisekedi signed the local development programme, covering all 145 territories, with a budget of \$1.66 billion.

8. Following the launching of military operations by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and the Uganda People's Defence Forces against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) on 30 November, both countries signed a memorandum of understanding in Bunia on 8 December to specify the terms of their partnership. On 13 December, in Kigali, the Congolese National Police and the Rwandan National Police signed a memorandum of understanding to formalize cross-border cooperation on fighting transnational crime and stabilizing the region. While some parliamentarians expressed support for operations undertaken with Uganda, some opposition and majority political actors voiced concern over the agreements with Rwanda and Uganda, noting the lack of a political and legal framework and a potential threat to the sovereignty and unity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

9. On 19 January, in Brazzaville, Mr. Tshisekedi attended the twentieth ordinary session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and assumed the ECCAS chairpersonship. On 5 February, Mr. Tshisekedi delivered his closing address as outgoing Chairperson of the African Union at the thirty-fifth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. Highlighting achievements during his tenure, he recalled the progress made in implementing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, initiatives to promote the economic empowerment of women and young people and efforts to address the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

10. The signatory countries and guarantor institutions of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region convened in Kinshasa on 24 February for the tenth High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Framework, chaired by Mr. Tshisekedi and at which the Secretary-General was represented by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations. In the final communiqué, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to the Framework; vowed to continue to engage in dialogue and diplomacy to resolve tensions; pledged their support for the efforts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in fighting negative forces, including through enhanced coordination and collaboration; and committed themselves to promoting regional integration as well as the full, equal and meaningful role of women, young people and civil society in political processes, among other issues.

III. Security situation

A. Ituri Province

11. The security situation deteriorated owing to an escalation of violence by armed groups. Attacks by the Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO), the armed group Zaire in Djugu and Mahagi territories and the Front patriotique et intégrationniste du Congo (FPIC) in Irumu territory appeared to target members of specific ethnic groups, local and traditional authorities, internally displaced persons and FARDC. ADF remained the primary threat to civilians in Irumu and southern Mambasa territory. Between 1 December and 7 March, 458 civilians, including 82 women and 48 children, were killed, and 142 civilians, including 9 women and 24 children, were injured. The number of internally displaced persons in Ituri Province reached an estimated 1.97 million.

12. CODECO attacks in Ituri killed 196 civilians (143 men, 30 women and 23 children). Four attacks, comprising three in Djugu territory and one in Irumu territory, targeted internally displaced persons sites. On 1 February, at the Plaine Savo site, CODECO killed 62 civilians, including 27 women and 19 children, and injured another 34. These dynamics prompted further mobilization by Zaire factions in mostly Hema-inhabited areas of Djugu territory, as well as retaliatory attacks by Zaire in the mining area of Mongbwalu. Competition over control of mining sites in western Djugu increasingly triggered conflict between CODECO factions and Zaire, which in turn heightened the risk of retaliatory attacks and human rights abuses targeting members of the Hema, Lendu, Nyali, Bira and Alur communities.

13. CODECO activity also increased in Mahagi territory, where the group retreated, fleeing FARDC operations in Djugu territory, its traditional stronghold. Attacks perpetrated by CODECO factions left 48 civilians, including 6 women and 4 children, dead and 20 injured. In northern Irumu territory, CODECO factions, often in coalition with FPIC elements, perpetrated attacks on civilians, including a 15 January attack

on Kokoyange village, which resulted in the killing of 12 civilians, including 6 women and 4 children, and the injury of another 9 civilians, including 3 women and 2 children.

14. In Irumu and southern Mambasa territories, between 1 December and 7 March, attacks attributed to ADF left 160 civilians, including 16 women and 3 children, dead and another 32, including 1 woman, injured. From 8 to 11 February, FARDC and the Uganda People's Defence Forces conducted operations targeting ADF bases in Irumu.

B. North Kivu Province

15. Insecurity persisted in the Grand Nord area notwithstanding joint Congolese and Ugandan military operations against ADF. Between 1 December and 7 March, ADF conducted at least 72 attacks against civilians and FARDC positions concentrated in the northern and south-eastern parts of Beni territory. The attacks resulted in the killing of 145 civilians, including 21 women and 3 children, and the injury of 27 civilians, including 2 women and 6 children.

16. Attacks involving improvised explosive devices continued. Seven such incidents were reported between 1 December and 7 March, including an attack involving a person-borne improvised explosive device on a bar in Beni on 25 December, a detonation at a market in Oicha on 5 January and another at a market in Beni town on 5 February. On 10 January, Islamic State Central Africa Province claimed responsibility for the 25 December attack on its social media channels. The attacks revealed greater sophistication in the use of improvised explosive devices, with concomitantly heightened risks to civilians. Consequently, MONUSCO, through the Mine Action Service, organized awareness-raising sessions on improvised explosive device threat prevention for United Nations military and civilian personnel, State security actors, non-governmental organization (NGO) personnel and the local population.

17. In the Petit Nord area, clashes between armed groups, as well as between armed groups and FARDC, continued to pose a threat to civilians. Fighting in Walikale territory between the Guidon faction of the Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové (NDC-R) and the Forces patriotiques populaires-armée du peuple resulted in the killing of one woman and two children. The reporting period was also marked by clashes in Rutshuru territory between FARDC and the allegedly reconstituted Mouvement du 23 mars (M23). Between 24 and 26 January, alleged M23 elements attacked FARDC positions around Nyesisi village, killing at least 32 soldiers. Subsequent FARDC heavy mortar and artillery fire triggered population displacements.

C. South Kivu and Maniema Provinces

18. The security situation in South Kivu remained volatile. Violence against civilians perpetrated by Raia Mutomboki groups in north-western parts of the province, around Shabunda territory, continued. Military operations against armed groups in neighbouring North Kivu, in the framework of the state of siege, triggered population movements towards the Bunyakiri and Hombo areas, where an estimated 12,000 people have arrived since December. Since the start of military operations in Ituri and North Kivu, areas of South Kivu with a limited State authority presence have experienced an increased presence of armed groups connected to regional criminal networks involved in illegal mining.

19. In the Hauts Plateaux and Moyens Plateaux of Uvira, Fizi and Mwenga territories, violence between armed groups and against civilians continued, while hate

speech was propagated through local and social media. Armed groups posed a persistent threat to civilians in Bibokoboko, in particular internally displaced persons. Armed groups also attacked FARDC positions, police posts and supply convoys. On 15 and 18 February, Mai-Mai Yakutumba elements conducted several raids against FARDC in Bibokoboko, resulting in the killing of four civilians and 2 FARDC and 11 Mai-Mai elements. Armed groups also killed three senior FARDC officers, nine newly deployed police officers and several soldiers and stole weapons and ammunition.

20. Clashes in the Uvira Plateaux between Burundian armed groups, including the Résistance pour un État de droit au Burundi (RED Tabara) and the alleged Burundi National Defence Force, increased threats to civilians, in particular owing to the reported use by parties of heavy weapons. Following the retreat of FARDC troops in the Lulenge area, remnants of the Conseil national pour le renouveau et la démocratie reinforced their control over Fizi and Mwenga territories, which host intensive artisanal mining activities. Twa militias and Mai-Mai Malaika factions reportedly committed exactions against civilians in South Kivu, Tanganyika and Maniema.

D. Tanganyika Province

21. The security situation in Tanganyika remained relatively stable. However, banditry and Mai-Mai activity persisted in Nyunzu territory and in the Bendera area of Kalemie territory, often concentrated around mining sites. Between 1 December and 7 March, 68 such incidents were recorded, in which 13 civilians, including 1 woman, were killed, 20 civilians, including 1 woman, were injured and 7 women and 24 girls were raped. More than 5,200 people, including 1,697 women and 2,907 children, are still in internally displaced persons sites in Nyunzu territory owing to Mai-Mai activity.

IV. Human rights situation

22. Between November and January, MONUSCO documented 1,932 human rights violations and abuses, an increase of 9 per cent compared with the three previous months. This reflects an increase in abuses committed by armed groups in conflict-affected provinces, in particular North Kivu, Ituri, Tanganyika and South Kivu. Armed groups perpetrated 57 per cent of the total number of human rights violations and abuses documented versus 43 per cent perpetrated by State agents. At least 825 people were victims of extrajudicial and summary killings (636 men, 129 women and 60 children), an increase from the 576 recorded over the previous three months. Armed groups were responsible for 722 of the killings.

23. More than 92 per cent of the violations were committed in conflict-affected provinces, where armed groups intensified attacks against civilians. In North Kivu, a significant increase in the number of violations by FARDC soldiers was noted, in particular in Masisi, Beni and Butembo territories. ADF combatants were responsible for the deadliest attacks, killing 230 civilians (188 men, 33 women and 9 children) in North Kivu and Ituri. A total of 96 of those civilians were killed in December, after the launching of the joint FARDC-Uganda People's Defence Forces military operations against ADF. Also in December, MONUSCO received reports of the occupation of two schools in Beni territory by Uganda People's Defence Forces soldiers beginning on 30 November in the context of the operations.

24. In Ituri, CODECO continued to target vulnerable groups, in particular displaced persons of Hema ethnicity. On 22 January, a series of indiscriminate helicopter bombings carried out by FARDC as part of operations against CODECO resulted in

the killing of one woman, the wounding of three children and damage to a school and a health centre.

