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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 is submitted pursuant to paragraph 46 of Security Council resolution [2463 \(2019\)](#) and covers major developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 29 June to 25 September 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 17 July 2019 ([S/2019/575](#)); 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. The political situation during the reporting period was dominated by the inauguration of a coalition government under the Prime Minister, Sylvestre Ilunga Ilunkamba, in September. The President, Félix Tshisekedi, also continued to play an active role in regional initiatives to strengthen bilateral relations and increase cooperation on security and economic issues.

3. On 26 August, Prime Minister Ilunga announced the composition of his government, following the endorsement by President Tshisekedi. It comprises 67 members, including the Prime Minister, 5 vice-prime ministers, 10 State ministers, 31 ministers, 3 *ministres délégués* and 17 vice-ministers. Three out of four of the ministers have never served in a government. The representation of women increased from 10 per cent to 17 per cent. The distribution of ministries between the two platforms of the coalition is broadly in line with a prior agreement, reached on 29 July, which provided that 42 portfolios would go to the Front commun pour le Congo and 23 to the Cap pour le changement. The same agreement also contained a commitment by the two platforms to implement a common programme through a coalition government.

4. An extraordinary session of the National Assembly was convened between 19 August and 7 September to debate and approve the programme of the new Government and inaugurate its members. On 3 September, Prime Minister Ilunga



presented the programme, which focuses on the political, defence and security, economic and finance, reconstruction and social and cultural sectors. The document, which was presented without detailed budgetary commitments, aligns with the priorities of President Tshisekedi and reflects the positions for which Cap pour le changement and the Front commun pour le Congo campaigned during the 2018 election. On 6 September, following a process of parliamentary debate and scrutiny, the National Assembly approved the government programme and proceeded to the inauguration of the new ministers. The Lamuka coalition boycotted the inauguration in protest at allegedly deliberate violations of parliamentary rules, which in their view disadvantaged the opposition. Several influential civil society organizations also expressed their concern over the size of the new Government and its cost implications.

5. The installation of the legislative institutions continued to generate political contestation. Internal disputes surfaced visibly during the election of the Senate Bureau on 27 July, following the endorsement by the Front commun pour le Congo of Alexis Thambwe Mwamba as its sole candidate for the Senate presidency. This led to disagreements with the second largest political grouping of the platform, the Alliance des forces démocratiques du Congo et alliés, whose leader, Modeste Bahati Lukwebo, also expressed interest in the position and maintained his candidacy even after being confronted with exclusion from the Front commun pour le Congo. In a secret ballot, Alexis Thambwe Mwamba was eventually confirmed as President of the Senate with 65 votes against 43 for Modeste Bahati, indicating that the Front commun pour le Congo could not leverage its full numerical strength despite its majority. The Cap pour le changement-aligned former Prime Minister Samy Badibanga was elected First Vice-President of the Senate against the candidacy of a prominent member of Front commun pour le Congo, Évariste Boshab.

6. Following his relatively strong showing in the Senate, Modeste Bahati announced that the Alliance des forces démocratiques du Congo et alliés would henceforth act as a third member of the government majority, separate from the Front commun pour le Congo. However, the actual loyalties of individual members of the grouping remained contested. On 2 September, the faction led by Modeste Bahati eventually expelled a number of senior officials and five constituent parties from the Alliance des forces démocratiques du Congo et alliés, citing their continued allegiance to the Front commun pour le Congo.

7. The last two remaining gubernatorial elections took place in June and July. The vote was conducted in Sud-Ubangi on 10 July and won by a Front commun pour le Congo affiliate. The Sankuru election, initially postponed due to logistical and security constraints, took place on 20 July. Despite the fact that the Front commun pour le Congo held a majority in the provincial assembly, an independent candidate, who later announced his loyalty to President Tshisekedi, was elected against former Government Spokesperson Lambert Mende.

8. The composition of the National Assembly was subject to legal processes until a revised ruling of the Constitutional Court on 3 and 4 July reinstated some of the previously disqualified members of the Assembly, but also confirmed the invalidation of 31 initially elected National Assembly members, many of them from the opposition. According to the final list of elected officials published by the Court, the Front commun pour le Congo has over 300 seats, Cap pour le changement has 48 seats, and the opposition Lamuka platform holds 99 seats. The remaining seats are held by members of the Alliance des forces démocratiques du Congo et alliés. In a letter dated 29 July, the Comité laïc de coordination called on all judges of the Constitutional Court to resign, given what they viewed as a violation of the Constitution in the handling of electoral disputes. The 31 invalidated parliamentarians also continued to protest against their exclusion from the National Assembly and formed an alliance for that purpose. In the Senate, the Front commun pour le Congo

and aligned independent senators hold 79 seats, Alliance des forces démocratiques du Congo et alliés hold 12, Lamuka 11, and Cap pour le changement hold 4, with the remaining positions held by independents without declared affiliations.

