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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 46 of Security Council resolution [2463 \(2019\)](#), covers major developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 8 March to 28 June 2019. The report describes progress in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) since my report of 7 March 2019 ([S/2019/218](#)); provides an overview of political developments; outlines progress in adjustments to the Mission's priorities, posture and presence, as well as the pursuit of its comprehensive approach to the protection of civilians; and provides information on the performance of MONUSCO uniformed personnel.

II. Political developments

2. Following the peaceful transition of power in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 24 January 2019, national and provincial legislative and executive institutions were installed in accordance with the Constitution. The return of opposition leaders to the Democratic Republic of the Congo contributed to evolving dynamics in the emerging balance of power among the country's political forces. The President, Félix Tshisekedi, pursued his initiatives aimed at strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation, implementing the national emergency programme, opening the political space and improving the security situation in the country.

3. On 20 May, Sylvestre Ilunga was appointed Prime Minister by the President. The new Prime Minister served in various senior capacities under former President Mobutu Sese Seko and was, until his appointment, the Director General of the Société nationale des chemins de fer du Congo. He is a member of the Parti du peuple pour la reconstruction et la démocratie, one of the main parties making up the Front commun pour le changement of former President Joseph Kabila. The Prime Minister's appointment followed several rounds of consultations between President Tshisekedi and Mr. Kabila. At the time of reporting, Mr. Ilunga had yet to assume his functions as Prime Minister.

4. The installation of national and provincial institutions continued. On 30 March, the Constitutional Court validated the National Assembly's rules of procedure, and



by 21 May it had completed the adjudication of over half of the approximately 1,000 appeals related to the 30 December 2018 legislative polls. On 24 April, Jeanine Mabunda, of the Parti du peuple pour la reconstruction et la démocratie, was elected Speaker of the National Assembly and President of the Assembly's seven-member Bureau. Jean-Marc Kabund, the interim president of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social, one of the parties that makes up the Cap pour le changement coalition of President Tshisekedi, was elected Vice-President of the Bureau. Six members of the Bureau belong to the Front commun pour le changement-Cap pour le changement parliamentary coalition. The vote was boycotted by the opposition, which argued that the 10 opposition deputies elected following the 31 March legislative polls in Mai-Ndombe and North Kivu should have been considered when determining the number of posts to be allocated to the opposition in the Bureau. Subsequently, the opposition brought the matter before the Conseil d'État, which has not yet ruled on the case. Discussions are ongoing in the National Assembly to find a compromise.

5. By 18 May, indirect elections for the posts of senators were held in all 26 provincial assemblies. The polls were surrounded by allegations of corruption and triggered demonstrations and sporadic violence, mainly by supporters of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social. Some demonstrators were angry that the Front commun pour le changement won the majority of senate seats, including in provincial assemblies in Kasai Oriental and Kinshasa, where the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social holds the majority. The senators were installed on 2 April but have yet to elect their President and Bureau.

6. At the provincial level, the postponed legislative elections were held in Mai-Ndombe and North Kivu on 31 March. Despite concerns over the activities of armed groups, population displacements and the Ebola outbreak, the elections took place in a relatively calm environment. As at 18 June, 25 of the 26 provincial assembly bureaux were installed.

7. At an inter-institutional meeting on 18 March, chaired by President Tshisekedi, it was decided that the gubernatorial elections should be postponed in the light of the corruption allegations relating to the senatorial elections. Initially scheduled for 26 March, the gubernatorial elections eventually took place on 10 and 15 April in 23 provinces. Mai-Ndombe and North Kivu provinces elected their governors on 30 May. In Sankuru Province, disputes over the final list of candidates led to a postponement sine die of the elections.

8. While the representation of women in the new institutions remains low, the election of Ms. Mabunda as Speaker of the National Assembly is noteworthy, as she is the second woman to hold that position and the first to be elected to it. In the National Assembly and the provincial assemblies, women make up approximately 10 per cent of members, against 18 per cent in the Senate. No women were elected as governors, although three women are serving as deputy governors.

9. The Constitutional Court continued to rule on disputes regarding the outcome of the 30 December 2018 legislative elections. On 11 June, the Court announced the invalidation of the election of two senators, both from the Lamuka coalition, and 33 members of the National Assembly, 21 of whom are affiliated with Lamuka and 12 of whom belong to parties affiliated with the Front commun pour le changement. Thirty-two members of the Front commun pour le changement and one member of the Cap pour le changement were elected in their place. On 13 June, in protest at the Constitutional Court's announcement, members and supporters of the Lamuka coalition held a demonstration in front of the Court building in Kinshasa. Lamuka also decided to suspend its participation in the National Assembly.

10. The Front commun pour le changement has an overwhelming predominance in the new institutions. It holds 361 seats in the 500-member National Assembly, while

Cap pour le changement holds 49. The opposition Lamuka coalition holds 90 seats. Out of the 108 members of the Senate, at least 87 are affiliated with the Front commun pour le changement, 3 with Cap pour le changement and 13 with Lamuka. When taken together, the seats held by the Front commun pour le changement in the National Assembly and the Senate represent a majority of over three fifths, giving the coalition wide-ranging legislative powers. In the provinces, the Front commun pour le changement has a majority in 25 of the 26 assemblies, with Lamuka having the most seats in North Kivu. Furthermore, the Front commun pour le changement holds the presidency in 24 assemblies, and 23 governors hail from its ranks. Lamuka holds the presidency in two provincial assemblies, and Cap pour le changement presides over one. The Lamuka and Cap pour le changement coalitions hold one governor post each. Some factions of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social expressed dissatisfaction about the dominance of the Front commun pour le changement, while disagreements within the Front commun pour le changement over the sharing of key positions also arose. On 12 and 13 June, supporters of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social held protests in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi (Haut-Katanga) and Mbuji-Mayi (Kasai Oriental) and clashed with supporters of the Parti du peuple pour la reconstruction et la démocratie over dissensions between Cap pour le changement and the Front commun pour le changement. Supporters of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social set fire to the local headquarters of the Parti du peuple pour la reconstruction et la démocratie in Lubumbashi and Mbuji-Mayi. On 14 June, at the initiative of the Governor of Kinshasa Province, representatives of Cap pour le changement and the Front commun pour le changement met in Kinshasa to reaffirm the commitment of both coalitions to surmounting misunderstandings and governing in a spirit of collegiality.

