

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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## COI QUERY

**Country of Origin**

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

**Title**

Situation of indigenous peoples, particularly in Kinshasa

**Reference period**

January 2022 – 5 March 2024

**Topic(s)**

1. [Background information](#)
2. [Treatment by the state](#)
3. [Treatment by non-state actors](#)
4. [Availability of state protection](#)

**Date of completion**

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## COI QUERY RESPONSE - Democratic Republic of the Congo

### Situation of indigenous peoples, particularly in Kinshasa

#### 1. Background information

DRC is a multiethnic country with over 200 ethnic groups, of which the majority are the Bantu people.<sup>1</sup> The four major ethnic groups in DRC are the Bantu, the Nilotic, the Sudanese, and the Pygmy.<sup>2</sup> According to the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), the term 'Indigenous Pygmy people' is recognised by the Congolese government and refers to the Mbuti, Baka, and Batwa peoples.<sup>3</sup>

According to estimates, the population of indigenous peoples in DRC is estimated between 750 000 and 2 000 000, but a precise figure is unknown.<sup>4</sup> The indigenous Pygmy people are closely connected to the country's rainforest, but today they live across the whole country in (semi)nomadic groups.<sup>5</sup> They are hunters and gatherers<sup>6</sup> and practice their own medicine.<sup>7</sup>

According to the US Department of State (USDOS), ethnic groups belonging to the indigenous population of DRC are 'collectively called "pygmies" by many residents'.<sup>8</sup> Mongabay, an environmental science news platform, indicated that the Batwa people were 'previously known as Pygmies'.<sup>9</sup> Under president Mobutu Sese Seko, when DRC was still Zaire, the term Pygmy, considered derogatory, was banned.<sup>10</sup> According to Human Rights Watch, the historically used term 'pygmy people' refers to the short stature of the people and today it carries a pejorative meaning.<sup>11</sup> The same source further explains that 'even though the term is still often used in a condescending way, Indigenous peoples' groups have in recent years approved the term to unify around their common challenges that characterize their plight and their treatment by non-Indigenous communities, commonly referred to as Bantu'.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> US, CIA, The World Factbook, Congo, Democratic Republic of the, updated 27 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>2</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>3</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>4</sup> HRW, Congo's Indigenous Rights Bill Stalls, 28 October 2022, [url](#); IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>5</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>6</sup> AP News, An alarming humanitarian crisis and massive sexual violence wrack eastern Congo, UN official says, 6 September 2023, [url](#); HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#); IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>7</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>8</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 38

<sup>9</sup> Mongabay, After 14 years of advocacy, the DRC president finally signs new Indigenous peoples law (commentary), 16 November 2022, [url](#)

<sup>10</sup> MRG, Batwa and Bambuti in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, updated April 2022, [url](#)

<sup>11</sup> HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#)

<sup>12</sup> HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#)

The Batwa people were expelled from their traditional homeland in the 1970s during the creation of the Kahuzi Biega National Park (PNKB), after which they became ‘landless refugees’.<sup>13</sup> In 2018, some Batwa returned to their traditional homeland in the park area.<sup>14</sup> As reported by Reuters, ‘a large-scale return to the park in 2018 led to a three-year campaign of forced expulsion’.<sup>15</sup> It is estimated that some 10 000 Batwa were living in the PNKB area in 2023.<sup>16</sup>

The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights described the indigenous peoples in DRC as ‘those particular groups who have been left on the margins of development, who are perceived negatively by the dominant mainstream development paradigms and whose cultures and lives are subject to discrimination and contempt’.<sup>17</sup> According to Human Rights Watch, ‘[DR] Congo’s Indigenous peoples have long suffered from stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. They have faced social exclusion, segregation, disenfranchisement, and human rights violations. They often lack access to justice, health services, and education’.<sup>18</sup> Mongabay indicated that there are 45 indigenous organisations in the country working to improve the rights of the indigenous people.<sup>19</sup>

Information on the situation of indigenous Pygmy people in Kinshasa could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