9. The opposition Lamuka coalition continued its activities, including by holding rallies throughout the country and calling for peaceful marches to denounce the rulings of the Constitutional Court that had invalidated the election of some of its National Assembly members. The leadership of Lamuka met on 30 July and reaffirmed its commitment to work for the reform of national institutions, including the Commission électorale nationale indépendante. The meeting also designated Jean-Pierre Bemba as the rotating coordinator of Lamuka for the next three months, taking over from Moïse Katumbi. Other initiatives by Lamuka leaders included rallies held by Moïse Katumbi with supporters in all four provinces of the Grand Katanga area in July and August and a rally held by Martin Fayulu in Kinshasa on 4 August. On 10 July, a leader of Lamuka, Freddy Matungulu, announced that he would cease his activities in the coalition, following his appointment at the African Development Bank upon the recommendation of President Tshisekedi.

10. Civil society and faith-based organizations continued to be actively engaged in political matters. The Episcopal Conference of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Église du Christ au Congo continued to call for local elections to be held before the end of the year, and on 9 August submitted a petition with 1.5 million signatures to that effect. Other organizations, including the National Council for Monitoring the Agreement and the Electoral Process also called for the local elections to be organized. The Council continued its mediation role between political formations, including calming tensions between supporters of Cap pour le changement and Front commun pour le Congo over the composition of the new government, and dispatched a good offices delegation to Sankuru Province to prevent potential violence surrounding the gubernatorial elections.

11. Pursuing his anti-corruption agenda, President Tshisekedi, on 8 August, established an office for behavioural change, the Coordination pour le changement de mentalité. Further, during a speech on 11 July marking the first African Anti-corruption Day, he reiterated his determination to reform the justice system and called for the ratification of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. He also advocated a greater role for women in politics and spoke in favour of a 30 per cent female representation rate in the coalition government, and for Parliament to adopt a quota system in elective assemblies and public administration.

12. President Tshisekedi also continued to pursue an active regional diplomatic agenda. Notably, on 12 July, he met with the President of Angola, João Lourenço in Luanda as part of a quadripartite meeting with the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, and the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni. In the joint communiqué of the meeting, they called for cooperation on peace and security, with a focus on armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as regional economic integration. The summit also supported dialogue between Rwanda and Uganda to resolve their existing differences, which the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola were asked to facilitate. In a follow-up quadripartite summit, on 21 August, in Luanda, Rwanda and Uganda signed a memorandum of understanding to improve political and economic relations.

13. From 4 to 8 July, President Tshisekedi participated in the twelfth extraordinary summit of the African Union in Niamey, on the margins of which he met with the Chair of the African Union, the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, and the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, to discuss bilateral cooperation and regional issues.

14. On 17 and 18 August, the President attended the thirty-ninth summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Dar es Salaam, during which he called for a regional coalition to eradicate armed groups in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this context, the final communiqué of the Summit referred to the acts of extremism and terrorism in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, specifically in the Beni area, and agreed to collaborate with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and consolidate efforts towards security stabilization in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. The communiqué also commended the President of Namibia, Hage Geingob, as outgoing Chairperson, and the President of Zambia, Edgar Chagwa Lungu, as outgoing Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, for their role in contributing to the peaceful elections and transfer of power in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

15. On the economic front, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund concluded Article IV consultations with the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 26 August, marking an important step in their cooperation. The Executive Board further stated that growth was projected to decrease from 5.8 per cent in 2018 to 4.3 per cent in the current year, as copper and cobalt prices continue to fall.

16. In pursuit of her good offices, my Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Leila Zerrougui, continued to meet with key national and provincial authorities, including President Tshisekedi, the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Chief of Staff of the President, Vital Kamerhe, the incoming Minister of the Interior, Security and Customary Affairs, as well as the Governors of Ituri, Sankuru, Kasai Central and South Kivu. She used these occasions to discuss opportunities for supporting institutional reforms and strengthening democratic governance, as well as the ongoing Ebola response.

17. During my visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 30 August to 1 September, I had the opportunity to hold meetings with representatives of the major political forces, civil society and institutions of the country, including President Tshisekedi, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Jeanine Mabunda, and Prime Minister Ilunga. The need for MONUSCO and national security forces to work together more effectively to address the threat posed by armed groups was an important conclusion of my meetings. I also interacted with authorities and civil society organizations in North Kivu, notably Goma, Beni and Mangina, where I expressed the solidarity of the United Nations with the victims of armed group violence, as well as Ebola and other public health challenges.

III. Security situation

18. Intercommunal violence and armed group activity continued to claim the lives of numerous civilians, with an upsurge in incidents in some areas in the east of the country. Despite political commitments to address the causes of insecurity in Ituri Province, Djugu and Mahagi territories saw an increase in violence. Attacks on civilians also increased in the Grand Nord area of North Kivu Province, due to a resurgence of attacks by presumed members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). Also in North Kivu, Masisi territory continued to be negatively affected by extensive armed group clashes, causing dozens of civilian deaths. Insecurity also persisted in Maniema, South Kivu and Tanganyika Provinces, but did not increase significantly. While politically sensitive elections in Sankuru Province took place in a relatively calm atmosphere, the risk of communal violence remains.