11. On 30 May, the remains of opposition leader Étienne Tshisekedi, the founder of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social and a political opponent of former presidents Mobutu Sese Seko, Laurent-Désiré Kabila and Joseph Kabila, were repatriated from Belgium. National funeral ceremonies were held on 31 May and 1 June in Kinshasa. Étienne Tshisekedi was posthumously awarded the Héros Nationaux Kabila-Lumumba Grand Cordon.

12. President Tshisekedi undertook visits to Kenya (13 March), Angola (22 March), Uganda (23 March) and Rwanda (24–26 March) to discuss regional stability, security and economic relations. He also visited Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the United Republic of Tanzania between 11 and 14 June. During his engagements, the President underlined the need for regional cooperation as a precondition for bringing peace to eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, in line with his campaign promises. Following a visit by a delegation from the Government of Rwanda to Kinshasa on 20 March, RwandAir, the country's national airline, began commercial flights between the two countries on 17 April. On 10 May, President Tshisekedi met the Chief of Defence Staff of the Rwanda Defence Force, General Patrick Nyamvumba. Earlier that same day, General Nyamvumba held a working session with his Congolese counterpart, Lieutenant-General Célestin Mbala, to discuss security cooperation issues. From 3 to 7 April, President Tshisekedi visited the United States of America and held discussions with senior United States officials on political, economic and security cooperation issues. On 25 May, President Tshisekedi attended the inauguration of the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, in Pretoria. On 31 May, on the margins of the funeral ceremony for Étienne Tshisekedi, the President of Angola, João Lourenço, and the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, met with President Tshisekedi to discuss cooperation, development and security in the Great Lakes Region. They agreed, in the final communiqué of the meeting, to reinvigorate the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, strengthen economic and trade relations and address the issue of Congolese and foreign armed groups.

President Tshisekedi also submitted the application of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for membership of the East African Community.

13. President Tshisekedi gave the National Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region a new impetus, with an increased focus on justice reform, the fight against impunity and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. On 5 and 6 June, the National Oversight Mechanism convened a meeting in Kinshasa attended by the chiefs of the intelligence and security services of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. Among other things, participants recommended the adoption of a comprehensive approach to the neutralization of armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and agreed to promote the exchange of available information between intelligence and security services in the region on issues of common interest.

14. As part of his so-called 100-day emergency programme, and in line with the political agreement of 31 December 2016, President Tshisekedi pardoned some 700 political detainees, notably lawyer Firmin Yangambi and opposition leader Franck Diongo. Moreover, in line with his commitment to combating corruption, the President suspended the Minister of Land Affairs, Lumeza Dhu Maleghi, as well as some heads of government agencies and parastatal organizations for their alleged involvement in corruption cases.

15. On 12 April, President Tshisekedi embarked on a domestic tour to several provinces, visiting Beni, Boma, Goma, Kasumbalesa, Kisangani and Lubumbashi. During the visits, he held discussions with political and military officials on the security situation, the surrender of members of armed groups, urban insecurity and the Ebola outbreak. He indicated his readiness to address the disciplinary issues and social conditions of national security forces. He also ordered that national security forces be relieved of guarding mining companies and sites.

16. The dynamics within the opposition evolved during the reporting period. Following a meeting of its founding members in Brussels in late March, the Lamuka electoral platform was transformed into a political platform, with Moïse Katumbi appointed as its first coordinator, a position that will rotate every three months. Amid allegations of internal dissensions, Lamuka's presidential candidate in the elections of 30 December 2018, Martin Fayulu, continued to demand that the "truth of the ballot" be upheld and held well-attended rallies in Kisangani and Kinshasa. On 20 May, Mr. Katumbi returned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo after two years in exile. His return followed the annulment of a three-year prison sentence for property fraud and the dropping of all pending legal proceedings against him. Mr. Katumbi welcomed the progress achieved by President Tshisekedi, especially in opening the political space, and pledged to take a pragmatic approach, promote national cohesion and work constructively as a member of the "republican opposition". However, he warned against alleged attempts to change the Constitution. On 31 May, opposition leader Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi, a member of the Lamuka coalition, returned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo after seven years in exile. On 17 June, he pulled out of the coalition, citing the need to devote all his energy to supporting the Government's efforts to address the Ebola outbreak and insecurity in Beni territory, North Kivu. On 23 June, Jean-Pierre Bemba, another member of Lamuka and the president of the political party Mouvement de libération du Congo, returned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

17. Civil society and faith-based organizations continued to play a largely constructive role. While offering to work with President Tshisekedi towards the implementation of his agenda, members of the Conférence épiscopale nationale du Congo urged him to reach out to opposition leaders. In anticipation of the local and

municipal elections, some organizations, including the Conseil national de suivi de l'Accord et du processus électoral, called for the reform of the Commission électorale nationale indépendante, whose mandate expires at the end of June. Although the elections are scheduled for the last quarter of 2019, no significant preparations have been observed.