## 2. Treatment by the state

According to USDOS, the constitution of the DRC stipulates that ‘no one may be discriminated against on the basis of his race, ethnicity, tribe, or cultural or linguistic minority’.<sup>20</sup>

In a report published in March 2022, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) noted a lack of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law in DRC and expressed concern about the absence of measures that could address ‘the de facto discrimination in the effective enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights’ by indigenous peoples, in particular the Batwa.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Mongabay, What went wrong with conservation at Kahuzi-Biega National Park and how to transform it (commentary), 27 January 2022, [url](#)

<sup>14</sup> IfE, What Happens in the Park: Attacks on Indigenous People in and around Kahuzi-Biega National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, updated January 2022, [url](#), p. 2; Reuters, Broken promises drive exiled hunter-gatherers back to Congolese gorilla refuge, 2 August 2023, [url](#)

<sup>15</sup> Reuters, Broken promises drive exiled hunter-gatherers back to Congolese gorilla refuge, 2 August 2023, [url](#)

<sup>16</sup> Reuters, Broken promises drive exiled hunter-gatherers back to Congolese gorilla refuge, 2 August 2023, [url](#)

<sup>17</sup> HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#)

<sup>18</sup> HRW, Congo’s Indigenous Rights Bill Stalls, 28 October 2022, [url](#)

<sup>19</sup> Mongabay, After 14 years of advocacy, the DRC president finally signs new Indigenous peoples law (commentary), 16 November 2022, [url](#)

<sup>20</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 37

<sup>21</sup> CESCR, Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 28 March 2022, [url](#), para. 26

According to Human Rights Watch, President Felix Tshisekedi's administration has expressed 'commitment to advancing the rights of Indigenous peoples'.<sup>22</sup> In November 2022, President Tshisekedi signed the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Indigenous Pygmy Peoples.<sup>23,24</sup> Sources indicated that the law entered into force in 2022<sup>25</sup> or in February 2023.<sup>26</sup>

The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has described the law as a 'major legislative step'.<sup>27</sup> The law prohibits 'discrimination, slavery and forced labour',<sup>28</sup> and provides land rights<sup>29</sup>, preservation of religious and cultural heritage<sup>30</sup>, the use of traditional pharmacopoeia,<sup>31</sup> and free access to health care, education, and legal support.<sup>32</sup>

While the law guarantees right to enjoy the lands that indigenous people 'own, occupy or use'<sup>33</sup>, including their natural resources<sup>34</sup>, it does not give access to traditional land that has been given away or designated as a protected area, nor does it provide for reparations for historical expulsions.<sup>35</sup> According to a report by the Rift Valley Institute (RVI), a non-profit organisation working towards a better understanding of local issues in central and eastern Africa, in November 2023, the Congolese government enacted a new land policy to implement the new land law, including the safeguard of land rights for the indigenous Pygmy

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<sup>22</sup> HRW, World Report 2023 - Democratic Republic of Congo, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

<sup>23</sup> HRW, World Report 2023 - Democratic Republic of Congo, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

<sup>24</sup> Adopting different terminology, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities and Minorities in Africa of the ACHPR refers to the same law as 'Law on Recognition of Customary Rights of the Indigenous Batwa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)'. See : ACHPR, Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities and Minorities in Africa - 75OS, 20 May 2023, [url](#). The original name of the law in French is Loi n°22/ 03/ du 15 juillet 2022 portant protection et promotion des Droits des peuples autochtones pygmies. See: Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes Summary; Democratic Republic of the Congo – July to December 2022, 1 January 2023, [url](#)

<sup>25</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>26</sup> African Arguments, "I'd give anything to go back": Pygmy communities face eviction in Virunga, 1 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>27</sup> UNHRC, Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 25 August 2023, [url](#), para. 55

<sup>28</sup> UNHRC, Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 25 August 2023, [url](#), para. 55

<sup>29</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#); USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>30</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>31</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#); USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>32</sup> Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes Summary; Democratic Republic of the Congo – July to December 2022, 1 January 2023, [url](#); USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>33</sup> HRW, World Report 2023 - Democratic Republic of Congo, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