25. MONUSCO documented 113 violations of democratic space, compared with 110 in the previous quarter, including violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, cases of arbitrary arrest and illegal detention, violations of the right to property, and death threats, targeting in particular human rights defenders and other members of civil society, and political parties. In four separate incidents in North Kivu, two men were killed by Congolese National Police agents and two others by FARDC soldiers while exercising their right to freedom of expression and public assembly.

26. MONUSCO provided support to the Congolese authorities to combat impunity and prosecute those accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity and serious human rights violations. At least 56 FARDC soldiers, seven Congolese National Police agents, three corrections officers and three members of armed groups were convicted of human rights violations during the reporting period. In February, a new garrison military court became operational in Butembo, North Kivu, to address impunity in Butembo and Lubero territory.

27. MONUSCO continued to support the efforts of the national authorities to develop and implement a transitional justice strategy, including the organization of popular consultations in Kasai, Kongo Central and Tanganyika Provinces, expected to begin in March. On 6 December, the Senate adopted a law on the protection and promotion of the rights of people living with disabilities, which MONUSCO had advocated.

V. Humanitarian situation

28. The humanitarian crisis in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo remains one of the most complex and protracted in the world. Nearly 5.5 million people are still displaced, the highest number in Africa. In addition, the country hosts 517,790 refugees, of which 52 per cent are women. It was revealed in the current cycle of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification survey that 27 million people, including 13.7 million women, face acute food insecurity, the highest number for a single country and a 38 per cent increase compared with 2021. The increase reflects the expanded geographical coverage of the Classification's analysis and the intensified conflicts in some areas. In addition, an estimated 4 million children under 5 years of age are acutely malnourished, a 17 per cent increase from one year ago.

29. COVID-19 figures continued to increase. As at 28 February, a total of 86,202 confirmed cases and 1,335 deaths had been reported. A total of 724,266 vaccine doses had been administered as at 28 February, of which 436,650 were fully vaccinated people. Endemic diseases, including malaria, cholera and measles, negatively affected vulnerable populations. On 16 December, the Ministry of Health declared the end of the thirteenth Ebola outbreak in the country, with eight confirmed and three probable cases, including nine deaths. On 23 December, the meningitis outbreak that had begun in September 2021 was declared over, with a total of 2,662 cases and 205 deaths. Epidemiologic surveillance and community awareness-raising, including psychosocial support for Ebola survivors and their families, continued after the outbreak ended.

30. On 17 February, the Government and the United Nations launched the humanitarian response plan for 2022, which is aimed at assisting 8.8 million of the most vulnerable people in the country, with a financial requirement of \$1.88 billion. The humanitarian response will be focused on Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and parts

of Tanganyika, where there is a convergence of humanitarian impacts, deepening needs and increasing levels of vulnerability. Structural problems remain, such as the limited access of the population to high-quality basic services, the inadequacy of public development for the most vulnerable and gender inequalities.

31. Challenges to humanitarian access, including owing to insecurity, continued to hamper the humanitarian response. In January, 27 incidents against humanitarian workers were reported, in which one worker was killed, one was injured and eight were abducted.

VI. Protection of civilians

A. Mission strategies and political processes

32. The Mission confronted armed groups attempting to attack civilians, deployed its uniformed components to areas identified as hotspots and engaged with national, provincial and local authorities to strengthen the presence of national security forces and address intercommunal tensions. On 23 February, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations visited the internally displaced persons camp in Roe, in Djugu territory, where displaced persons demanded accountability for crimes committed by armed groups.

33. MONUSCO continued to strengthen the coordination of its protection efforts across provinces. Together with the United Nations country team, the Mission prepared a local protection contingency plan aimed at mitigating the impact of potential reprisal attacks by ADF on civilians residing at internally displaced persons sites.

34. In addition, MONUSCO pursued tripartite coordination with FARDC and the Uganda People's Defence Forces to ensure operational continuity in areas of operations where all three parties are present. On 22 January, MONUSCO, FARDC and the Uganda People's Defence Forces held an initial tripartite meeting at which they agreed on operational boundaries for each party, including the identification of MONUSCO camps across the theatre of operations to ensure force protection.

B. Field-level responses

35. The Mission's Community Alert Network system received a monthly average of 287 alerts, 58 per cent of which originated in North Kivu, 35 per cent in South Kivu and 6 per cent in Ituri. State security forces and/or MONUSCO responded to 67 per cent of the alerts. The Mission continued to invest in community engagement, early warning mechanisms and conflict resolution for local protection actors.

36. Following Mai-Mai attacks in Baraka, South Kivu, on 15 and 16 December, MONUSCO facilitated the visit of the provincial security committee in Baraka. Following the visit, MONUSCO deployed a series of joint assessment missions and organized intercommunity consultation sessions in Baraka, Uvira and the Ruzizi plain to gather information and prepare further consultations with provincial authorities.

37. In Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika, MONUSCO, through the Mine Action Service, conducted 168 spot tasks between 1 December and 7 March, resulting in the destruction of 5,000 small arms and ammunition, 237 explosive remnants of war and 1 other explosive device. Risk-awareness sessions on explosive devices and remnants of war were conducted in Bunia and Beni for United Nations military and civilian personnel, NGO personnel and local authorities and populations.

38. In Ituri, the Mission undertook night patrols to protect civilians from physical harm. In Djugu, MONUSCO troops repelled at least six incursions by CODECO militias into populated areas and conducted three cordon and search operations to block CODECO attacks on internally displaced persons sites. Local leaders informed MONUSCO that the cordon and search operations had permitted the resumption of school-related activities and civilian movements on the road between Drodro and Bule. The Mission also thwarted multiple CODECO attacks at the Roe internally displaced persons site, which hosts more than 70,000 persons. Following a security assessment, the Mission established a standing combat deployment in Drodro on 7 January. Following the attack on the Plaine Savo internally displaced persons site, MONUSCO deployed a quick reaction force to the area to hinder CODECO movements. The Mission engaged with the Military Governor of Ituri to discuss security arrangements and an increased presence of national security forces and with the Congolese National Police in Djugu to deploy a reinforcement of 100 officers. The Mission also engaged with the Territory Administrator and key stakeholders at the local and provincial levels, including leaders of the Hema and Lendu communities, urging them to intervene to de-escalate increasing tensions and prevent communal violence.

39. In Irumu territory, MONUSCO, in collaboration with FARDC, safely escorted 445 civilian vehicles along a segment of route nationale 4 despite the ADF presence in the area. A standing combat deployment was maintained in Manyala from 28 December to 22 January to secure the efforts, including the Mission's continuing rehabilitation work on the road.

40. In North Kivu, MONUSCO engaged with local authorities to facilitate dialogue following protests in Beni and Butembo against the extension of the state of siege. In the Petit Nord, MONUSCO established a standing combat deployment in Miriki to protect civilians displaced by fighting between the Guidon faction of NDC-R and the Forces patriotiques populaires-armée du peuple, resulting in the return of 980 displaced persons to their respective villages. Moreover, four standing combat deployments were dispatched to the northern and southern parts of Rugari, Gigoro and Rumangabo to enable a corridor for eventual humanitarian aid amid the crossfire between FARDC and alleged M23 elements. In Masisi territory, an enhanced standing combat deployment was established in Nyabiondo on 12 February to protect an estimated 1,500 displaced persons in the aftermath of reported clashes between the Guidon faction of NDC-R and NDC-R (Bwira/Mapenzi faction) and its allies. To address potential further improvised explosive device attacks in Beni territory, MONUSCO engaged with the Congolese National Police to develop improvised explosive device threat prevention, protection and response measures.

41. In South Kivu, MONUSCO supported the consolidation of a truce between the Tembo, Hutu and Havu communities in the Kalehe highlands and worked to anticipate population movements from North Kivu. The Mission also facilitated two dialogue sessions with the chieftaincies of Buholo and conducted 12 long-range patrols in the area. Following MONUSCO advocacy, a new FARDC regiment was deployed in Bunyakiri. As a result, tensions progressively decreased in the north of the province, marked by the signing on 2 December of a peace protocol between representatives of the three communities. In addition, 67 weapons were collected. In the Hauts Plateaux of Uvira, MONUSCO deployed a standing combat deployment, securing the axis of the road between Baraka and Bibokoboko for the return of internally displaced persons, and advocated FARDC deployment supporting that of additional Congolese National Police agents. The actions, in coordination with those of humanitarian actors and provincial authorities, enabled the return of an estimated 8,000 displaced persons in Baraka to their villages of origin around Bibokoboko.

42. In Tanganyika, MONUSCO conducted eight long-range patrols along the Kalemie-Bendera axis to address persistent banditry and Mai-Mai activity in the Bendera area of Kalemie territory. A standing combat deployment was maintained in Kisonja village, Kalemie territory, from 24 December to 6 January, permitting MONUSCO to raise the awareness of local defence and security forces of human rights violations following allegations of illegal detention of civilians in the area. The Mission also continued to liaise with FARDC to secure conflict-affected areas in Nyunzu territory.

VII. Stabilization and the strengthening of State institutions

A. Stabilization and root causes of conflict

43. The Magistrates' Court of Djugu, built under the project Ensemble pour la sécurité et la paix à Djugu, became operational on 4 March. Judicial staff, including magistrates and judges, were appointed, and the project consortium and MONUSCO advanced plans to build accommodations to facilitate the continued presence of judicial officers in the zone.