18. Following a series of strike actions in the wake of the inauguration of President Tshisekedi, the socioeconomic situation has since calmed down. The exchange rate remained stable and a reduction of the Central Bank's base lending rate from 14 to 9 per cent, announced on 30 April, is expected to lower interest rates by commercial banks. Meanwhile, the price of cobalt, a major export commodity and source of government revenue, stabilized after a significant drop in 2018. A meeting held on 5 April in Washington, D.C., between President Tshisekedi and the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, paved the way for the resumption of cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Fund. The Fund conducted a mission to Kinshasa from 22 May to 4 June to assess economic and financial developments and determine how it could support national efforts to revitalize the economy.

19. As regards security governance, MONUSCO supported the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) in establishing troop rotation cycles, in anticipation of new initiatives to improve security in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUSCO also provided recommendations on security governance to the ministries of the environment, defence and the interior.

20. In pursuit of her good offices mandate to support the consolidation of the post-electoral transition process, my Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of MONUSCO, Leila Zerrougui, met with President Tshisekedi, the Chief of Staff of the President, Vital Kamerhe, and other political actors and senior provincial authorities during the reporting period.

III. Security situation

21. Although the overall security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was relatively stable, some worrying dynamics emerged. Despite tensions in Mai-Ndombe and Sankuru provinces, no significant violence took place and the situation in the western provinces was generally stable. The trend of surrenders by members of armed groups continued, notably in Tanganyika. In North Kivu, the security situation deteriorated markedly in Masisi territory, and there was a spike in attacks on Ebola response centres in Beni and Butembo. Shifting security dynamics were observed in Maniema Province, and there were worrying trends in Fizi and Kalehe territories (South Kivu Province) and in Djugu and Mahagi territories (Ituri Province).

North Kivu

22. Compared with the period covered in my last report (4 January–8 March), there were fewer attacks on civilians by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Beni territory, but there was a high level of violence in Masisi territory and increased violence against Ebola response teams. Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové elements were the largest perpetrators of attacks on civilians in North Kivu during the reporting period.

23. Alleged ADF elements carried out 49 attacks on civilians, killing 89, including 29 women, and kidnapped 202 people, including 32 women. ADF also conducted 14 attacks on FARDC positions in Beni territory. MONUSCO supported FARDC after

ADF elements attacked a FARDC position in Ngite in the Mavivi area on 30 May. FARDC killed 26 ADF elements in a counteroffensive. On 3 June, in an apparent act of reprisal, ADF elements attacked the Rwangoma area of Beni town, killing 12 civilians (7 women and 5 men) and 2 FARDC soldiers. FARDC and the Congolese National Police repelled the attack, killing one assailant. Since the beginning of 2019, ADF has abducted at least 42 minors (24 boys and 18 girls). Mai-Mai groups also continued to threaten civilians, especially in the Butembo and Lubero areas, with 63 attacks recorded during the reporting period, resulting in the killing of 31 people, including 5 women, and the abduction of 80 civilians. No attacks against MONUSCO were recorded during the reporting period.

24. There was a surge of violence in the Beni and Lubero territories that significantly impaired the activities of the Ebola response teams. Between 8 March and 30 May, at least five armed attacks were carried out against health facilities in the Butembo area, including an incident on 19 April that resulted in the killing of a World Health Organization (WHO) doctor.

25. In Masisi territory, a coalition of armed groups, led by Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové, clashed on several occasions with another coalition led by the Collectif des mouvements pour le changement-Force de défense du peuple, resulting in a high number of civilian casualties and gross human rights violations. Between 1 March and 31 May, MONUSCO recorded 127 civilian deaths. Some 52 cases of reported rape by elements of Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové were documented, of which 50 were against women and 2 against children.

South Kivu and Maniema

26. South Kivu Province saw heightened foreign armed group activities, as the Conseil national pour le renouveau et la démocratie (CNRD), a Rwandan armed group, continued to strengthen its bases in Kitindiro and Rutare, in Kalehe territory. The group's movement from North to South Kivu increased markedly by early May. Although the number of documented human rights violations committed by CNRD remained low, the presence of the group posed a latent threat to civilians. Meanwhile, in Fizi and Uvira territories, the incursion of militia groups from Burundi and FARDC operations against those groups and their local allies led to clashes, resulting in casualties, looting, sexual violence, the loss of people's livelihoods and population displacement.

27. Congolese and foreign armed groups remained active in Fizi and Uvira territories, particularly in the Ruzizi plain, the Uvira mid-plateau and the Bijombo groupement. In addition, tensions between the Bafuliro, Banyamulenge and Barundi communities over the contested Ruzizi chieftaincy led to the loss of civilian lives. In the Minembwe plateau of Fizi, intercommunity clashes between armed groups affiliated with the Banyamulenge and other ethnic groups living in the area (Babembe, Bafuliro and Banyindu) triggered large-scale population displacements across Fizi, Mwenga and Uvira territories. The long-standing intercommunity tensions escalated after a Bafuliro village chief was reportedly abducted and killed by an armed group linked to the Banyamulenge. An estimated 125,000 civilians were displaced as a result of clashes between, on the one hand, the Twigwaneho and Ngomino militias from the Banyamulenge, and on the other, a coalition of Mai-Mai elements from the Babembe, Bafuliro and Banyindu ethnic groups. These armed groups looted and burned villages, causing severe damage to shelter and critical infrastructure, including schools and health-care and sanitation facilities.