North Kivu Province

19. The security situation in the Grand Nord deteriorated during the reporting period, with a notable increase in attacks on civilians in Beni territory. Alleged ADF members killed at least 36 civilians and abducted dozens more in 26 attacks. By contrast, there was a decrease in ADF attacks against the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). Civil society organizations in the region organized a series of demonstrations urging local and national authorities, as well as MONUSCO and the international community, to address insecurity in Beni territory. Several civilians were injured, and the police arrested dozens in the context of these demonstrations. Mai-Mai groups also continued to attack civilians, Ebola response centres and FARDC, in particular in the Butembo and Lubero areas, with 25 attacks recorded during the reporting period, of which 12 were against civilians, 7 against the FARDC and 6 against Ebola virus disease centres.

20. In Masisi territory, the Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové (NDC-R) armed group continued to pose a significant threat to the safety and security of civilians. The group is known to have carried out summary executions of civilians, rape, unlawful imprisonment and the imposition and collection of illegal taxes. The strategy of NDC-R to extend its area of control beyond Masisi and Walikale territories, in particular into Rutshuru territory, led to violent confrontations with other local armed groups. The clashes resulted in the killing of at least 60 civilians and caused large-scale displacement. Up to 25 schools remain closed in Masisi territory owing to insecurity, leaving approximately 3,000 students without access to education.

South Kivu and Maniema Provinces

21. The overall security situation in South Kivu remained tense and unpredictable, with eight out of the nine territories of the Province affected by local and foreign armed groups. In Kalehe and Shabunda territories, the Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki and other members of local armed group reactivated their support networks, reportedly with the tacit support of some local politicians, following the movement of the Conseil national pour le renouveau démocratique and the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) into the area. This also triggered the intensification of confrontations between FARDC and local armed groups in Bunyakiri, as well as renewed rivalries with FARDC for the control of mining areas in Shabunda territory.

22. In Uvira and Fizi territories, insecurity and recurrent armed confrontations continued to adversely affect the population. Intercommunal conflict between Banyamulenge groups, supported by the Gumino and Twigwaneho militias, and the Babembe, Bafuliru and Banyindu communities, supported by various Mai-Mai groups, resulted in serious human rights violations in the Minembwe area of Fizi territory. The continued presence of Burundian and Rwandan armed groups in the Province made the situation even more volatile. Approximately 200,000 people remained displaced owing to continued insecurity.

23. In southern Maniema Province, Kabambare territory witnessed renewed armed group hostilities against the Namoya mine site. FARDC redeployed troops to secure the privately run concession; however, on 26 July, four mine workers, including a South African national, were taken hostage by members of Mai-Mai Malaika and eventually released. While sexual violence reportedly committed by security forces in Salamabila decreased, incidents of rape reportedly committed by members of Mai-Mai increased in number. FARDC continued operations against Mai-Mai Malaika in Kasongo and Kabambare territories. Kabambare territory continued to experience insecurity due to clashes between Twa militia, Apa na Pale and members of Mai-Mai Yakutumba from South Kivu and Tanganyika Provinces.

Ituri Province

24. On 23 August, ADF carried out its first multi-day incursion outside of North Kivu, into the Boga area of Irumu territory, Ituri Province. The primary purpose appeared to be resupply with cash, basic goods, cattle and medication. No fatalities were reported, but some 114 civilians, including women and minors, were abducted for forced labour and ransom payments.

25. The demobilization process of the Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri (FRPI) has advanced considerably since my previous report. On 12 August, the Governor of Ituri Province launched the pre-cantonment of FRPI combatants. This followed a visit by President Tshisekedi in July, which facilitated negotiations with the FRPI on a final agreement for their demobilization. To date, over 800 combatants have registered in the pre-cantonment site in Geti. The signature of a peace agreement between the Government and FRPI is expected to take place later in the year.

26. In his public address in Bunia on 30 June, President Tshisekedi committed to restoring peace in Ituri and holding perpetrators of human rights violations accountable. Following the visit, police and FARDC deployments were increased to enable military operations against the armed assailants. Although to a lesser extent than in previous months, these acts of violence persisted in Djugu territory, causing tens of thousands of civilians to flee.

27. In Mahagi territory, Ituri Province, the reporting period was marked by killings, lootings and the destruction of villages. During attacks on several villages in Djugu and Mahagi territories on 10 and 11 June, at least 117 members of the Alur and Hema communities were killed. There was little military presence during the attacks, which appear to have been coordinated. Despite calls for restraint by community leaders and local authorities, inter-community relations remained strained. Tensions also rose in the Alur community after the killing of at least seven Alur individuals by unidentified armed men in a village near Bunia town on 16 July.

Tanganyika Province

28. The security situation in Kalemie town gradually improved during the reporting period. In Kambu, MONUSCO provided its good offices to facilitate a dialogue between Twa combatants, former Bantu militia leaders and customary chiefs, which had a positive impact on the security on the Kalemie-Moba road axis. As a result, normal traffic between Lubumbashi and Kalemie resumed.

29. Security incidents were also reported in north-eastern Nyunzu territory and northern Kalemie territory. In these areas FARDC and various Mai-Mai groups fought for control of mining sites, leading to the displacement of the population. In the Bendera area, both FARDC and armed groups reinforced their respective positions.

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

30. In Sankuru Province, tensions remained high following delayed gubernatorial elections, and the killing of several politically aligned militia leaders. Community violence continued in Lodja, centred in the areas of Kondo-Tshumbe and Nambelu-Luhembe, where there is little security presence. The risk of violence related to local power struggles persists, particularly in the Kondo-Tshumbe sector of Lodja territory.