B. Security sector and justice system reforms

44. MONUSCO worked closely with FARDC and the Congolese National Police to promote the meaningful participation of women in security institutions. On 3 December, MONUSCO, in collaboration with FARDC, organized a mentoring session for 30 women soldiers ranked between major and colonel to encourage career advancement opportunities. In December, MONUSCO, in collaboration with the National Commission for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Reduction of Armed Violence, concluded an awareness-raising programme targeting women in State institutions and civil society organizations in Bunia, Goma and Bukavu. The Mission supported the network for justice and security sector reform in a mapping exercise involving security sector reform partners and analysis of the laws governing that sector.

45. On 3 February, the Steering Committee of the Joint Justice Reform Support Programme, co-chaired by the Minister of Justice and the Special Representative, adopted key priorities and milestones of the Programme for 2022, including the formulation of a national strategy for prisoner reintegration; the training of 902 police, judicial and correctional personnel; mobile court hearings to help to address overcrowding and prolonged detention; judicial inspections in Tanganyika Province; and the review and updating of provincial case prioritization strategies in Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika and Kasai.

46. MONUSCO continued to support the national authorities in their efforts to combat impunity. On 6 December, the Bunia Military Tribunal convicted 24 CODECO members of crimes against humanity for their participation in an insurrectional movement and the illegal detention of weapons and ammunition in relation to atrocities perpetrated in Ituri Province.

47. As part of efforts by MONUSCO to assist State authorities in reinforcing criminal justice institutions, a five-day training session for 40 clerks and prosecution secretaries, including 25 women, was conducted in Bukavu in December. The Mission liaised closely with judicial authorities in Djugu territory, Ituri, on the operationalization of the Magistrates' Court and its Prosecutor's Office.

48. The Mission continued to support the corrections system, with a focus on 11 priority prisons. As at 4 March, the total number of inmates in the priority prisons stood at 22,678, with 22,066 men and 612 women prisoners, 80 per cent (18,205) of whom were pretrial detainees. The combined capacity of the facilities is 5,420, with an overcrowding rate of 412 per cent. With support from MONUSCO, State authorities conducted inspections leading to the discharge of 1,545 prisoners. However, 47 inmates died owing to, among others, malnourishment and illnesses such as anaemia and COVID-19. In close collaboration with corrections authorities, the Mission continued to develop prisoner-feeding projects and support legislative efforts.

C. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

49. MONUSCO continued to work closely with State authorities to advance the operationalization of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme. In January, the Mission facilitated visits by the National Coordinator of the programme to Ituri and North Kivu, which included a launch ceremony for the programme in Ituri.

50. Between 1 and 18 December, MONUSCO and the United Nations Development Programme supported the visit of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme to eastern provinces. The programme team assessed ongoing conflict transformation and stabilization programmes and confirmed the importance of strategies tailored to localized responses centred on dialogue and community-based approaches. The draft strategy for the programme was shared with MONUSCO and international partners for comments and is being revised by the Government.

51. From 12 to 15 January, MONUSCO and the United Nations Development Programme supported the organization of the first national civil society forum to discuss the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme and the MONUSCO transition, with 89 participants, including 19 women, from provinces in which the programme will be implemented. Stressing the importance of a responsible Mission drawdown, participants recommended an increased role for civil society to ensure national ownership, including by building the capacity of national and provincial authorities. They emphasized their role in the development and implementation of the programme, including through participation in various decision-making committees to ensure that the population is informed and in agreement with community reintegration initiatives.

52. Presidential ordinance 22/003 was issued on 7 January, assigning to the Ministry of Defence and former combatants responsibility for the planning and execution of the demobilization of former combatants and children associated with armed forces and groups for the purpose of community reinsertion.

53. MONUSCO continued to support the voluntary disengagement of armed group elements. Between 1 December and 7 March, the Mission disarmed and provided reintegration support to 231 Congolese former combatants, including 1 woman, and facilitated their return to their communities of origin. As part of efforts by MONUSCO, six male Rwandan former combatants and one male Burundian former combatant, along with three dependants (one man, one woman and one girl), were hosted at transit centres. Eight Rwandan persons, including four male former combatants, two dependants (one man and one woman) and two children (one boy and one girl), were repatriated.

VIII. Women and peace and security

54. On 3 December, Mr. Tshisekedi appointed nine members to the Board of Directors of the State-owned mining company Gécamines and four financial authorities, including two women, to other State entities. On 11 January, Ms. Kapinga and Marie-Hélène Mathey were appointed, respectively, as Deputy National Executive Secretary of the Independent National Electoral Commission and as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United States of America.

55. On 18 and 19 January, MONUSCO organized two workshops in Beni territory to reinforce the capacity of 60 women with regard to mediation, negotiation and dialogue. On 7 and 8 December, the Mission participated in a regional conference on the involvement of women in peace processes, convened in Kinshasa by ECCAS. The conference adopted a declaration establishing a regional network of women mediators to strengthen ongoing peace and stabilization processes.

56. A joint assessment mission to Aveba, Ituri Province, organized by MONUSCO in December revealed the vulnerability of women to rape and ransom by armed groups at roadblocks. During the mission, women called for enhanced protection, including their full, equal and meaningful participation in the implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme. On 15 December, the Special Representative discussed the security situation in Ituri with women leaders, who denounced attacks by ADF and CODECO against civilians and recommended that MONUSCO advocate gender-responsive implementation of the programme. In December and January, MONUSCO facilitated a mapping exercise regarding high-risk areas of vulnerability for women and girls in Bulongo, Mutwanga and Kasindi, Beni territory, to promote the gender-sensitive protection of civilians and the active participation of women in their safety and security.

57. Efforts continued to promote positive masculinity as a tool to prevent sexual and gender-based violence. On 21 December, MONUSCO organized a workshop targeting 47 students, which comprised 24 boys and 23 girls from schools and universities in Bunia, on non-violent behaviour and traditions that are harmful to women. During the workshop, participants committed themselves to championing healthy behaviours to end the cycle of violence in communities.

IX. Child protection and conflict-related sexual violence

58. Between 1 December and 7 March, MONUSCO verified 419 grave violations by parties to the conflict against 348 children (198 boys and 150 girls). A total of 104 children (53 boys and 51 girls) were killed or maimed. FARDC soldiers were responsible for one killing, one abduction, four cases of sexual violence and one attack on schools.

59. During the reporting period, a total of 177 children (143 boys and 34 girls) escaped from, were separated from or were voluntarily released by armed groups. A total of 31 children were newly recruited, and 109 escaped from armed groups in North Kivu. Nyatura factions (30), Apa Na Pale (27), Mai-Mai Mazembe (25), Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda-Forces combattantes abacunguzi (23) and Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain (19) were the main perpetrators of child recruitment and use.

60. Commanders from the Union des patriotes pour la défense du Congo in North Kivu and the Rassemblement congolais contre l'occupation et la balkanisation in

South Kivu signed unilateral declarations and road maps to end and prevent child recruitment and use and to prevent sexual violence against children. Two children were voluntarily released during the reporting period. A total of 43 armed groups have made such commitments since July 2018, resulting in the voluntary release of 2,615 children, including 364 girls, as at 7 March.

61. The systematic use of sexual violence by non-State armed groups against civilians, as well as documented incidents perpetrated by State actors during military operations, continued. Between November and January, at least 117 women were victims of conflict-related sexual violence, a slight decrease, of 7 per cent, from the previous quarter, which reflects a decrease in sexual violence committed by armed groups. During the reporting period, armed groups were responsible for 71 cases of such violence and State actors for 46, in particular FARDC soldiers (42 victims). Among the armed groups, Nyatura (18 victims), CODECO (12 victims), Mai-Mai Apa Na Pale (10 victims) and Raia Mutomboki (7 victims) were the main perpetrators. The majority of the cases were recorded in North Kivu Province (51 per cent), followed by Ituri (21 per cent), South Kivu (14 per cent) and Tanganyika (11 per cent).

X. Exit strategy

62. MONUSCO and the United Nations country team continued to engage with the Government, civil society and partners in the operationalization of the transition plan. The joint working group, co-chaired by the Special Representative and the Prime Minister, met on 3 March with a view to reporting on the realization of benchmarks and related indicators. MONUSCO and the United Nations country team collected information on the status of actions taken to achieve the benchmarks, which was shared with the Government and reviewed and discussed through four technical-level meetings of the sub-working group on the transition. The sub-working groups on disarmament, demobilization, community reintegration and stabilization and on protection and human rights officially launched their activities on 10 March and reviewed their terms of reference and calendar of activities. The United Nations engaged with the Government, in consultation with civil society actors, to develop an initial progress report on the realization of the benchmarks and indicators (see annex).

63. The United Nations, in collaboration with national and international stakeholders, continued to operationalize the humanitarian-development-peace triple nexus approach in the pilot provinces of Tanganyika, Kasai and Kasai Central. In the Kasai provinces, the United Nations continued its efforts to sustain peacebuilding gains following the withdrawal of MONUSCO. In addition to a residual presence of personnel, a Coordination Officer supports the implementation of the triple nexus approach, in coordination with the Peacebuilding Fund and the provincial government. In addition, a provincial-level nexus meeting was held in Kananga on 24 February to further operationalize the nexus priority territories of Luiza and Dibaya (Kasai Central Province) and Mwaka and Kamonia (Kasai Province).