28. Between February and May, a series of clashes occurred between FARDC and Mai-Mai groups fighting under the name "Revendiquants" around Lowa locality in Tshopo Province, close to the border with Maniema. FARDC sent troop

reinforcements to the area. The situation caused the displacement of 20,000 civilians from Tshopo Province to Punia territory in Maniema Province.

29. In the south of Maniema Province, FARDC continued to carry out operations against the Mai-Mai Malaika (Mandevu faction) in the eastern part of Kasongo territory and in the Lulindi and Wamaza sectors of Kabambare territory. In the Babuyu sector of Kabambare territory, FARDC clashed intermittently with Twa militia groups. In Salamabila locality, also in Kabambare territory, Mai-Mai Malaika leaders continued to express their interest in surrendering.

Ituri, Bas-Uélé and Haut-Uélé provinces

30. In Ituri Province, the hiatus in the political process to demobilize the Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri (FRPI) led to heightened FRPI activity in southern Irumu. While looting was prevalent, a clear decrease of human rights violations by the group was recorded. The uncertainty surrounding the political process reportedly enhanced factionalism within FRPI and strengthened its links with other armed groups, particularly in Djugu territory. Also in Irumu territory, on 1 May, ADF elements reportedly abducted 18 civilians during an attack on Tchaby locality.

31. Violence by suspected Lendu assailants re-emerged in Djugu and Mahagi territories, reaching worrying levels. Suspected Lendu youth militias carried out several attacks on villages, resulting in the killing, wounding and displacement of civilians, as well as the destruction and looting of properties. On 1 June, in Bunia, members of the provincial assembly hailing from Mahagi territory issued a statement claiming that the violence had resulted in the killing of at least 40 civilians in May. Between 8 and 12 June, approximately 72 civilians were reportedly killed in a series of attacks by suspected Lendu assailants in several villages around Lake Albert; however, unconfirmed figures suggest that the number of victims may be substantially higher. On 18 June, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees stated that more than 300,000 had fled from the resurgent inter-ethnic violence in Djugu, Mahagi and Irumu territories. FARDC conducted operations against Lendu militia camps in the Wago forest along the shores of Lake Albert. MONUSCO deployed forward bases in the affected areas.

32. In a positive development, in Haut-Uélé and Bas-Uélé provinces, the activities of armed groups, including the Lord's Resistance Army, decreased significantly owing to constant military pressure by FARDC. Despite sporadic lootings, there was a lull in the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army in the Banda and Bondo areas of Bas-Uélé, as well as in Niangara and Dungu territories in Haut-Uélé. In other developments, FARDC and rangers clashed with South Sudanese armed elements in Garamba National Park and in the Aba locality, Faradje territory, on 22 and 25 April respectively.

Tanganyika Province

33. Although violence between Twa militias and other militia groups declined significantly during the reporting period, several Mai-Mai groups continued to clash with security forces, triggering displacement of the population and discouraging those already displaced from returning. As at 31 March, more than 480,280 people remained displaced in Tanganyika, according to estimates by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In a positive development, up to 600 Mai-Mai Fimbo Na Fimbo elements expressed their willingness to demobilize.

34. Following the alleged torture of six civilians by Twa militias in the village of Munyatwa, in Nyunzu territory, FARDC troops deployed to the area with the support of MONUSCO. The Mission also intensified patrols along the Kalemie-Kioko axis, where there had been a high incidence of sexual violence and civilian deaths in March.

Kasai, Kasai Central, Kwilu, Mai-Ndombe and Sankuru provinces

35. Overall, despite localized tensions, the security situation was calm in most western and central areas. A series of prison breaks took place from various detention centres. In early May, five detainees who were being tried in relation to the 2017 murder of two members of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Michael Sharp and Zaida Catalán, escaped from Kananga prison, in Kasai Central Province. Two of the fugitives have since been recaptured.

36. Tensions remained high in Sankuru Province, where violent demonstrations followed the postponement of the gubernatorial elections on 15 April. Political tensions were also noted near Kikwit, in Kwilu Province, which saw low-scale community violence in Idiofa and Gungu territories. Tensions also remained high in Yumbi territory, in Mai-Ndombe Province, despite reconciliation attempts between the Nunu and Tende communities.

37. In Kasai Province, the Kamuina Nsapu group remained virtually inactive following the spontaneous and large-scale surrenders at the start of 2019. In some instances, those already demobilized have returned to their areas of origin.

IV. Humanitarian situation

38. During the reporting period, the humanitarian situation remained concerning, albeit with some positive trends, such as the increased return of internally displaced persons to their communities of origin in the Kasai region. The main concerns were the continued propagation of Ebola, measles and cholera epidemics; violence-induced internal displacements in Ituri, Maniema, North Kivu and South Kivu; and new hotspots of acute malnutrition in several provinces, particularly Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental and Kwango.

39. The humanitarian community maintained its projected figures of 12.8 million people in need of protection and humanitarian assistance in 2019, representing more than one in ten Congolese. In addition to an estimated 4.8 million internally displaced persons, as at 31 March, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was also hosting some 540,000 refugees, mostly from Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda and South Sudan.

40. There are currently 13.1 million Congolese living in food insecurity, including 5.2 million children and 800,000 pregnant or nursing mothers who are acutely malnourished. The United Nations continues to provide emergency food assistance to more than 5 million people.

41. From 10 March to 2 June, 6,089 suspected cases of cholera, including 115 deaths, were reported. On 10 June, the Minister for Health declared a national measles epidemic, stating that about 87,000 cases had been reported by mid-May. In responding to the epidemics, humanitarian actors were confronted with a number of challenges, including lack of funding, supplies and humanitarian access.