31. Following the self-demobilization of the Kamuina Nsapu militia across Kasai and Kasai Central Provinces in the aftermath of the elections, an overall reduction in security incidents was observed. Some cases of intercommunal violence nevertheless occurred, as members of the Pende, Tetela and Chokwe communities clashed with members of Kamuina Nsapu-affiliated Luba groups. Returns of Congolese refugees

from Angola continued, in particular into the Kamako area in Kasai Province and are expected to increase further.

IV. Humanitarian situation

32. During the reporting period, the humanitarian situation significantly deteriorated in several areas of the country, mostly owing to intercommunal conflict, armed group violence and ongoing epidemics. Humanitarian actors continued to be confronted with several challenges in aid delivery, such as accessibility in conflict areas and lack of funding. As at 29 August 2019, the humanitarian response plan, which requires \$1.65 billion, was 29 per cent funded.

33. Currently, 13.1 million people, or 10 per cent of the population, are estimated to be food-insecure. As a particular concern, 4.5 million children are affected by severe and moderate acute malnutrition, and 11 per cent of the health zones in the country were above nutritional emergency thresholds during the first trimester of 2019. In the Kivu Provinces, more than 60 per cent of the population is food-insecure, with more than 20 per cent at emergency level. Further increases in food insecurity may occur, given poor climatic conditions, which will have an impact on crops, in particular in the east of the country.

34. In Masisi territory, North Kivu Province, over 67,000 people were newly displaced in June and July. Meanwhile violence in Djugu territory in Ituri Province displaced tens of thousands, with total numbers reaching 400,000 displaced persons in Djugu, Irumu and Mahagi territories. In the high plateaus of South Kivu Province, approximately 180,000 people were displaced during May and June.

35. Epidemics continued to be among the most urgent humanitarian concerns. Since the beginning of 2019, over 16,000 suspected cases of cholera and 300 deaths were reported. There were also over 150,000 suspected cases of measles, including some 3,000 deaths.

36. Despite the ongoing response effort, the number of Ebola cases in North Kivu, Ituri and South Kivu Provinces continued to increase and reached over 3,000 cases and more than 2,000 deaths by the end of August. On 15 July, the first case of Ebola was confirmed in Goma. Two days later, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. On 16 August, the first two Ebola cases were confirmed in South Kivu Province. Both cases were contained, and no further spreading of the disease occurred.

37. The United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator and the World Health Organization continued to support the national Ebola response, with a focus on security, political engagement and support for affected communities. The Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator met with President Tshisekedi, the Prime Minister, the Health Minister, local authorities, donors, civil society actors and international non-governmental organizations for coordination and advocacy. In August, the Ebola response was placed under the direction of President Tshisekedi, supported by a multisectoral committee of experts. Ebola response efforts continued to be hampered by insecurity and communal distrust, as attacks on responders and facilities persisted.

V. Comprehensive approach to protection of civilians

A. Mission-wide strategies

38. In collaboration with the Government, MONUSCO continued to rely on targeted strategies to reduce armed group violence and implement mechanisms for the protection of civilians. This is consistent with the Action for Peacekeeping commitment to pursue tailored, context-specific peacekeeping approaches to protecting civilians. The most significant progress was achieved in Ituri Province, where the commitment of national and provincial authorities, as well as MONUSCO support, allowed for the pre-cantonment of over 800 members of FRPI, while negotiations have continued towards the full demobilization of the group. MONUSCO and the United Nations country team have accompanied and supported the process since late 2017. A new community reintegration programme is being finalized through the Mission's stabilization support structures and will support the local reintegration of FRPI combatants.

39. In North Kivu, MONUSCO began a detailed review of its targeted strategy against ADF, including setting up intelligence architecture and reviewing the effectiveness of existing early warning systems. The broader protection plan is also being reviewed and will enable the Mission to more effectively address the security dynamics created by Mai-Mai actions in the Beni, Butembo and Lubero areas. In Maniema, South Kivu and Tanganyika Provinces, MONUSCO reviewed its protection strategy. The need to effectively tackle Mai-Mai Yakutumba was identified as a priority. Next steps will include workshops with United Nations partners and national authorities in Kalemie and Kindu, in preparation for the eventual withdrawal of MONUSCO from those areas.

40. MONUSCO continued to implement its protection through projection approach and undertook 19 standing combat deployments and 7,422 long-range patrols during the reporting period. Early warning systems and local protection committees, which consist of at least 30 per cent women, in hard-to-reach communities were expanded, leading to improvements in the Mission's ability to reach civilian populations. The Community Alert Network system received a monthly average of 861 early-warning alerts during the reporting period (compared with 1,257 alerts in the previous period); 80 per cent of which resulted in responses from the Government or MONUSCO. Alerts that could not be responded to mainly emanated from remote areas with limited presence of national security forces.

41. Regarding security governance, MONUSCO pursued close cooperation with FARDC. To this end, the Mission held weekly conferences with high-ranking officers on relevant topics, including international humanitarian and international human rights law. The Mission also helped FARDC institutionalize peacekeeping modules in their training curriculum. MONUSCO continued to work actively to coordinate the support for security sector reform provided by international and bilateral partners. MONUSCO also provided air transport to 114 FARDC personnel via United Nations flights. Four joint air reconnaissance flights and 14 medical evacuations were conducted on behalf of FARDC.