64. In preparation for the withdrawal of MONUSCO from Tanganyika by June 2022, the United Nations engaged with provincial authorities and other stakeholders through joint working groups on the protection of civilians and human rights, stabilization, support to State institutions, operations and strategic communication. The working groups developed action plans to address residual challenges relating to the protection of civilians, stabilization, early warning systems, civil society capacities and the strengthening of State institutions. Notwithstanding progress towards stabilization, the security situation remains fragile in northern zones of Nyunzu and Kalemie territories. To address the residual security challenges,

MONUSCO advocated with provincial and national authorities to reinforce the capacity of national security forces. A working group on the triple nexus approach in Tanganyika, comprising provincial authorities, civil society and the United Nations system, mapped existing activities and planned a workshop for March to identify priority areas for the roll-out of the nexus approach in the provinces.

XI. Mission effectiveness

A. Mission performance

1. Assessment of the performance of the force and police components

65. MONUSCO deployed 26 standing combat deployments (an increase of 13 per cent compared with the previous period) to improve humanitarian access. The Mission conducted 13,428 day and night patrols (a decrease of 11 per cent), 1,527 joint patrols (an increase of 20 per cent), 879 escorts (a 70 per cent increase) and 118 aerial reconnaissance operations (a 20 per cent increase). The aerial reconnaissance operations assisted in locating armed groups and facilitated the conduct of offensive operations to restrict their movements. MONUSCO intensified operations in Ituri that targeted armed groups. Three operations were launched in the areas of Uzi hill and Dheja, aimed at improving protection of civilians and resulting in the recovery of weapons and ammunition.

66. Four military units were evaluated, including one infantry battalion, one level 2 hospital and two headquarters support companies. All the units were assessed as satisfactory overall, with certain areas requiring improvement. Identified strengths across the units included high morale, effective command and control and the use of engagement teams. Areas requiring improvement and increased operational effectiveness included radio interoperability, training and rehearsals involving base defence plans, riot control, casualty evacuation, contingency plans and the provision of buddy first aid kits to all troops. A study is under way to identify equipment that has outlived its utility and that may require replacement or repatriation.

67. Women represent 22.1 per cent of MONUSCO military staff officers and military observers and 5.3 per cent of military contingent members. MONUSCO has 12 female and mixed engagement teams, which are involved in long-range and foot patrols to address security and protection needs in a gender-sensitive manner in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu.

68. A quick reaction force from Nepal was deployed to the Mission area on 1 February, further enhancing the Intervention Brigade of the force. The advance party and main body of the latest quick reaction force from South Africa are expected to deploy in March and April, respectively.

69. The Mission conducted a quarterly performance evaluation of 362 individual police officers, including 101 women officers. The overall performance assessment score was 73 per cent, an increase of 5 percentage points compared with the previous quarter, reflecting the effectiveness of measures implemented to improve performance.

70. All eight formed police units were evaluated as satisfactory. Two units are addressing shortfalls related to unavailable or old equipment following the findings of an inspection by the Contingent-Owned Equipment/Memorandum of Understanding Management Review Board. Formed police units regularly updated their contingency plans and by 21 February had conducted 808 training sessions on protection of civilians, public order management, firearms, command and control and camp security. A total of 16 operational readiness inspections were carried out, 64 training

inspection reports were written and four induction training sessions were held for all formed police units to ensure their readiness to respond to security threats and protect civilians.

71. Currently, women represent 26 per cent of individual police officers and 16 per cent of formed police unit personnel. To achieve the target of 25 per cent women in formed police units by the end of 2022, MONUSCO assessed the existing accommodation for women to improve infrastructure and create a conducive environment while advertising and promoting the deployment of women in the framework of the uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028.

2. Progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System

72. The dashboards of the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System integrating gender-related indicators became operational during the last quarter of 2021, and data were recorded against performance indicators on the online platform. The first performance assessment and reporting based on the System are expected towards the end of the first quarter of 2022.

3. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mandate implementation

73. MONUSCO continued to implement prevention measures relating to COVID-19, including a 14-day quarantine for newly deployed uniformed personnel, while prioritizing operational activities focused on protection of civilians. As at 7 March, 1,687 United Nations personnel had tested positive for COVID-19, 1,444 of whom had recovered, while the number of deaths remained unchanged, at 13. Through the United Nations vaccination campaign for Organization personnel, their dependants and personnel of international NGOs, 20,970 vaccine doses have been administered. A total of 12,813 United Nations personnel and dependants have been fully vaccinated (9,477 military, 550 United Nations police, 2,626 civilians and 207 dependants).

B. Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse

74. MONUSCO recorded seven allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse between 1 November and 28 February, including one allegation of transactional sex involving a military observer, which reportedly occurred in December; one allegation of sexual abuse, including a paternity claim, involving five military contingent members formerly deployed to MONUSCO or to the former United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which reportedly occurred in 2006, 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2021, respectively; and one allegation of an exploitative relationship involving a military contingent member, which reportedly occurred in 2006. Member States or the United Nations are investigating the allegations, and the alleged victims were referred to service providers for appropriate assistance.

75. MONUSCO further enhanced its preventive efforts by conducting outreach to local communities on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and closely engaging with members of communities and humanitarian organizations. Presentations were made to MONUSCO leadership, emphasizing the role and accountability of commanders and managers in preventing misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse.

XII. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

76. The safety and security of United Nations personnel and facilities remained a priority in line with Action for Peacekeeping commitments. The activities of non-State armed actors continued to affect United Nations programmes and personnel, especially in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. A total of 148 security incidents affecting United Nations personnel and facilities were recorded between 1 December and 24 February. They included 18 incidents related to armed conflict, 59 to crime, 36 to civil unrest and 35 to hazards. In the incidents, 35 national (33 men and 2 women) and 16 international (13 men and 3 women) United Nations personnel were affected.

77. On 15 February, soldiers of the 3410th regiment of FARDC fired on a MONUSCO patrol near Lwibo, North Kivu Province. No MONUSCO personnel were injured in the incident, and the patrol returned to the closest MONUSCO base. MONUSCO engaged with the Congolese authorities to address the incident in line with the status-of-forces agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

78. Risk assessments were conducted to evaluate and mitigate risks faced by the United Nations in implementing its mandate. Security training and awareness workshops were conducted to raise the awareness of staff members of the United Nations and humanitarian partners of the heightened risks of armed conflict and organized crime and the risks posed by improvised explosive devices and natural disasters. MONUSCO continued to provide armed escorts, when required, to United Nations field missions and humanitarian partners.

79. On 29 January, the Military Court of the former Kasai Occidental issued its verdict in the case of the assassination of two United Nations experts in 2017. Of the 54 accused persons, all men, 32 appeared before the Court during the trial, while 22 were tried in absentia. In all, 50 of the accused were found guilty, including 49 who were convicted for war crimes by murder and mutilation, terrorism, criminal association and participation in an insurrectional movement, and sentenced to death. The Court requalified the crimes with which a FARDC member, Colonel Jean de Dieu Mambweni, was charged as breach of orders, diversion of seized items and non-assistance to a person in danger and sentenced him to 10 years of imprisonment. Two of the accused men were acquitted for lack of evidence, while the Court declared its incompetence with respect to two others because they were minors at the time of commission of the crimes. The Prosecutor and the convicted persons appealed the decision before the High Military Court.

XIII. Observations

80. I welcome the stated commitment of President Tshisekedi to holding elections in 2023 in accordance with the Constitution, as well as the efforts of Congolese political actors to address their differences through dialogue. I also welcome the adoption of an electoral road map by the Independent National Electoral Commission, while taking note of the important challenges identified in the road map. I encourage all stakeholders to work together to overcome these challenges and to create an environment conducive to the holding of peaceful, inclusive and transparent elections.

81. I remain concerned about the lingering dispute surrounding the designation of Independent National Electoral Commission members. The planned reform of the electoral law could help to restore trust among political stakeholders and strengthen the population's confidence in the democratic process. However, I am troubled by the

prospect of protracted delays and attempts to introduce provisions that could lead to discrimination or undermine social cohesion. I therefore encourage all actors concerned to ensure that the revision of the law is consensual and inclusive. It is important that the Commission quickly finalize the electoral calendar and budget. I also encourage all relevant stakeholders to play their part in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people in all aspects of the electoral process. The United Nations system stands ready to support such efforts.

82. I commend President Tshisekedi for his efforts to prioritize the pacification of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. However, the continuing insecurity in these provinces remains a source of grave concern. I condemn the continued violence perpetrated by armed groups, including the increased use of improvised explosive devices. I call upon the national, provincial and local authorities to engage with affected communities and to enlist their support in finding durable solutions to ongoing conflicts. I take note of the ongoing joint military operations conducted by FARDC and the Uganda People's Defence Forces. I welcome the initial steps taken to establish effective tripartite coordination between MONUSCO, FARDC and the Uganda People's Defence Forces, which is essential to ensure the protection of civilians and the safety and security of United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers.

83. I welcome the outcome of the recent high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, which provides a strong basis for tackling the common challenges to peace and security facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. I remain concerned that armed groups with networks across the region continue to pose a threat to civilians, in particular in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, amid indications that a reconstituted M23 may have resurfaced. I call upon the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the countries of the region to pursue a comprehensive approach to these challenges, including through the development and implementation of non-military measures to support military operations.