42. Despite the ongoing response effort, the number of Ebola cases in North Kivu and Ituri provinces has increased sharply since early March, reaching over 2,000 confirmed cases in June. There have been an increasing number of cases confirmed in Kalanguta, Mandima, Mabalako and Musienene health zones across Beni and Lubero territories. Ebola response efforts continued to be hampered by community resistance and insecurity, with attacks on health-care personnel and facilities. On 30 April and 15 June respectively, the WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and the WHO Regional Director for Africa, Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, visited Butembo.

43. On 11 and 12 June, three Ebola cases were confirmed in Uganda, the first cases to cross the border from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, a public health emergency of international concern was not declared.

44. The United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator, David Gressly, and the WHO Assistant Director-General, Dr. Ibrahima Socé Fall, initiated the development of a United Nations strategy to put an end to the Ebola outbreak. The strategy will focus on the public health response, enhanced security, political engagement and support for communities affected by the Ebola outbreak. The United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator met with President Tshisekedi, the Minister for Health, local authorities, donors and international non-governmental organizations.

V. Comprehensive approach to the protection of civilians

A. Mission-wide strategies

45. MONUSCO continued to implement, in collaboration with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, targeted strategies on armed groups. The National Coordinator of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, Claude Ibalanky, visited Ituri, which was a welcome boost to the FRPI peace process. The Mission's comprehensive approach to addressing the threat posed by FRPI, which integrates good offices, wide-ranging stabilization efforts, demobilization and reintegration, protection of civilians and human rights, provided an enabling framework for the political engagement of key stakeholders, such as the local community and authorities, the leadership of the armed group and the Government. Meanwhile, the targeted strategy and joint operational plan on ADF was reviewed on 19 June to assess progress and to consider new developments in the Grand Nord. The targeted strategies to address armed groups operating in Maniema, South Kivu and Tanganyika provinces are being finalized.

46. MONUSCO continued to implement the "protection through projection" approach, with the establishment of 35 standing combat deployments and the conduct of 9,645 long-range patrols during the reporting period. Early warning systems and local protection committees in hard-to-reach communities were expanded, leading to improvements in the Mission's ability to reach civilian populations and support dialogue initiatives. To build local ownership and ensure sustainability, MONUSCO strengthened local protection mechanisms through community capacity-building and conducted assessments of protection and early warning mechanisms.

47. The Community Alert Network received a monthly average of 449 early warning alerts, originating mostly in North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika. Of those, 80 per cent gave rise to responses from the Government and/or MONUSCO. Alerts that could not be responded to mostly emanated from remote areas or areas with limited presence of national security forces.

48. During the reporting period, the Mine Action Service continued to mitigate the threat posed to civilians by explosive hazards. The Service destroyed 52 unexploded ordnances across the area of responsibility of MONUSCO and installed 124 gun safes for 1,559 State-held weapons in police stations in Ituri, North Kivu and Tshopo provinces. In addition, more than 5,000 State-held weapons were marked and registered to support efforts to prevent diversion from national stockpiles.

B. Field-level response

49. In North Kivu, MONUSCO used its good offices at the provincial and national levels in response to the upsurge of violence in Masisi territory. The Mission also deployed 10 standing combat deployments to monitor human rights abuses and secure the separation of children associated with armed groups. On 15 May, MONUSCO deployed to Ntoto (Masisi territory) and Walikale town (Walikale territory) to protect civilians. Furthermore, MONUSCO supported the North Kivu Provincial Ministry of the Interior in facilitating dialogue between Hunde, Hutu, Nande and Pygmy communities in Binza groupement, in Rutshuru territory. As a result, the local conflict resolution mechanism was revived and the number of violent incidents in the community decreased significantly. In other developments, in March and April, FARDC disarmed around 492 Congolese combatants, of whom 272 were from Mai-Mai Nyatura (Kavumbi faction), who are now in the Mubambiro pre-cantonment camp in Goma.

50. MONUSCO provided support to the Provincial Ministry of the Interior to facilitate dialogue in the Bambuba-Kisiki and Banande-Kainama groupements in Beni territory on land and other disputes. The dialogue led to the signing of a peace agreement.

51. In response to increased insecurity in the Beni-Butembo area, MONUSCO deployed additional Intervention Brigade troops, 14 individual police officers and two platoons from the Egyptian and Senegalese Formed Police Units to address security threats to Ebola response teams. Furthermore, the Mission redeployed the Kinshasa-based Uruguayan company to Butembo.

52. In South Kivu, MONUSCO deployed integrated military and civilian teams to two standing combat deployments in Kalehe territory, supported enhanced information collection and early warning, and engaged with CNRD and the Congolese authorities. MONUSCO held meetings with FARDC to encourage adherence to international humanitarian law and reduce risks to civilians associated with CNRD. In Fizi territory, MONUSCO deployed a standing combat deployment to the Lamera-Kidote-Mulenge axis in support of a FARDC military operation from 1 March to 15 April. Close collaboration of the MONUSCO force with the Mission's civilian sections facilitated the reopening of schools, churches, markets and hospitals in the area. In Minembwe, MONUSCO conducted several joint missions and long-range patrols and carried out conflict resolution initiatives, which resulted in the signing of a document by the communities in conflict, in which they committed themselves to a ceasefire and to working with FARDC. In Shabunda territory, in response to a spike in conflict-related sexual violence, MONUSCO implemented a comprehensive action plan, which led to the arrest by FARDC of the Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki leader, Koko di Koko, and his deputy, who are facing charges of crimes against humanity for rape and the killing of civilians. Despite the arrests and the surrender of some Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki members, low-level violence perpetrated by the group continued.