<sup>34</sup> HRW, World Report 2023 - Democratic Republic of Congo, 12 January 2023, [url](#); IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>35</sup> WRM, The Batwa and the Kahuzi-Biega National Park in the DRC: Will the new law on Indigenous Peoples help the Batwa recover their land?, 25 October 2023, [url](#)

people.<sup>36</sup> Additional information on the implementation of the law could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

According to a December 2022 overview of DRC, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), a US-based non-profit organisation that works to improve legal environment for civil society organisations around the world, indicated that laws meant to protect indigenous peoples were not enforced in practice.<sup>37</sup> The USDOS country report indicated, for example, that the law guaranteeing 10 % of the profit from the use of their land was not enforced in practice.<sup>38</sup>

According to USDOS, indigenous peoples lack representation in the state institutions<sup>39</sup> and according to Freedom House, they are 'effectively missing' from the political life.<sup>40</sup>

## **2.1. Incidents involving state actors**

Information on incidents in the reference period involving state actors was scarce among the sources consulted by EUAA within time constraints of this query. However, the following information may be relevant.

- In July 2021, Batwa people living near the PNKB were attacked by soldiers and park guards.<sup>41</sup>
- According to the USDOS report covering 2022, there were reports that state security forces committed human rights abuses against indigenous peoples that included 'unlawful killings, looting, and rape'.<sup>42</sup>
- According to a report by Initiative for Equality (IfE), a global network of advocates for economic, social and political equality, updated in January 2022, providing an overview of violent incidents by park guards and soldiers against the Batwa people in the Kahuzi Biega National Park (PNKB) in the period of 2017-2021, 12 Batwa villages were burned, 13 villages displaced, 29 people killed, 16 wounded or threatened, and 5 cases of sexual violence against women were recorded.<sup>43</sup>
- In April 2022, MRG (Minority Rights Group International) released a report documenting abuses against the Batwa people in PNKB, including instances where park guards and Congolese soldiers 'carried out large-scale acts of organized violence targeting the

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<sup>36</sup> RVI, All Authorities have eaten; A History and Political Economy of Urban Land in Bukavu, March 2023, [url](#), p. 52

<sup>37</sup> ICNL, Civic Freedom Monitor: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 23 December 2022, [url](#)

<sup>38</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>39</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 30

<sup>40</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2023 - Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2023, [url](#)

<sup>41</sup> Mongabay, After 14 years of advocacy, the DRC president finally signs new Indigenous peoples law (commentary), 16 November 2022, [url](#); MRG, To Purge the Forest by Force: Robert Flummerfelt Organized violence against Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, April 2022, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>42</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>43</sup> IfE, What Happens in the Park: Attacks on Indigenous People in and around Kahuzi-Biega National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, updated January 2022, [url](#), p. 2

indigenous Batwa community living in villages on their ancestral lands inside the park'.<sup>44</sup> According to the report, this violence took place in three phases: July-August 2019, July 2021, and November-December 2021, and had 'the apparent objective of forcibly expelling Batwa from inside the park'.<sup>45</sup> The attacks included the killing and maiming of civilians, the raping of women, and the burning of villages.<sup>46</sup> According to the report, at least 20 Batwa were killed during these periods.<sup>47</sup>

- In June 2022, some indigenous peoples were evicted from the Virunga National Park, according to media reports.<sup>48</sup>
- In January 2024, sources reported on violent attacks on the Batwa and their eviction from the Kahuzi-Biega National Park (PNKB)<sup>49</sup> by park authorities and soldiers, under the pretext of 'fighting insurgency'.<sup>50</sup>