84. I remain deeply concerned about violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including conflict-related sexual violence committed by armed groups and State agents. I strongly condemn all attacks against civilians, especially those targeting the most vulnerable. I welcome the investigation initiated by the Congolese authorities into the attack on the Plaine Savo internally displaced persons site and urge them to hold the perpetrators to account. I call upon the Government to exercise the utmost restraint and ensure that the implementation of the state of siege and the conduct of military operations in the provinces of Ituri and North Kivu are consistent with its obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

85. I welcome the progress made towards the development of the national Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme strategy. The United Nations stands ready to place its technical expertise at the disposal of the Government to support the implementation of the national strategy, once finalized. I urge all stakeholders to promote the full, equal and meaningful participation of women at all stages of the programme's implementation. I encourage the Government, in collaboration with relevant partners, to pursue its security reform efforts, which remain critical to the successful implementation of the programme.

86. I am deeply troubled by the continued threats to the safety and security of United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers. I strongly condemn the repeated attacks by armed groups on MONUSCO personnel working to protect civilians. I recall that attacks against peacekeepers may constitute war crimes. I am particularly troubled by the incident on 15 February in which FARDC soldiers fired on a MONUSCO patrol

in North Kivu Province. I welcome the assurances of the Congolese authorities to look seriously into this regrettable incident and to ensure that those responsible are held to account.

87. I am encouraged by the efforts of the national authorities, the United Nations and partners to fight impunity. I have taken note of the verdict rendered in the case of the assassination of United Nations experts Michael Sharp and Zaida Catalán and their four Congolese companions. I note that some of the defendants were found guilty and sentenced to the death penalty. I call upon the authorities to maintain the moratorium on the death penalty, to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to consider abolishing the death penalty in law. The United Nations is committed to supporting further investigations by the authorities into the killings and the deaths of the Congolese companions of the United Nations experts.

88. Significant progress has been made during the reporting period towards ensuring the sustainable withdrawal of MONUSCO from Tanganyika Province through strengthened planning and coordination between the Government and the United Nations system. Given the security challenges that persist in certain areas of the province, it is vital that the drawdown of the Mission's presence in the province be carried out in a phased and responsible manner to avoid any further spillover of violence that may jeopardize the gains made to date. The transition plan offers a comprehensive framework for mobilizing the collective efforts of the Government, the United Nations system and international partners in support of the creation of conditions conducive to the progressive drawdown of MONUSCO in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. The United Nations stands ready to continue to work with the Government to jointly assess, in a comprehensive and rigorous manner, progress towards realizing the benchmarks set out in the transition plan, which will inform decisions on the future presence and configuration of MONUSCO.

89. Lastly, I wish to thank my Special Representative, Bintou Keita, for her steadfast leadership and dedication. I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to all MONUSCO personnel, members of the United Nations country team, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Office of my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region for their continued commitment to peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Annex I

Joint report of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations with information on the progress made in achieving the 18 benchmarks and the indicators set out in the joint transition plan, as at 23 March 2022

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)</i>
1. Minimum conditions for the drawdown of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	
(a) Security and protection of civilians	
Benchmark 1. Significant reduction in armed threats thanks to a comprehensive approach that helps to put an end to the existence of armed groups in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri to an extent that they can no longer cause widespread violence against the civilian population	
1.1 The number of armed groups, the size of their membership and the geographical area where they operate in violence-affected areas declines considerably	The number of armed groups and the size of their membership remained relatively unchanged. On the other hand, as a result of the intensification of military operations, the geographical areas where they operate have changed. The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)-Madina Tawheed wal Muwahedeen group and its allies have left their stronghold located mainly in the north of Beni territory in North Kivu and in the south of Irumu territory in Ituri and are attempting to reach the Okapi Wildlife Reserve, which has been declared a World Heritage site. Similarly, fighters from these armed groups are now dispersed into small mobile groups associated with ADF, Mai-Mai Kyandenga, the armed branch of Banyabwisha and Mai-Mai Mayani. During the period from October 2021 to February 2022, 3,244 ex-combatants were registered. To date, 726 ex-combatants and their dependants have been registered in the disarmament and demobilization centre at Mubambiro camp in North Kivu Province. 204 combatants have surrendered in the past three months, following efforts to mobilize support for the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme. Since the beginning of the state of siege, no new armed groups have been created. In Ituri, Coopération pour le développement du Congo (CODECO) activity, including attacks on civilians and internally displaced persons, increased. The group has employed hostage-taking and other methods to terrorize civilians.

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)</i>
1.2 The capacity and presence of security forces increase in areas where armed groups are present and active	Operations by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) against armed groups continued in priority areas. At its 10th summit in February 2022 in Kinshasa, the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region took note of progress towards the eradication of armed groups, through the reinforcement of FARDC and the Congolese National Police and the pooling of Uganda People's Defence Forces and FARDC forces in Ituri and North Kivu. In these areas, FARDC have been reinforced in terms of men and equipment. Regiments and battalions have been relieved and new units deployed. Capacity-building needs with respect to explosive ordnance disposal and the destruction of improvised explosive devices remain high. An operations coordination centre has been in operation since November 2021, which allows for the exchange of information on intelligence and current operations, thereby improving the responsiveness of FARDC and MONUSCO.
1.3 The Congolese National Police is deployed in liberated areas and takes over the security role performed by FARDC	Between November 2021 and February 2022, 900 Congolese police officers were deployed to the east, with 750 officers deployed from November to December 2021 and an additional 150 officers deployed by the end of February 2022, mainly in the areas of Beni, Goma and Bunia.
1.4 The reconfiguration of the MONUSCO force, in particular its Force Intervention Brigade, is complete and its engagement in joint operations is effective	Implementation of the new configuration of the MONUSCO force is almost complete, with the exception of part of the South African intervention force. The Kenyan and Nepalese quick reaction forces have arrived and completed their initial induction period. In the new configuration, MONUSCO and FARDC conducted one joint operation in February 2022 and are planning four operations for April 2022.
1.5 The number of persons internally displaced owing to armed conflicts decreases	In September 2021, 5.5 million persons were registered as internally displaced as a result of armed conflict. In November 2021, the number was 5.3 million.
1.6 The trust of the population, including women and young people, in the national defence and security forces is rising (polling data disaggregated by gender and by age group)	New survey data disaggregated by gender and age group would be needed in order to determine the extent to which the defence and security forces may have begun to regain the trust of the population, since the beginning of the state of siege in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces.
1.7 The cases of sexual and gender-based violence and other human rights violations drop sharply	Between December 2021 and January 2022, 560 human rights violations and abuses were documented by MONUSCO (a 33 per cent decrease compared with the previous two months). In contrast, the number of victims of conflict-related sexual violence between December 2021 and January 2022 (98 adult women) increased by 17 per cent compared with October-November 2021, with 59 cases attributable to armed groups and 39 to State actors. Military courts have been deployed to prosecute perpetrators.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
1.8 The number of people by territory who say that the armed groups are the principal source of insecurity decreases (polling data)	No updated data are available.
Benchmark 2. Existence of a greater capacity to respond rapidly to protection threats and resolve intercommunity conflicts effectively, and greater cooperation between the security forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO, the actors concerned and other effective civil defence mechanisms, including civil society and humanitarian personnel	
2.1 Inclusive and representative early warning and protection mechanisms exist and are functioning effectively, translating into rapid response by State actors	To date, 86 community alert networks and 160 local protection committees are operational across Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces. For the period from July to December 2021, the rate of response to alerts (FARDC and MONUSCO) averaged 60 per cent. In Tanganyika, capacity-building activities for local protection committees, territorial security councils and the protection of civilians continue. Local councils exist for community security and are operational throughout the villages. At the command level of operations, operations coordination centres are implemented in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. Stakeholders in early warning and response include members of local government security councils (provincial governments, territories, chiefdoms and sectors), neighbourhood leaders and locality leaders. MONUSCO also participates in early warning and response. The Integrated Operational Strategy for the Fight Against Insecurity mechanism is operational in 8 localities in the following four provinces: Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika.
2.2 Women, young people, civil society and community representatives, including religious leaders, participate actively and inclusively in coordination mechanisms dealing with security and conflict resolution	In North Kivu, there was active and inclusive participation of 136 women and young people from among civil society and community representatives, including religious leaders, in coordination mechanisms dealing with security and conflict resolution. In 2021, 568 local actors, including young people and women, received training and acquired new skills in leading development and conflict resolution work in their respective communities. In Tanganyika, civil society, including women and young people, have participated actively in the secretariat of the Consultative Commission for the Resolution of Customary Conflicts. In the specific case of FARDC and the Congolese National Police, over the period from December 2021 to February 2022, there was increased exchange and coordination between the Civic Education and Social Action Service, the civil-military operations and civil society, community and religious leaders.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
2.3 Local councils for neighbourhood security are operational and local security committees and standing human rights protection monitoring committees are in place and operational	North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri: As of January 2022, 18 local security committees (including 16 women) and 16 local councils for neighbourhood security (including 6 women) are operational. Tanganyika: Three local peace and development committees are in place. Local councils for neighbourhood security have been established in the territories but are not operational, owing to a lack of resources and the absence of a regulatory act from the provincial authorities approving the members of said councils. Ituri: Regular meetings of the committees for the monitoring of human rights violations, involving the Congolese National Police and FARDC, have been held in Bunia.
(b) Disarmament and demobilization	
Benchmark 3. Adoption of a national framework outlining key strategic, political, institutional, legal, coordination, financial and operational strategies for disarmament and demobilization, including community reintegration that will serve as a means of transition towards community recovery and stabilization	
3.1 The components of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme, such as the steering committee, the national coordination group, the technical committee, the provincial coordination groups and the territorial branches, are in place and operational	The national coordination group, the steering committee and the technical committee are in place and operational. In North Kivu and Ituri, the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme has actively built on pre-existing mechanisms to respond to urgent situations of demobilization. The establishment of provincial coordination mechanisms is under way.
3.2 The national policy and strategy documents of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme outlining the principles, objectives, roles and responsibilities, necessary resources, coordination mechanisms, and the systems for monitoring and overseeing disarmament, demobilization and community reintegration and stabilization activities in accordance with the provisions of order No. 21/038 of 5 July 2021 are prepared and approved by the competent authorities	The national policy and strategy documents of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme have been developed in consultation with various partners and are in the process of being submitted for approval.