42. MONUSCO continued to mitigate the threat posed to civilians by explosive hazards and the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons. To this end, the Mission destroyed 122 items of unexploded ordnance. It also installed 13 weapon safes to help secure 130 State-held firearms in police stations in North Kivu Province and trained 35 members of national security services in the handling of weapons and ammunition.

B. Field-level response

43. In Masisi territory in North Kivu Province, MONUSCO established a standing combat deployment in Pinga, which supported the signing of an intercommunal agreement between residents of the Hunde and Nyange communities on 25 July. MONUSCO also deployed four joint military and civilian teams to address protection of civilians concerns. These deployments led to the surrender of 13 Congolese and 18 foreign combatants, as well as the separation of 16 children from armed groups. In response to increased insecurity and abuse against civilians in Beni territory, the Intervention Brigade intensified conduct of long-range and area domination patrols, in coordination with the FARDC, in the Beni and Kamango areas.

44. In South Kivu Province, in addition to establishing a standing combat deployment in Bibatama, MONUSCO strengthened early warning systems in the Kalehe area, successfully preventing the entrenchment of foreign armed groups. In Shabunda territory, the Mission continued to engage with community leaders to strengthen mechanisms for the prevention of sexual violence. The deployment of integrated military and civilian teams through a standing combat deployment in the Minembwe area enhanced early warning capacities and increased humanitarian access to the area. Also in Minembwe, MONUSCO facilitated dialogue between community leaders, resulting in a code of conduct on local transhumance practices. MONUSCO also deployed a joint civilian and military team in the artisanal gold exploitation areas of Lubichako, Misisi and Lulimba, helping to prevent an escalation of violence and denying armed groups access to residential areas.

45. In Maniema Province, MONUSCO established a standing combat deployment at Salamabila from 15 August to 11 September, which focused on the protection of civilians and liaison with FARDC on the conduct of operations against Mai-Mai Malaika. The deployment facilitated a technical mission to enhance the capacity of security forces in Salamabila, reinforce local protection mechanisms and encourage a return to peaceful negotiations. In Kasongo, a joint response mission delivered training for FARDC, the Congolese National Police and local security council and local protection committee members.

46. In Ituri Province, MONUSCO maintained four standing combat deployments in the Djugu area and intensified patrolling in response to continued violence against civilians. This helped protect the local population and internally displaced people, while facilitating humanitarian access. In addition, fact-finding missions were conducted to assess protection needs and to investigate alleged human rights violations by militias and State security forces. The Mission worked with the provincial authorities to establish a commission of inquiry into the violence in Djugu. MONUSCO also established a standing combat deployment close to the FRPI pre-cantonment area as a contingency.

47. In Tanganyika Province, MONUSCO helped create an environment conducive to talks between provincial authorities and Mai-Mai leadership on the root causes of the conflict. Several joint missions were conducted with authorities and influential customary leaders to areas such as Nyemba, where a preliminary dialogue was conducted with leaders of the Mai-Mai Apa na Pale. Standing combat deployments were also established in Lambo Katenga (Bendera/Kalemie territory), Kabeya Mayi (Nyunzu territory), Nyemba (West Kalemie territory) and Lyoni (Moba territory) in preparation for new community violence reduction projects to provide a community-based approach to the reintegration of ex-combatants.

48. In the Kasai area, following the initial postponement of the gubernatorial election in Sankuru, MONUSCO sent a standing combat deployment to Lodja and Lusambo. The situation in Lusambo calmed down enough to allow for its withdrawal.

In Lodja however, the deployment required further strengthening, as well as multiple mediation and advocacy missions to address tensions. MONUSCO support facilitated the resolution of a security crisis following the escape of 169 prisoners from Kananga prison during the first quarter of the year. The support included technical advice and assistance on the effective management of high-risk prisoners, in particular members of the Kamuina Nsapu militia, and capacity-building for the security personnel.

49. In support of the Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator and the national Ebola response, MONUSCO engaged with national and local authorities to promote a more conducive environment for humanitarian actors. MONUSCO supported provincial representatives and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the coordination of the response, with a specific emphasis on the sensitization of the local population on preventive measures. The Mission also scaled up its efforts to provide area security and improve access for responders and the affected population. Daily patrols were conducted between Beni and Butembo. The MONUSCO military component also provided static security to strategic locations such as the Ebola Operations Centre in Butembo and conducted day and night patrols to ensure the safety of all United Nations personnel. The Mission's police component complemented these efforts through community policing activities. In the meantime, radio Okapi continually broadcast information about Ebola preventive measures and activities.

VI. Extension of State authority

A. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

50. MONUSCO processed 165 individuals from local and foreign armed groups who volunteered for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and facilitated the release of 34 children associated with armed groups before handing them over to national child protection counterparts. Of the 165 ex-combatants, MONUSCO repatriated 32 to Rwanda and 14 to Burundi, while 21 Rwandan civilians were transferred to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and 29 Congolese combatants were handed over to national entities. The Mission continued the gender-sensitive screening of entrants to prevent women and children abducted by armed groups from being placed with them as dependants in camps.