53. In Maniema, the establishment of a standing combat deployment in Salamabila from 27 April to 8 May facilitated a joint mission by MONUSCO and provincial authorities to address insecurity, evaluate conditions for the surrender of armed groups and discuss stabilization initiatives. MONUSCO supported capacity-building initiatives on security governance and the protection of civilians, and trained child protection focal points and members of the Congolese National Police. MONUSCO also conducted human rights investigations and an awareness-raising event for FARDC on sexual violence. To encourage locally owned, peaceful solutions to conflicts, MONUSCO supported dialogue between the authorities, representatives of Mai-Mai Malaika, mining actors and civil society. Some 50 women and 100 men

participated. The dialogue identified measures to prevent a relapse into conflict, and FARDC began withdrawing elements from Salamabila on 8 May.

54. In response to the conflict that began in February in the border areas of Maniema and Tshopo provinces, MONUSCO conducted joint assessment missions to Ubundu (Tshopo) in March and to Punia (Maniema) in April. The missions identified human rights violations linked to FARDC in the Lowa locality, including confirmed cases of executions.

55. In Ituri, MONUSCO maintained standing combat deployments in potential hotspots to protect the population, and promoted reconciliation through dialogue initiatives.

56. In Tanganyika, MONUSCO deployed five standing combat deployments in areas most affected by Mai-Mai activities, allowing civilian personnel, humanitarian actors, provincial authorities and local leaders to reach vulnerable communities and engage directly with Mai-Mai leaders, which in turn led to some 600 militia elements expressing their intention to demobilize.

57. In the Kasai region, MONUSCO focused its activities on the impact of the return of Congolese expelled from Angola; the conduct of dialogue initiatives in Kamako, Kamonia and Tshikapa to reduce tensions between the Luba, Lulua, Pende and Chokwe communities; and the promotion of peaceful cohabitation, particularly in the context of the surrender of Kamuina Nsapu militias. In March, MONUSCO launched a joint project with the United Nations Development Programme and other partners in Kasai Central aimed at strengthening social cohesion between the communities affected by conflict and at promoting peaceful coexistence.

VI. Extension of State authority

A. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

58. MONUSCO processed the cases of a total of 513 individuals from armed groups and secured the release of 312 children. Of those 513 individuals, MONUSCO repatriated 46 former combatants and their dependents to Rwanda, 8 to Burundi and 3 to Uganda, and referred 12 civilians to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Mission also continued to encourage foreign armed groups to voluntarily disarm, demobilize and repatriate.

59. MONUSCO intensified its engagement with the Congolese authorities on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and discussed a strategic shift away from static demobilization structures to more flexible, tailored approaches. Moreover, MONUSCO and the United Nations country team continued to work jointly with provincial and local authorities in areas to which former combatants have already returned, in particular the Kasai region and Tanganyika, with a view to addressing underlying conflict drivers and strengthening the ability of those communities to cope with the return of both former combatants and displaced people. As a bridge to longer-term funding for Ituri, the Kasai region and Tanganyika, on 26 April MONUSCO approved 9 new disarmament, demobilization and community violence reduction projects, bringing the total number of projects for the period 2018/19 to 63.

B. Stabilization

60. Within the framework of the International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy, and in collaboration with the national stabilization and reconstruction programme, MONUSCO continued to support efforts aimed at the signing of a peace

agreement between the Government and FRPI. Delays in the signing of the agreement led to FRPI elements leaving the pre-cantonment area for the bush. The National Coordinator of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, Mr. Ibalanky, met FRPI elements during a field visit to Ituri from 10 to 17 May and reiterated the commitment of President Tshisekedi to the peace process.

VII. Human rights situation, justice and corrections

61. While incidents of human rights violations and abuses generally remained high, positive trends regarding freedom of expression and assembly were observed during the reporting period. In the first quarter of 2019, MONUSCO documented 1,560 human rights violations and abuses throughout the country, a 10 per cent decrease compared with the last quarter of 2018. Most of the violations and abuses took place in conflict-affected provinces, mainly in Kasai, Maniema, North Kivu and South Kivu. State agents, mainly FARDC soldiers and members of the Congolese National Police, were responsible for 63 per cent of human rights violations and abuses. The remaining 37 per cent of cases were committed by members of armed groups. State actors were responsible for the majority of documented violations of fundamental freedoms and restrictions on democratic space. Furthermore, a high number of violations resulted from the presence and operations of national security forces in conflict-affected areas.

62. In North Kivu, the province most affected by conflict, the human rights situation deteriorated further, particularly in Masisi territory, where the number of human rights violations and abuses increased by 40 per cent in the first quarter of 2019 compared with the last quarter of 2018. Armed groups were responsible for most of those abuses, which included abductions and a high number of summary killings (51 victims, including 11 women and 2 children).

63. Upon taking office, President Tshisekedi made strong commitments to improve the human rights situation, including by releasing political prisoners and closing all secret detention centres. That was followed by the publication, in March, of four presidential and two ministerial orders on individual and collective measures of pardon. Those measures concerned detainees who had served a quarter of their sentence; those whose incarceration exceeded three months and who had shown good conduct; beneficiaries of the amnesty law of 11 February 2014 who had nevertheless been kept in custody; and those sentenced in connection with public protests or political meetings held between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2018. The effective closure of prison cells at the Agence nationale de renseignements, announced by the President of the Conseil national de suivi de l'Accord et du processus électoral on 26 March, could not be verified.