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)</i>
3.3 The national disarmament, demobilization, community reintegration and stabilization strategy is developed and implemented in accordance with the provisions of order No. 21/038	The national policy and strategy documents of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme have been developed in consultation with various partners and are in the process of being submitted for approval.
3.4 Rebels are not incorporated automatically or massively into the regular army and the Congolese National Police	The Government's policy through the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme is to avoid the automatic incorporation of rebels into the armed forces and to reject any specific requests from the armed groups.
3.5 Women and girls and boys associated with armed groups and their dependants are demobilized and benefit from sustainable, effective, holistic and gender-sensitive disarmament, demobilization, community reintegration and stabilization programmes	The national policy and strategy documents of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme have been developed in consultation with various partners and are in the process of being submitted for approval. On the ground, children continued to be separated from armed groups and reintegration assistance was provided.
Benchmark 4. Contribution of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme to the sustainable reduction of the number of armed groups, in accordance with order No. 21/038 of 5 July 2021, following the transition timeline	
4.1 The number of armed groups dismantled through disarmament and demobilization operations and whose members are then reintegrated through community reintegration projects respectful of the rights of victims to reparation and measures of non-repetition increases	The number of armed groups remained unchanged. However, 726 ex-combatants and their dependants are in the disarmament and demobilization centre in Mubambiro, having been disarmed and demobilized. With MONUSCO support, 196 ex-combatants, including 1 woman, were disarmed and assisted with return and reintegration into their communities of origin between December 2021 and January 2022.
4.2 The number of women, girls and boys and dependants associated with armed groups and returning vulnerable members of communities who have benefited from community reintegration projects increases	With MONUSCO support, 196 ex-combatants, including 1 woman, were disarmed and assisted with return and reintegration into their communities of origin between December 2021 and January 2022.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
2. Priority collaborative actions with agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations	
(a) Community recovery and stabilization	
Benchmark 5. Continued implementation of the national framework outlining key strategic, political, institutional, legal, coordination, financial and operational parameters for community recovery and stabilization in the country with the support of agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	
5.1 Former combatants who have surrendered voluntarily are accompanied and supported through community recovery processes	Within the framework of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme, the community recovery phase to accompany disarmed and demobilized ex-combatants has not yet begun.
5.2 Communities, including traditional and religious leaders, women and youth groups, participate actively in the development and implementation of inclusive (socioeconomic) disarmament, demobilization, community reintegration and stabilization programmes	In the provinces of Ituri and North Kivu, discussions, consultations and meetings were held with civil society to define the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization programme. In Ituri, a joint project of the provincial government and MONUSCO, involving inclusive political dialogues in Djugu, Irumu and Mambasa aimed at stabilization and the restoration of State authority, is being implemented.
Benchmark 6. Capacity and concrete engagement of the Government and civil society and other non-State actors in preventing, mitigating and resolving disputes through functional, inclusive and sustainable platforms (mechanisms) for the resolution of local conflicts	
6.1 The number of customary power conflicts addressed and resolved through an appropriate mechanism with the broad participation of communities concerned increases	Data are not currently available.
6.2 Inclusive and effective conflict resolution mechanisms, including customary conflict resolution advisory committees and barazas, are strengthened, taking into consideration the gender dimension	In North Kivu, the Consultative Commission for the Settlement of Customary Conflicts arbitrated the customary conflict in the Kibumba group in Nyiragongo territory. In South Kivu, representatives of the Hutu, Tembo and Havu communities signed a peace protocol on 2 December 2021 after two dialogue sessions with the Buholo chieftaincies and security measures taken by FARDC and MONUSCO. In Tanganyika, a needs assessment was conducted for the Consultative Commission for the Settlement of Customary Disputes.
6.3 The number of men and women who say that they have good relations with the members of their ethnic group and other ethnic groups increases (polling data)	Data are not currently available.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
6.4 The number of intercommunity and intracommunity clashes reported decreases	In Ituri, there has been an increase in intercommunity clashes, particularly between militias claiming to be from the Hema and Lendu communities.
(b) Restoration of State authority in conflict and post-conflict areas	
Benchmark 7. Adoption and implementation of a government policy that takes into consideration the rights and needs of refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities, as well as gender issues (men, women, girls and boys)	
7.1 The Democratic Republic of the Congo deposits an instrument of ratification of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa of 23 October 2009 and passes a national law on the implementation of the Convention	The instrument of ratification of the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa has not yet been deposited with the secretariat of the African Union, notwithstanding Act No. 14/025 of 8 July 2014 authorizing the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ratify the Convention. A draft law on protection and assistance for internally displaced persons was submitted to the secretariat of the Government on 25 September 2014.
7.2 A favourable environment allowing refugees, internally displaced persons, including women and girls, and host communities to effectively enjoy their rights is created	The Democratic Republic of the Congo has ratified the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of 1969 and has adopted specific laws on the status of refugees (Act No. 021/2002 of 16 October 2002). However, legislation on the protection of internally displaced persons has not yet been adopted (see indicator 7.1). Internally displaced persons continued to face serious security threats. In Ituri Province, four attacks on sites for internally displaced persons occurred during the reporting period, including an attack on the Plaine Savo site on 1 February 2022, in which 62 civilians, including 27 women and 19 children, were killed.
7.3 The needs of refugees, internally displaced persons, including women and girls, and host communities are integrated into development plans at the national and local levels	These needs are addressed at the national, provincial and local levels.
7.4 The number of refugees and internally displaced persons benefiting from lasting solutions, including the return to their localities of origin, increases and peaceful coexistence with host communities is promoted	378 Congolese nationals have been repatriated from Zambia and Zimbabwe out of the 1,020,295 Congolese refugees currently on the African continent. In South Kivu, approximately 8,000 displaced persons in Baraka returned to their villages of origin around Bibokoboko, and 7,000 displaced persons in the highlands of Kalehe returned to their villages of origin. In North Kivu, between December 2021 and February 2022, 6,140 Congolese refugees spontaneously returned from Uganda.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
7.5 Government directives and the presence of security actors facilitate secured humanitarian access to vulnerable populations, including women and girls	The instruments for managing these specific issues exist and are managed jointly by the Ministry of the Interior and Security and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Humanitarian Action and National Solidarity. In 2021, 292 incidents directly affecting humanitarian personnel or assets were recorded, with humanitarian access remaining precarious.
7.6 Internally displaced persons and refugees enjoy lasting security in their places of residence	Cases of violations of the civilian character of sites have been observed. Some sites are frequented by elements of the defence and security forces to carry out checks owing to incursions by armed militias, often accompanied by human rights violations. In Ituri, 70 people were killed in attacks on sites for internally displaced persons.
Benchmark 8. Meaningful participation of women and young leaders (to amplify the voice of women and young leaders) in decision-making processes related to the protection of civilians, stabilization and peacebuilding	
8.1 The representation and significant participation of women in community mechanisms, such as local security committees and provincial safety councils, increases	Data are not currently available.
8.2 Implementation of the plan of action of the Congolese National Police and the plan of FARDC regarding the joint communiqué on conflict-related sexual violence is pursued and strengthened	In 2022, continued progress could be seen in the implementation of the plan of action of the Congolese National Police and the plan of FARDC regarding the joint communiqué on conflict-related sexual violence, which were concluded in 2020 and 2021, respectively. Between August and September 2021, 189 FARDC soldiers received training. A total of 52 commanders, including 10 generals, have signed pledges to combat sexual violence in accordance with the plan. As of December 2021, 129 Congolese National Police commanders, including 21 women, had received training. All of them have signed pledges to combat sexual violence in accordance with the plan. In Ituri, outreach activities and training for FARDC and Congolese National Police, as well as military magistrates, are under way. In South Kivu, the judicial authorities arrested five leaders of the Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki armed group and two civilians allegedly responsible for mass violations, including sexual violence, in Shabunda territory. A mobile court hearing is expected.
8.3 The National 1325 Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (II) and the Revised National Strategy for Combating Gender-Based Violence are implemented in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri	Specific projects and routine actions have been integrated into the frameworks of the National Action Plan 1325 and the Revised National Strategy for Combating Gender-Based Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
8.4 The number of women's organizations and networks benefiting from protection, stabilization and peacebuilding increases	There is still a need to disseminate these documents, strengthen these frameworks and support State institutions and civil society in understanding and using these frameworks. An action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) has been developed for Ituri, and follow-up mechanisms are in place. During the reporting period, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office worked actively with five women's organizations and victims of gender-based violence in the east of the country, and with six other non-governmental organizations in Kasai and Tanganyika. At least 15 women's organizations were registered in Ituri in 2021.
Benchmark 9. Increased capacities of State institutions to protect civilians and their rights by restoring State authority	
9.1 Cases of physical aggression against civilians, in particular women, girls and boys, decrease	In 2021, there were 1,335 violations and abuses of the right to life resulting in the deaths of 1,853 men, 497 women and 442 children; 1,886 violations and abuses of freedom and security of the person, with 5,933 victims, comprising 4,747 men, 723 women and 463 children; and 1,880 violations and abuses of the right to physical integrity, with 3,508 victims, comprising 2,176 men, 948 women and 384 children. At least 528 women, 226 children and 8 men were victims of sexual violence throughout the country. The proportion of human rights abuses committed by members of armed groups in provinces affected by armed conflict was 60 per cent. No improvement has been reported.
9.2 An environment conducive to safety and security for women, girls and boys, free of sexual and sexist violence and other forms of human rights violations is created	
9.3 Mechanisms are in place to ensure compensation in case of loss, damage and arbitrary or illegal land deprivation	The proposed law on the protection of indigenous peoples adopted by the National Assembly in April 2021 provides for the allocation of a special fund for the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. It also establishes an obligation for the State to ensure adequate conditions for relocation and resettlement in the event of force majeure. Land Act No. 73-021 of 20 July 1973, as amended and supplemented by Act No. 80-006 of 18 July 1980, also provides for such mechanisms.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
Benchmark 10. Engagement of State institutions in the protection of civilians and their rights, strengthening the rule of law to combat impunity and corruption in accordance with national laws and international human rights obligations	
10.1 The number of human rights abuses and violations, including serious violations of the rights of the child, sexual and gender-based violence, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by all armed groups and State actors, decreases	In 2021, 6,989 human rights violations (a decrease of almost 12 per cent compared with 2020) were recorded, involving 556 adult victims of sexual violence (548 women and eight men), including 537 victims of conflict-related sexual violence (531 women and six men) (a decrease of 21 per cent compared with 2020). The proportion of human rights abuses by members of armed groups in conflict-affected provinces rose to 60 per cent. Between December 2021 and January 2022, 560 human rights violations and abuses were documented by MONUSCO (a 33 per cent decrease from the previous two months). The number of victims of conflict-related sexual violence during that period included at least 98 adults, all of whom were women, which is an increase of 17 per cent from October–November 2021. Armed groups were responsible for 59 cases and State actors for 39. No increase in resources for the operation of the justice system was reported.
10.2 The resources allocated to the judicial system and establishment of mechanisms for the prevention of and response to human rights violations and abuses, including for reparations and comprehensive support for victims, increase	The Provincial Human Rights Division in Ituri Province has not yet been established. In 2021, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo supported at least two judicial investigations by the Ituri senior military prosecution service, and at least two mobile court hearings were conducted by the garrison military court, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office and the Justice Support Section, resulting in the trial of at least 66 cases of serious and ordinary human rights violations and crimes against humanity.
10.3 The effectiveness of State human rights protection institutions increases due to the establishment of the Provincial Human Rights Division in Ituri Province and the strengthening of the activities of the National Human Rights Commission in an optimal and effective manner for it to fulfil its mandate in accordance with the Paris Principles, including for the handling of complaints	In 2021, 345 FARDC soldiers, 115 Congolese National Police agents and 149 armed group combatants were convicted by judicial authorities for acts constituting human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Between December 2021 and March 2022, at least 56 FARDC soldiers, seven Congolese National Police officers, three prison officers and three members of armed groups were convicted of human rights violations.
10.4 Allegations of serious human rights violations are investigated, and credible prosecutions are conducted by the judicial authorities, and the perpetrators, including those in command and control positions, are brought to justice	