### 3. Treatment by non-state actors

#### 3.1. *Treatment by society*

Sources reported that indigenous peoples in DRC face discrimination and exclusion,<sup>51</sup> and are considered 'one of the most marginalized and poorest groups in the DRC'.<sup>52</sup> According to the USDOS report covering 2022, 'political, social, and economic discrimination and exclusion of Indigenous peoples drove conflict throughout the country, most notably in Tanganyika Province, and around KahuziBiega National Park in South Kivu Province'.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> MRG, To Purge the Forest by Force: Robert Flummerfelt Organized violence against Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, April 2022, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>45</sup> MRG, To Purge the Forest by Force: Robert Flummerfelt Organized violence against Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, April 2022, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>46</sup> MRG, To Purge the Forest by Force: Robert Flummerfelt Organized violence against Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, April 2022, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>47</sup> MRG, To Purge the Forest by Force: Robert Flummerfelt Organized violence against Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, April 2022, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>48</sup> African Arguments, "I'd give anything to go back": Pygmy communities face eviction in Virunga, 1 March 2024, [url](#); BNN Breaking, In the Shadows of Virunga: DRC's Pygmy Community Battles for Their Ancestral Land Amid Legal Protections, 26 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>49</sup> ACHPR, African Commission sends urgent letter of appeal to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) calling for cessation of the violence and eviction of members of the Batwa indigenous population in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park (PNKB), 2 January 2024, [url](#); Land is Life, Batwa people under attack again: for attempting to return to traditional lands in eastern Congo (DRC), 30 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>50</sup> Land is Life, Batwa people under attack again: for attempting to return to traditional lands in eastern Congo (DRC), 30 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>51</sup> CESCR, Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 28 March 2022, [url](#), para. 14; HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#); USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>52</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23 March 2023, [url](#)

<sup>53</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39



Discrimination against indigenous peoples has been described as ‘widespread’<sup>54</sup> and ‘pervasive’.<sup>55</sup> Among the reported challenges they have faced are poverty,<sup>56</sup> discrimination in the healthcare and education,<sup>57</sup> limited access to services,<sup>58</sup> loss of land<sup>59</sup> and evictions,<sup>60</sup> and violence.<sup>61</sup> Lives of the indigenous people have been further negatively impacted by deforestation<sup>62</sup> and instability in eastern DRC<sup>63</sup>.

Furthermore, USDOS reported about the death threats and violence by a variety of actors, including ‘illegal loggers and miners, commercial bushmeat hunters, wildlife traffickers, and armed groups’.<sup>64</sup> The same source further noted the kidnapping and the subjecting of indigenous peoples into forced labour and slavery by surrounding tribes and rebel groups.<sup>65</sup>

According to sources, indigenous peoples often live in remote areas that are hardly accessible.<sup>66</sup> According to Human Rights Watch, after losing their traditional ways of life, they ‘live on the margins of society in extreme poverty’.<sup>67</sup> According to a report by Reuters, the Batwa people live near the PNKB ‘in makeshift villages, struggling to survive without the land,

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<sup>54</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>55</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2023 - Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2023, [url](#)

<sup>56</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, n.d., [url](#); WRM, The Batwa and the Kahuzi-Biega National Park in the DRC: Will the new law on Indigenous Peoples help the Batwa recover their land?, 25 October 2023, [url](#); Mongabay, What went wrong with conservation at Kahuzi-Biega National Park and how to transform it (commentary), 27 January 2022, [url](#); USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>57</sup> HRW, Congo’s Indigenous Rights Bill Stalls, 28 October 2022, [url](#); USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 40

<sup>58</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2023 - Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2023, [url](#)

<sup>59</sup> ACHPR, Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities and Minorities in Africa - 75OS, 20 May 2023, [url](#); HRW, Congo’s Indigenous Rights Bill Stalls, 28 October 2022, [url](#)

<sup>60</sup> African Arguments, “I’d give anything to go back”: Pygmy communities face eviction in Virunga, 1 March 2024, [url](#); HRW, Congo’s Indigenous Rights Bill Stalls, 28 October 2022, [url](#); Land is Life, Batwa people under attack again: for attempting to return to traditional lands in eastern Congo (DRC), 30 January 2024, [url](#); Reuters, Broken promises drive exiled hunter-gatherers back to Congolese gorilla refuge, 2 August 2023, [url](#)