64. A positive trend was observed regarding freedom of expression and assembly, with a 13 per cent decrease in related violations when comparing the first quarter of 2019 to the last quarter of 2018. However, freedom of the press and the intimidation of civil society activists remained a cause for concern in the second quarter of 2019. While several peaceful demonstrations were held without incident, others were suppressed by the authorities and resulted in demonstrators being arbitrarily arrested or injured. For instance, in demonstrations between 8 and 10 April in Tshikapa (Kasai), Lubumbashi (Haut-Katanga) and Kinshasa, 38 demonstrators, including 1 boy, were arbitrarily arrested and at least 17 others, including 1 boy, were ill-treated by members of the Congolese National Police during or following the dispersal of peaceful protests related to the gubernatorial elections of 10 April.

65. On 23 May, in Kinshasa, the Minister of Human Rights, Marie-Ange Mushobekwa, presented the report of the investigation commission on the incident that occurred on 16 and 17 December 2018 in Yumbi. According to the report, 461 people were killed, 133 others injured and 1,793 properties destroyed. The incident resulted in 7,472 internally displaced persons and 17,000 refugees. Twenty-five alleged perpetrators have been arrested and are awaiting trial. Investigations are ongoing.

66. Detention conditions continued to give rise to concern. In the first quarter of 2019, at least 74 people died in detention, mainly due to malnutrition, lack of medical care and ill-treatment. Furthermore, during the reporting period, at least 899 people escaped from detention centres across the country, with the provinces of Bas-Uélé, Kwilu and Kasai Oriental being the most affected, compared with 801 escapes in 2018. Building on previous efforts, MONUSCO continued to provide support for reinforcing security and improving living conditions in 14 high-priority prisons.

67. MONUSCO continued to support the efforts of the Congolese authorities to combat impunity and address cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations. In Kasai and Kasai Central provinces, MONUSCO and provincial authorities conducted five joint investigation missions on crimes committed during the Kamuina Nsapu crisis.

VIII. Sexual violence

68. From 1 March to 31 May, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office documented 302 new cases of rape, gang rape, forced marriage and other forms of sexual violence in conflict areas, of which 245 were against women and 57 against children. Over half of the incidents were perpetrated by armed groups in North Kivu. Most of the remaining cases occurred in Maniema, South Kivu and Tanganyika provinces.

69. MONUSCO documented an increase in the number of cases perpetrated by State actors compared with the last quarter of 2018. FARDC soldiers and other State actors were responsible for approximately one third of documented cases, especially in the territories of Beni (North Kivu), Kalemie (Tanganyika), Kabambare (Maniema) and Uvira (South Kivu), as well as in Kasai and Kasai Central provinces.

IX. Child protection

70. Between 8 March and 8 May, MONUSCO verified 573 grave violations against children, including the rape of 16 girls, the abduction of 6 children (5 girls and 1 boy) and the maiming of 7 children (5 boys and 2 girls). In the same period, 538 children, including 81 girls, were separated from armed groups.

71. During the reporting period, commanders of six Mai-Mai groups operating chiefly in North Kivu and South Kivu signed unilateral declarations and road maps, committing themselves to ending child recruitment and other grave violations of children's rights, including sexual violence and forced marriage. That brings the total number of such agreements signed in 2019 to 10.

X. Gender considerations in mandate implementation

72. MONUSCO supported equal access to justice and equal participation in judicial institutions for women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the first quarter

of 2019, more than 52 per cent of participants in the Mission's training for judicial authorities were women, compared with 11 per cent in the third quarter of 2018. Further, 42.4 per cent of MONUSCO-supported mobile court sessions in prisons and remote areas involved women as defendants or victims, enhancing their access to justice. That represents an increase of nearly 50 per cent in the first quarter of 2019 compared with the second half of 2018.

73. MONUSCO continued to promote gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory communication in the media and provided training to 161 journalists.

74. Furthermore, MONUSCO supported efforts aimed at promoting women's involvement in political and conflict resolution processes. The Mission advocated the inclusion of women in traditional government structures, leading to the nomination of two female customary chiefs in the National Assembly. A total of 97 female politicians, including candidates in the delayed Beni and Butembo legislative elections, received capacity-building support from MONUSCO. In addition, the Mission provided training to 314 female peacebuilders and mediators in 14 conflict zones, who subsequently engaged with the parents and relatives of militia members.

XI. Deployment and assessment of the performance of MONUSCO

A. Progress in adjusting the Mission's priorities, posture and presence

75. In line with the strategic objectives outlined in Security Council resolution [2463 \(2019\)](#), and following the successful holding of the national and provincial elections, the operational focus of MONUSCO centred around the protection of civilians, reducing the threat posed by armed groups and assessing the human rights situation, while supporting efforts to combat impunity and stabilize and strengthen State institutions.

76. With a view to focusing resources on areas where the presence of armed groups poses a persistent threat to the civilian population, MONUSCO redeployed uniformed personnel to field offices in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. One Indian Formed Police Unit was successfully repatriated from the closing Kisangani office, while an Egyptian Formed Police Unit, currently based in Lubumbashi, will redeploy to Bukavu, given the effective closure of the Lubumbashi office. In addition, the Egyptian Special Forces were repatriated on 2 June.

77. MONUSCO also readjusted the priorities of the Intervention Brigade, enhancing its responsiveness by refocusing its area of operations and relieving Intervention Brigade assets from static duties to increase the projection capability within their assigned area. Similarly, the deployment of military observers was reassessed, and teams were relocated to strengthen the presence in priority areas.