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
	In Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika, provincial strategies for prioritizing the prosecution of crimes under international criminal law and conflict-related sexual violence were identified, with 106 cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity, 53 of which included conflict-related sexual violence. Significant progress has been made in 58 per cent of those cases.
10.5 Victims, including women and girl survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, are recognized and compensated appropriately	In Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Kasai, Kasai Central and Tanganyika, 2,485 victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity or conflict-related sexual violence were recognized by the courts. Although the courts and tribunals have determined and awarded damages to all victims, they have not yet been compensated. Actions are being taken to ensure that judicial and extrajudicial reparations for victims of sexual and gender-based violence are effective, through a national transitional justice commission and a decree-law on reparations, which is currently being drafted.
10.6 The number of women who are represented in State institutions for the protection of civilians and their rights and who influence them significantly increases	Data are not available.
10.7 The number of respondents who think that victims of sexual violence may have their case heard in court increases (polling data)	No survey activity was conducted during the reporting period.
10.8 A national and provincial system of transitional justice is established	A joint commission on transitional justice was established by the President of the Republic. It held its first meeting on 17 August 2021. In February 2022, popular consultations were held in the Provinces of Kasai, Kongo Central and Tanganyika. In Ituri, consultations and training are under way as a prelude to the popular consultations on transitional justice.
10.9 The legal framework is strengthened in accordance with international legal instruments concerning human rights ratified by the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the law setting measures for the application of freedom to demonstrate is passed; the draft legislation on the rights and responsibilities of human rights defenders and the draft legislation on general provisions applicable to non-profit institutions and public utilities are adopted	The three bills have not yet been added to the parliamentary calendar and are still being drafted. On 6 December 2021, the Senate adopted the organic law on the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
Benchmark 11. Effective and functional presence of State institutions to ensure a minimum offering of public services to the population 11.1 The operating mechanisms of decentralization are reinforced 11.2 Police and justice institutions, including the prison system, are operating in a coordinated manner in the major towns of Tanganyika, Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu and are assuming increasing responsibility for law and order 11.3 The number of qualified women in the judiciary, the army and the police increases	The presidential order of 7 January 2022 establishing the attributions of the ministries indicates that the Ministry of the Interior, Security, Decentralization and Customary Affairs is responsible for “implementing the strategies and mechanisms of the government policy on decentralization” and for the equalization fund. In early 2022, the implementation of the grass-roots development programme for the 145 territories (signed by the President, Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, on 31 December 2021, and with an estimated budget of \$1.66 billion) was accelerated. On 18 November 2021, the Senate adopted a resolution establishing a formal framework for dialogue and consultation between the upper chamber and the provincial assemblies; the main objective is to improve local governance and consolidate decentralization through effective collaboration between the Senate and other institutions. In North Kivu, the diagnostic report on the capacities for coordinating development interventions and the performance analysis report on decentralization and provincial and local development planning are available. Prosecution services, courts, and tribunals with criminal jurisdiction are operating in the major towns of the four provinces. However, the coordination within the criminal justice system remains limited. These institutions lack sufficient staff, buildings and operational resources. Capacity-building measures for prison authorities, as well as Congolese National Police and FARDC personnel assigned to priority prisons in Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika, are being implemented. In North Kivu, efforts are under way to implement the recommendations on the functioning of the criminal justice system. In Tanganyika, there is close collaboration between the prison and judicial authorities to eradicate illegal or arbitrary detention and the extortion and torture of detainees. In these two provinces, measures are being taken to build the technical capacity of actors in the criminal justice system, including judicial police officers, law officers (judges and prosecutors), secretaries in the prosecution service, court clerks and Congolese National Police officers. As of December 2019, there were 555 female law officers (judges and prosecutors). However, in Ituri, not one of the 74 active law officers (judges and prosecutors) was a woman.