51. MONUSCO intensified its engagement with national authorities on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and advocated a strategic shift from static demobilization structures to more flexible and tailored approaches. In addition to supporting the FRPI process, and as an interim solution towards longer-term national disarmament, MONUSCO and the United Nations country team continued to work jointly with provincial and local authorities to prepare initiatives for former combatants and communities for demobilization and community violence reduction. To date this year, nearly half of all beneficiaries of community violence reduction projects have been women, compared with 30 per cent in 2018.

B. Stabilization

52. The National Stabilization and Reconstruction Programme for conflict zones in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO launched a call for proposals through the Stabilization Coherence Fund to implement a democratic dialogue programme for inter-community conflicts in Djugu territory. The programme is a first step in expanding International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy

programming in Ituri Province following the now concluded Mambasa programme and ongoing South Irumu programme.

53. On 3 July, the National Steering Committee of the Stabilization Coherence Fund, co-chaired by the acting Minister of Planning and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, allocated funding for expanding the stabilization programme in the North Kivu Kitchanga priority zone. Expected to start in the second quarter of 2020, the programme will build on previous projects carried out over the past three years and will focus on the socioeconomic and social reintegration of at-risk youth and registered ex-combatants, ensuring higher participation of women in stabilization programming, as well as supporting local political processes aimed at reducing armed group activities.

VII. Human rights situation, justice and corrections

54. The number of human rights violations during the second quarter of 2019 dropped by 5 per cent compared with the first quarter, with MONUSCO documenting 1,479 cases. State agents, mainly FARDC soldiers and the Congolese National Police, were responsible for nearly 56 per cent of the violations. The remaining 44 per cent were committed by armed groups. The human rights situation remained most worrying in conflict-affected provinces, where over 85 per cent of all violations took place, particularly North Kivu, South Kivu, the Kasais and Tanganyika. At least 286 civilians, including 66 women, were victims of extrajudicial or summary killings.

55. The number of violations of civil and political rights and fundamental freedoms decreased further in the second quarter of 2019, to nearly half the number documented during the first quarter. Where violations occurred, they were predominantly committed by State agents, mainly the Congolese National Police. Obstacles to freedom of the press and attacks and threats against human rights defenders and other civil society actors continued to be observed. In some cases, armed groups targeted journalists and civil society members who had reported human rights abuses or supported the work of Ebola response teams. While several peaceful demonstrations were held without incident, others were suppressed by the authorities, including through lethal force.

56. In the second quarter of 2019, at least 32 people died in detention, mainly due to lack of access to appropriate medical care or malnutrition. At least 146 people escaped from detention centres across the country, with Kwango, Maniema and North Kivu Provinces being the most affected. Both figures represent a decrease from those recorded in the previous quarter.

57. MONUSCO continued to support the efforts of the Congolese authorities, which have been essential to national reconciliation and building trust between state and populations, to combat impunity and address cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations. Throughout the country, at least 18 militia members, 15 FARDC soldiers and six Congolese National Police officers were convicted of various serious crimes in the second quarter of 2019. Guidon Shimiray Mwissa, the leader of the NDC-R armed group, against whom the North Kivu military prosecutor issued an arrest warrant on 7 June on charges of crimes against humanity for rape and war crimes for recruitment of child soldiers, is still at large.

58. On 9 July, the team of international experts on the situation in Kasai engaged in an interactive dialogue on the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the forty-first session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. It noted that its recommendations to investigate and prosecute the violence of 2016 and 2017

as crimes against humanity and war crimes have not resulted in any verdicts. The Democratic Republic of the Congo authorities requested that the team of international experts continue to support transitional justice efforts in Kasai, including technical assistance to judicial authorities to investigate the violence of December 2018 in Yumbi, Mai-Ndombe Province. On 10 July, the Human Rights Council renewed the mandate of the team of international experts for another 15 months and requested the United Nations to provide technical assistance to the Government to support judicial investigations across the country.

VIII. Sexual violence

59. During the second quarter, over 300 women, 70 girls and one man were victims of various forms of conflict-related sexual violence, including rape, gang rape and forced marriage. Over half the incidents were perpetrated by armed groups in North Kivu, which was the province most affected by sexual violence, followed by Tanganyika and South Kivu.

60. Overall, armed groups were responsible for 72 per cent of the documented cases of sexual violence, while State agents, mainly FARDC soldiers, accounted for the remaining 28 per cent. Among armed groups, members of FDLR and NDC-R were the main perpetrators in North Kivu, followed by Mai-Mai Fimbo na Fimbo combatants in Tanganyika Province.

61. During the reporting period, MONUSCO carried out two protection missions in Ituri Province, with technical support from women protection advisers in preparation for a joint investigation mission. Other missions for verification and protection of conflict-related sexual violence cases were carried out in South Kivu, Kasai Central and Tshopo Provinces. These missions interacted with 416 victims and witnesses, including 173 victims of conflict-related sexual violence, and ensured referrals for medical and psychosocial assistance where needed.