78. The MONUSCO police component continued to support, through the formed police units, the capacity-building efforts of the Congolese National Police in areas such as crowd control. In March, a United Nations specialized police team on organized crime was established to strengthen the capacity of the Congolese National Police to investigate serious and organized crimes. Moreover, the MONUSCO police component continued to support the development of the 2019–2023 action plan for the Congolese National Police.

B. Assessment of performance of the Mission's uniformed personnel to protect civilians

79. Through field visits by the leadership of MONUSCO, 18 troop units were inspected and evaluated against criteria that included support for mandate implementation, command and control, training, discipline, sustainability of logistical capacity and medical support. A total of 5 units were assessed as excellent, 10 as satisfactory and 1 as requiring further improvement owing to the low rate of availability of utility helicopters. Two assessments have not yet been approved. To improve operational standards, various training sessions were organized, with a focus on operations and logistics, planning and conduct of joint offensive operations, and enhancing peacekeepers' understanding of the Mission's operations and complex environment.

80. The leadership of MONUSCO also conducted a performance evaluation of seven formed police units against several criteria, including command and control, discipline, administration, understanding and support of the Mission's mandate, operational readiness, logistics, compliance with the relevant memorandums of understanding, medical issues and training. The evaluation revealed that the operational capability of formed police units is constrained by a lack of armoured personnel carriers. To address the shortage, one police-contributing country was requested to deploy six additional armoured personnel carriers and has already deployed four; another has deployed an additional five carriers; and a third has been requested to deploy two additional carriers. The Mission's police component also implemented a performance evaluation for individual police officers, including on protection of civilians in urban areas through the integrated operational strategy for the fight against insecurity.

C. Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse

81. MONUSCO continued to implement the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse for all personnel, in close partnership with relevant actors, including members of the local population. Activities to raise awareness of the policy and the avenues for safe reporting were organized for communities located in high-risk areas.

82. Between 9 March and 15 May, two allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, involving a military contingent member and an international staff member, were reported and referred to the troop-contributing country and the Office of Internal Oversight Services, respectively, for further action. Three projects sponsored by the trust fund in support of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse were in the final stages of implementation in Bujovu and Sake, North Kivu Province, and in Kavumu, South Kivu Province. The projects provided vocational skills training to 250 vulnerable women, including 17 victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

XII. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

83. From 9 March to 12 May, a total of 82 incidents related to the safety and security of United Nations personnel were recorded throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They comprised 55 crime-related incidents, 21 cases of civil unrest and 6 hazard-related incidents.

XIII. Observations

84. I am encouraged by the positive steps taken by President Tshisekedi since his inauguration to complete the installation of national and provincial institutions and to launch his reform agenda. I also welcome the steps taken by the President to open the political space, resulting in the release of political detainees, the return of political actors and progress in the upholding of fundamental liberties, including freedom of speech. I note the constructive approach adopted by many Congolese stakeholders in support of the President's agenda. That has helped to create a relatively peaceful environment, which is essential for the implementation of reforms.

85. I am pleased at the initiatives taken by President Tshisekedi to promote regional collaboration and strengthen the National Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. I urge regional and subregional organizations, as well as international partners, to build on that momentum in order to reinforce cooperation between countries in the Great Lakes Region, including in the fight against armed groups and in the pursuit of economic integration.

86. I welcome the commitment of President Tshisekedi to combating corruption and impunity, and I encourage the Government to pursue governance reforms, which are a precondition for creating an attractive investment climate, accelerating economic growth and ultimately improving socioeconomic conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

87. I am encouraged by the improvement of the security situation in some parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I am, however, concerned at the deterioration of the security situation in some areas of the eastern part of the country, particularly in Ituri Province, where there has been a resurgence of intercommunal violence. Every effort must be made to prevent a further escalation of the situation and to put an end to the recurring cycle of conflict that has plagued that part of the country in recent years. I take note of the decisions taken by President Tshisekedi to address threats to the civilian population and the security of the State as a matter of priority. It would be important, in that regard, to make progress on the further professionalization of the national security forces, including by ensuring strengthened command and control and democratic oversight. At the same time, there is no purely military solution to the issue of armed groups. All concerned actors must therefore seize the opportunity of armed groups surrendering, or expressing their intention to surrender, to make tangible progress in disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating these combatants. I call upon the Government and international partners to allocate the necessary resources to efforts aimed at removing armed group elements from the battlefield through non-military initiatives, including community violence reduction programmes. I am also encouraged by the dialogue initiatives jointly carried out by the authorities and MONUSCO to address the drivers of intercommunity violence and conflict.

88. I commend the concerted efforts of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, WHO, MONUSCO and other partners to combat the Ebola outbreak. I am, however, concerned at the worsening security situation in the affected areas and the attacks on Ebola response teams. I call upon the Government to continue taking, in collaboration with MONUSCO, measures aimed at improving the security situation in the affected areas. I have taken specific steps to improve the coordination of the United Nations system-wide response to the outbreak. The newly appointed United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator, working closely with national authorities and all concerned actors, will contribute to creating an enabling political

and security environment. The United Nations and its partners remain fully committed to supporting the Government in its efforts to bring the Ebola outbreak to an end.

89. I am equally concerned about the overall humanitarian situation, which remains dire. I renew my call for donors and partners to continue providing the necessary support in order to close the humanitarian funding gap as quickly as possible.

90. Lastly, I wish to thank my Special Representative for her steadfast leadership and dedication, and all MONUSCO personnel, the United Nations country team and the troop- and police-contributing countries for their commitment to the stabilization of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I also commend the efforts of the regional organizations, bilateral and multilateral partners and non-governmental organizations for their continued support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

MONUSCO deployment map