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)</i>
11.4 The five-year action plan for reform of the Congolese National Police is fully funded and implemented	At present, the second five-year action plan has not received funding from the Congolese authorities. Some of the activities in this plan are being implemented and are included in a draft joint programme of support for police reform and other activities, which do not require funding, such as the preparatory work for the preliminary drafting of texts, the development of tools and the monitoring of certain activities.
11.5 The Government's security institutions have the appropriate capacity and are implementing the agreed frameworks for combating crimes of sexual violence	No changes have been recorded.
11.6 The effectiveness of public administration is improved at the central, provincial, and local levels, in accordance with the Government's programme, including through the more efficient management of resources	The Presidential Order of 7 January 2022 establishing the powers of the ministries states that all ministries must implement the government policy for good governance and the fight against corruption. The final document of the eighth session of the conference of provincial governors contains a decree imposing a moratorium on the use of censure motions in provincial assemblies for a period of two years, in addition to a pledge to introduce constitutional and legislative reforms aimed at ensuring the stability of provincial institutions. However, in Ituri and North Kivu, provincial governments, as well as the provincial assemblies of those provinces, are suspended, and their prerogatives have been transferred to the provincial military authorities following the state of siege declared in May 2021.
11.7 The priority prisons of Ndolo, Makala, Luzumu, Goma, Beni, Butembo, Bunia, Kalemie, Uvira, Bukavu, Kabare, and Kananga treat inmates, including high-risk and "high-profile" inmates, with the appropriate security capacities to ensure the internal security and the basic subsistence of inmates	Measures are being taken to build the capacity of national prison authorities. The rate of overcrowding in priority prisons stands at 412 per cent. Thirty prisoners died, including from malnutrition. Nevertheless, 1,545 prisoners were released following an inspection by the authorities.
11.8 The working and living conditions of law officers, police officers and prison officers are improved, in accordance with the Government's programme	As part of efforts to improve the working and living conditions of the law officers (judges and prosecutors), their salary conditions have been improved significantly.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
Benchmark 12. Enhanced demand for justice, access to justice and legal protection for the population, in particular vulnerable and at-risk groups by setting up the appropriate legal and operational mechanisms	
12.1 Police, justice and prison infrastructure in areas affected by armed conflict are built or rehabilitated, in accordance with the Government's programme	The MONUSCO police component, in consultation with the Congolese National Police, plans to complete 16 Congolese National Police infrastructure construction and rehabilitation projects by June 2022. Actions are being taken to improve the working conditions of law officers (judges and prosecutors) and other judicial personnel by building and rehabilitating judicial infrastructure and providing furniture and equipment in Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika. Actions are also being taken to improve the infrastructure of the penitentiary system in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. In Ituri, this has resulted in the courts of peace, the regional court, the prosecution service of the regional court, the juvenile court, the garrison military court, the military prosecution service and the detached military prosecution service having their own buildings. However, the court of appeal and the chief prosecution service, which were established in 2018, and the military court and the senior military procuracy, which were established in May 2021, still do not have their own buildings, and the detached military prosecution service in Irumu does not have any offices. Priority institutions in the criminal justice system have been identified for construction or rehabilitation in North Kivu and Tanganyika.
12.2 Access to information and justice (investigation and prosecution processes) is facilitated for the non-discriminatory treatment of women, girls and boys facing the judicial system	According to the results of a survey of beneficiaries of projects financed by the Stabilization Coherence Fund, the percentage of citizens reporting access to a court within a one-day timeline was 17 per cent (10 per cent of women, 20 per cent of men) in Mwenga in January 2021, and 69 per cent (64 per cent of women, 73 per cent of men) in Djugu and 75 per cent (74 per cent of women, 76 per cent of men) in Uvira in the second half of 2021. In Central Kasai, North Kivu and Tanganyika, 14 cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including conflict-related sexual violence, have been tried, allowing 2,655 people, including 170 defendants and 2,485 victims, to gain access to justice.
12.3 Measures for the protection of victims and witnesses, in particular women and children, exist before, during and after judicial proceedings	Protection measures of victims and witnesses, especially women and children, are provided for by law. The Government's partners, including the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, also support their implementation.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
12.4 A justice reform and empowerment mechanism for women is in place to combat impunity with regard to human rights violations and gender-based violence	The national strategy to combat sexual and gender-based violence, which includes domestic violence and covers all provinces, has been revised and validated since June 2020, and its implementation has been initiated. All reforms to address sexual violence are supported in the 2022 Budget Act. An assessment on their level of implementation will be made at the end of the first half of 2022.
12.5 Transformative justice programmes that address violations suffered by women as well as the underlying inequalities that make women and girls vulnerable in times of conflict are developed and implemented	Data are not available.
Benchmark 13. Implementation of disciplinary and legal measures, in accordance with the law, against those responsible for acts of corruption or for maintaining commercial relations with armed groups	
13.1 The capacities of the Government to investigate and prosecute cases of corruption, serious violence against civilians or commercial relations with armed groups involving officials of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are strengthened	As part of efforts to build capacity to investigate and prosecute corruption cases, 300 people, including 88 women, (a) established a complete state of play of the fight against corruption in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; (b) agreed on the reforms to be undertaken; and (c) put in place mechanisms to monitor the reforms to be undertaken in the fight against corruption in the country. In Ituri, the senior military prosecution service has initiated legal proceedings against alleged perpetrators of serious crimes from both armed groups and the security forces. In the same context, FARDC and Congolese National Police officers and State agents suspected of corruption and misappropriation of public funds are also being questioned. Also in the framework of capacity-building, a new garrison military tribunal has become operational in Butembo, North Kivu, to combat impunity in Butembo and Lubero.
13.2 A law to protect whistle-blowers is passed in order to counter illicit enrichment, in accordance with the Government's programme	A law to protect whistle-blowers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was proposed in June 2021. It has already met with the approval of civil society.
Benchmark 14. Continued implementation by the Government of a security strategy at the national and provincial levels, as well as a plan of action for security sector reform, focusing in particular on respect of human rights and gender	
14.1 Priority plans of action for reform of FARDC and the Congolese National Police are disseminated and implemented at the national and provincial levels, taking into consideration the gender dimension	Plans are in place to reform the police and the army. However, the implementation process is behind schedule.

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)</i>
14.2 The mechanism for oversight and monitoring of the empowerment of security institutions through parliament is strengthened	MONUSCO has begun to involve both houses of parliament through their defence and security committees, as well as other key stakeholders, such as the National Security Council, the National Oversight Mechanism and civil society, in the implementation of security sector reform.
14.3 Gender-sensitive road maps for the implementation of the priority plan of action for reform of the defence and security forces, as well as reserved quotas and specialized training facilitating the recruitment, retention and participation of women in security sector institutions, are adopted and communicated to bilateral and multilateral partners	Data are not available.
14.4 An updated road map for the implementation of the annual recruitment and demobilization plans of FARDC and the Congolese National Police is adopted and communicated to bilateral and multilateral security sector reform partners	Data are not available.
14.5 Awareness by security institutions of respect for human rights, including the rights of the child, international humanitarian law and protection of civilians, is increased	Within the framework of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces, MONUSCO continues to train FARDC soldiers, Congolese National Police officers and prison authorities in various locations and provinces on international human rights law, international humanitarian law, prevention of conflict-related sexual violence and the human rights due diligence policy.
14.6 The capacity of judicial mechanisms to combat human rights violations by State security services and violations of the rule of law, including conflict-related sexual violence, is strengthened	Actions are ongoing to build the capacity of judicial mechanisms.
14.7 Complete gender-sensitive assessments of national security institutions (justice, police, FARDC) are conducted to fill capacity gaps	No progress was made during the reporting period.
14.8 FARDC and the Congolese National Police are trained on gender-sensitive approaches in security contexts and are educated about the linkage between gender and the prevention of violent extremism	The training of Congolese National Police officers is ongoing.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
Benchmark 15. Organization of credible, inclusive and peaceful elections held in accordance with constitutional timelines	
15.1 The electoral law and the organic law on the organization and functioning of the National Independent Electoral Commission are revised; the amendments are adopted by consensus following political consultations	The law amending the National Independent Electoral Commission has been enacted. However, the opposition and part of civil society deem the adoption to be non-consensual and are contesting the lack of provisions ensuring the transparency and credibility of the electoral process.
15.2 A consensus is reached on constitutional reforms concerning voting methods	Data are not available.
15.3 Political actors are refraining from any use of armed violence related to the contesting of elections	At this stage, political parties have not made any commitment in that regard.
15.4 Gender-sensitive legal frameworks and arrangements, including the 2015 law on the modalities for the enforcement of women's rights and parity, are established	Data are not available.
15.5 The number of women participating in nation-wide electoral processes, including as candidates for various elections, increases at the national and provincial levels	The next gubernatorial elections, initially scheduled for April 2022, have been postponed to May.
Benchmark 16. Stabilization of conflict-sensitive mining areas through the progressive formalization of the mining sector and a significant reduction of fraud and corruption	
16.1 State control is implemented thanks to the effective strengthening of the mining police in mining areas	No change was reported for the period under review.
16.2 Significant progress is made in the fight against impunity and in accountability in cases of illegal commercial relations with armed groups	No change was reported for the period under review.
16.3 Units suspected of being involved structurally in the illegal exploitation of natural resources in conflict-sensitive areas are rotated and their command changed	No change was reported for the period under review.
16.4 Tangible progress is made with regard to accountability for the illegal exploitation of natural resources at all levels of command	No change was reported for the period under review.

Indicator	Situation for the period from December 2021 to February 2022 (or latest available information)
Benchmark 17. Finalization of land reform to ensure transparency over land allocation and security of tenure	
17.1 Reinforced traceability, certification and due diligence systems control economic activities and reduce opportunities for fraud by criminal actors	The national land policy document was validated in January 2022 by the Steering Committee on Land Reform.
17.2 Considerable progress is made in the formalization of and support for artisanal mining in identified conflict-sensitive priority areas	No change was reported for the period under review.
17.3 Active measures are taken to improve legal trading opportunities	In January 2022, the Ministry of Territorial Planning organized a workshop on the development of the National Directory of Renewable and Non-Renewable Natural Resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Benchmark 18. Implementation of the transition plan in line with the integrated regional strategy, respecting the commitments made by the countries of the Great Lakes region, signatories, guarantors and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations under the Addis Ababa Framework Agreement	
18.1 The transition plan is executed as part of an integrated regional strategy while respecting the commitments made by the countries of the Great Lakes region	The Transition Plan is implemented as part of the integrated regional strategy.
18.2 Regular assessments of the implementation of the Framework are undertaken	The high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism and associated meetings were held in Kinshasa from 22 to 24 February 2022.