62. The reporting period also saw the investigation and prosecution of emblematic cases of crimes against humanity, including conflict-related sexual violence. On 8 July, the International Criminal Court found Bosco Ntaganda guilty, beyond reasonable doubt, of 18 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in 2002 and 2003. On 18 September, the military leader of FDLR, Sylvestre Mudacumura, who was wanted by the International Criminal Court, was killed in North Kivu Province. The Sheka trial in North Kivu and the preparation of the Kokodikoko hearings in South Kivu involved approximately 175 victims of conflict-related sexual violence, as well as other human rights violations perpetrated in Mwenga and Shabunda territories.

IX. Child protection

63. During July and August, MONUSCO documented 242 grave violations against children. These included two cases of rape, one killing, two cases of maiming, one abduction, the looting of a primary school and a health post and the documentation of 234 children (31 girls, 203 boys) who had escaped or been separated from armed groups. Children were mainly separated from Kamuina Nsapu (71) in the Kasais, Twa militia (36) in Tanganyika Province, Mai-Mai Malaika (21) in Maniema Province and Mai-Mai armed groups (29) in South Kivu.

64. During the reporting period, five armed-group commanders signed unilateral declarations or road maps to end child recruitment and other grave child rights violations. Since July 2018, 25 commanders have signed such road maps with

approximately 1,200 children subsequently released. Over 120 FARDC and Congolese National Police officers were trained on the child protection mandate, the prevention of sexual violence and age verification to avoid recruitment of minors. Further, over 280 MONUSCO troops were trained on the protection of children in armed conflict. The Mission reached out to 1,820 community members through awareness-raising activities to stop and prevent child recruitment and other grave child rights violations. In addition, 78 non-State armed group focal points received training on child protection and the implementation of declarations and road maps signed by factions of armed groups against the recruitment of children.

X. Gender considerations in mandate implementation

65. During the reporting period, MONUSCO conducted workshops on gender-responsive budgeting and legislation for the newly elected provincial assembly delegates and other administrative authorities. The Mission further supported civil society efforts to promote women's political inclusion, resulting in the appointment of two female customary chiefs to the South Kivu and Kongo Central provincial assemblies. Finally, the Mission shared good practices for gender-responsiveness by State institutions with the President's adviser on youth, gender and prevention of conflict-related violence. During the reporting period, over 300 women mediators received training from MONUSCO. The Mission also trained over 436 journalists (over 40 per cent of whom were women) on gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory communication in the media.

66. MONUSCO continued to integrate gender into its security considerations. In Beni, Bukavu, Bunia, Goma and Kananga, the Mission mapped areas of heightened security needs for women, leading to reinforced patrols and surveillance in 18 locations. MONUSCO also helped ensure that specific measures for the protection of women and girls were incorporated into local security plans. To improve the living conditions of female inmates in high-risk prisons, the Mission advocated more female corrections officers, which increased to 25 per cent, and increased provision of specialized services and medical support. In addition, legal clinics on gender-based violence were set up in North Kivu, South Kivu and Kasai Central Provinces, helping to improve access to justice.

67. Internal efforts by MONUSCO towards gender parity during the reporting period included applying special measures from the system-wide strategy on gender parity to the comparative review phase of the personnel downsizing process, which resulted in improved retention of female staff. As at 31 July, about 32 per cent of international civilian staff were women.

XI. Deployment and assessment of performance of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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

68. In line with the strategic objectives outlined in Security Council resolution [2463 \(2019\)](#), the operational focus of MONUSCO centred around the protection of civilians, reducing the threat posed by armed groups and assessing the human rights situation and supporting efforts to promote accountability and fight impunity, stabilize and strengthen State institutions and facilitate humanitarian access, including in areas affected by the Ebola virus disease. The deployment of troops remained unchanged during the reporting period.

69. With a view to focusing resources on areas where the presence of armed groups poses a persistent threat to the civilian population, MONUSCO adjusted its presence by closing its antenna offices in Bandundu, Matadi, Mbandaka and Mbuji-Mayi, as well as its field offices in Dungu, Kisangani and Lubumbashi. The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office adopted measures to ensure its continued presence in Kisangani and Lubumbashi, in collaboration with the United Nations country team. MONUSCO also took measures to ensure that Radio Okapi would continue broadcasting in areas where MONUSCO offices were closed.

70. The MONUSCO police component readjusted its field presence alongside the Mission's office closures. Police personnel from closed locations were redeployed to other locations, including Bukavu, Bunia, Butembo, Goma and Uvira in order to reinforce and consolidate police presence there and support the Mission's efforts in the protection of civilians and the Ebola response effort. The Mission also redeployed a formed police unit from Lubumbashi to Bukavu. Two platoons, temporarily deployed to Butembo, provide security support for the Ebola response.

B. Assessment of performance of the Mission's uniformed personnel in protecting civilians

71. A total of 18 units were evaluated on their support for: mandate implementation; aspects related to command and control; training; discipline; and the sustainability of logistical capacities and medical support. This reflects the Mission's determination to ensure the highest level of peacekeeping performance, as stipulated in the Action For Peacekeeping initiative, including in paragraph 13 of the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. With three reviews pending finalization, 5 units were assessed as excellent and 10 as satisfactory. To improve operational standards, MONUSCO instituted training, as well as operational and logistical measures to enhance the capability of contingents to implement their mandate. In line with the emphasis on the planning and execution of joint offensive operations, the Force leadership visited sector headquarters to advise on joint operational planning, focusing specifically on the joint fight against ADF. A headquarters-based team carried out casualty evacuation stress testing, which confirmed that MONUSCO medical evacuation and casualty evacuation procedures were fit for purpose.