<sup>61</sup> ACHPR, African Commission sends urgent letter of appeal to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) calling for cessation of the violence and eviction of members of the Batwa indigenous population in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park (PNKB), 2 January 2024, [url](#); IfE, What Happens in the Park: Attacks on Indigenous People in and around Kahuzi-Biega National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, updated January 2022, [url](#), p. 2; Land is Life, Batwa people under attack again: for attempting to return to traditional lands in eastern Congo (DRC), 30 January 2024, [url](#); MRG, To Purge the Forest by Force: Robert Flummerfelt Organized violence against Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, April 2022, [url](#), p. 3; USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>62</sup> France24, ‘Dependent on the forest’: The fight for indigenous peoples’ rights in the Congo Basin, 8 August 2023, [url](#)

<sup>63</sup> AP News, An alarming humanitarian crisis and massive sexual violence wrack eastern Congo, UN official says, 6 September 2023, [url](#)

<sup>64</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>65</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>66</sup> HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#); USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>67</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, n.d., [url](#)



healthcare, and other support'.<sup>68</sup> According to the USDOS report on DRC covering 2022, discrimination against indigenous peoples continued in some parts of the country, in particular in Equateur, Kasai-Oriental, and Haut-Katanga provinces.<sup>69</sup>

### **3.2. Incidents involving non-state actors**

The following are among the incidents involving non-state actors, as reported by sources:

- Without providing additional information, USDOS indicated that 'longstanding ethnic tensions – often revolving around land rights – fuelled some community violence' in the country.<sup>70</sup>
- MRG reported that an ethnic conflict took place between the Batwa and Luba peoples in the Katanga province between 2014 and 2017.<sup>71</sup> The conflict killed over 200 people and displaced around 100 000.<sup>72</sup>
- In February 2021, the ethnic Nkundo group attacked the indigenous Iyke people, who are a part of Batwa, close to the Salonga National Park in Tshuapa province, leaving at least 66 Iyke people killed and over 1 000 houses destroyed.<sup>73</sup>

## **4. Availability of state protection**

Information on availability of state protection was scarce among the sources consulted by EUAA within time constraints of this query. However, the following information may be relevant.

According to USDOS, the authorities did not effectively protect the civil and political rights of the indigenous population.<sup>74</sup>

The April 2022 MRG report indicated that authorities have failed to investigate allegations of human rights abuses committed against the Batwa, denying any direct violence against them, and stating that they were conducting operations against armed groups active in the PNKB area.<sup>75</sup> USDOS similarly indicated that a commission set up by the park authorities to investigate the alleged killings concluded that guards 'conducted operations to expel civilians from illegally occupied protected land' and 'denied all allegations of arbitrary killings and

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<sup>68</sup> Reuters, Broken promises drive exiled hunter-gatherers back to Congolese gorilla refuge, 2 August 2023, [url](#)

<sup>69</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 30

<sup>70</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 37

<sup>71</sup> MRG, Batwa and Bambuti in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, updated April 2022, [url](#)

<sup>72</sup> IWGIA, Indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>73</sup> HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#)

<sup>74</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 39

<sup>75</sup> MRG, To Purge the Forest by Force: Robert Flummerfelt Organized violence against Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, April 2022, [url](#), pp. 41-42



argued that the eco-guards did not engage in systematic attacks against civilians'.<sup>76</sup> According to an Al Jazeera article, authors of the commission went into hiding following 'credible threats to their lives'.<sup>77</sup> Further information on the investigation of the abuses documented by the report could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

Regarding incidents of the ethnic conflict between the Iyoke and Nkundo from February 2021, Human Rights Watch reported that authorities failed to investigate, and the case was closed without anyone being charged.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>77</sup> Al Jazeera, German-funded inquiry into DRC atrocities slammed as 'cover-up', 23 June 2022, [url](#)

<sup>78</sup> HRW, DR Congo: Neglected Massacre of Indigenous Group, 9 February 2022, [url](#)

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