72. MONUSCO also evaluated six formed police units against several criteria, including: their support for mandate implementation; aspects related to command and control, training and discipline; and the sustainability of logistical capacity and medical support. All units were assessed as excellent. An evaluation of individual police officers was also implemented. As a result, the skill set for protection of civilians in urban areas was further defined, which will enable the selection of police officers with relevant experience for future deployments.

C. Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse

73. MONUSCO continued to maintain robust measures to ensure a zero-tolerance policy for all personnel on sexual exploitation and abuse. During the reporting period, 15 misconduct allegations were brought forward, of which 10 were categorized as serious. Preventive measures included training, risk assessments and patrols to enforce curfews and out-of-bounds areas. The Mission also conducted outreach activities in local communities and supported 43 community-based complaint mechanisms in localities where MONUSCO has a strong presence. These activities

reflect the Action for Peacekeeping commitment to strengthen the conduct of peacekeeping operations and personnel.

XII. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

74. During the period under review, 57 incidents with impact on the safety and security of United Nations personnel were recorded. These included 19 hazard, 20 crime and 16 civil unrest incidents. No incidents were due to armed conflict.

XIII. Observations

75. The transfer of power following the December 2018 elections represents a historic opportunity for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A sense of hope has spread across parts of the country with the advent of the new political dispensation under President Tshisekedi. I witnessed some of the positive changes taking place during my recent visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 31 August to 2 September.

76. Continued political stability and security, as well as increased State presence, in areas of conflict are critical for the consolidation of the current political transition and the advent of sustainable peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I welcome the inauguration of the new coalition government and encourage its members to continue to place the needs of the Congolese people above the pursuit of partisan interests. I urge all political actors to pursue the consensual approach that characterized the government formation process. It is incumbent on both the Government and opposition to play their part in fostering national unity and building strong institutions through sustained and inclusive political dialogue among all stakeholders.

77. I take note of the scope of the programme of the new Government, which places an emphasis on sustainable development, social justice and the delivery of basic services, and I am encouraged by the Government's anti-corruption and justice sector reforms agenda. I welcome in particular the Government's stated commitment to reform and increase the professionalism of the Congolese armed forces and other security institutions. These are essential elements of the broader strategy for addressing the current state of insecurity in some parts of the country and fighting impunity. To implement these reforms, the Government will require more resources than those currently at its disposal. In this regard, I encourage the Government to take active steps to sustainably expand the revenue base of the State and intensify its fight against corruption at all levels. I also call on bilateral and multilateral partners to increase their support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in these critical areas.

78. Regional cooperation remains key to sustainably addressing the threat posed by foreign armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and stemming the illicit flow of weapons across the Great Lakes region. I am heartened that President Tshisekedi views this as a priority. I encourage the signatories of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region to honour their respective commitments under the Framework and build on the present momentum to address the root causes of conflict and work together to promote lasting peace and sustainable development in the region.

79. I am deeply concerned by the deteriorating security situation in North Kivu and continued insecurity in South Kivu and Ituri Provinces. Negative forces continue to prey on civilians and undermine regional stability. Addressing the threat posed by these armed groups remains an urgent priority for the Government of the Democratic

Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO, including through credible accountability processes. During my visit, President Tshisekedi and I agreed that MONUSCO and FARDC should work together more effectively to tackle foreign armed groups. Resolute action is needed against ADF, which continues to pose a serious threat to civilians. I remain convinced that MONUSCO still has a critical role to play in tackling the security and humanitarian challenges facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I welcome the opportunity to revitalize the Mission's cooperation with the Government in pursuit of this goal.

80. A sustained focus on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is key to the country's stability. After the spontaneous demobilization of several armed groups this year, seizing the opportunities offered by a more conducive political environment, and the momentum for change brought by new national and provincial leaders, is clearly the way forward. Past experience suggests that the sustainable reintegration of former combatants would be best achieved through a flexible, community-based approach centred on supporting the crucial role played by women. I call upon the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to continue to create a conducive environment for fostering the voluntary surrender of combatants and their sustainable disarmament, demobilization and reintegration into their home communities. MONUSCO and the United Nations country team stand ready to work closely with the Government and provide it with the necessary support.

81. I remain concerned by the ongoing Ebola epidemic in Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has the potential to spread to neighbouring countries. I call upon all stakeholders, including national and local authorities, civil society, women's organizations and the international community, to spare no effort in putting an end to the epidemic. I commend the leadership of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the work of the World Health Organization, MONUSCO, the United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator and all other partners. I pay homage to the brave men and women on the front lines of the Ebola response, whose remarkable work I was able to witness first hand during my recent visit to Mangina in North Kivu. The United Nations remains fully committed to playing its part in bringing the Ebola outbreak to an end. Beyond Ebola, we must not forget that preventable diseases such as measles, cholera and malaria continue to claim lives and must be addressed with equal urgency. I renew my call upon donors and partners to provide the necessary resources to close the humanitarian funding gap, including at the international conference on public health that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo intends to host in Goma this November.

82. 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 for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

