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**PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT :
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

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PROFILE SUMMARY

Profile Summary: DR Congo: stabilisation of political situation raises hope for millions of displaced people (Feb 04)

Since the mid-1990s, millions of Congolese have fled their homes to escape fighting between rebel groups and the national government in a complex conflict which has, at times, involved as many as nine neighboring states. More than 3 million people have died as a result of the conflict which was accompanied by widespread human rights violations, including cannibalism, systematic killings, and rape. The UN estimates that 3.4 million people currently remain displaced, although the figure could be much higher since many of the displaced are not registered.

Violence flared in May and June 2003, with hundreds of thousands fleeing fighting in the north-eastern district of Ituri. The situation stabilised in the second part of the year, following the establishment of a transitional government which incorporated several rebel groups; and the strengthening of international peacekeeping operations. As a result, IDPs got better access to assistance and many thousands started to return home. Despite these positive developments, many pockets of insecurity remain, as militias carry on roaming freely and targeting civilians. Displacement has thus continued, albeit at a slower pace. A comprehensive response to IDPs' protection and assistance needs, as well as a concerted return strategy by international actors, is desperately needed.

Background of displacement

While the eastern province of North Kivu was the stage of ethnic clashes which caused the displacement of thousands in the early 1990s, internal displacement in the DRC (formerly Zaire) became particularly widespread during fighting in 1996 and 1998. The underlying causes of displacement have been the disintegration of the state, which started long before the 1996 demise of President Mobutu, and the subsequent competition by various ethnic groups for political and economic power in their respective provinces. A series of rebel groups, more or less closely linked to outside actors such as Uganda and Rwanda, have competed to control large areas of DRC. These groups have repeatedly clashed among themselves, as well as with the Kinshasa government and foreign troops.

Civilians have borne the brunt of the violence, often being targeted for ethnic or political reasons. Their meager resources have been preyed upon, children have been enrolled in the army, and women and girls have been used as sex slaves by combatants. Armed groups have also actively displaced people in order to access DRC's abundant natural resources, like in the Kivus and Maniema (APPG Nov 02).

During the clashes in Ituri District in 2003, many people walked for days to put as much distance as possible between themselves and the fighting. Most IDPs live with host communities, or hide in forests. Increasingly, however, IDP camps have been set up, as relatives and friends are unable to cope with the influx of people, particularly in Ituri, North Kivu and Katanga.

Sharp increase in IDPs since the mid 1990's

1996 Over 400,000 people were temporarily displaced, following the campaign by Laurent Kabila's forces, supported by Uganda and Rwanda, against the regime of President Mobutu (USCR 97, p.107).

1998 Over 500,000 people fled fighting, in the wake of a rebellion organised and supported by Rwanda and Uganda against President Laurent Kabila's new regime (UN Dec 98, p.14).

1999 The number of IDPs reached one million, as violence continued despite the signing of a cease-fire agreement between the DRC government, its allies Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia, and former opponents Rwanda and Uganda (UN SC 17 Jan 00, para. 24).

2001 The number of IDPs reached 2 million, as fighting continued following the accession of Kabila's son Joseph to power (UN OCHA 30 Sept 01).

2002 Over 2.7 million people remained displaced, as fighting among militias intensified following the withdrawal of most foreign troops from the DRC. At the end of the year, the Kinshasa government and opposition groups agreed to establish a government of national unity (UN OCHA 15 Aug 03).

2003 Internal displacement reached 3.4 million, as massacres of civilians and clashes among various groups continued throughout the year. Hopes for an improvement in the situation were raised by the establishment of a transitional government which included former belligerent groups in June 2003 (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p5).

Current phase of displacement

Progress for IDPs remained fragile as sporadic fighting continued to erupt in various parts of eastern DRC, particularly in Ituri, North and South Kivus, Katanga and Maniema by the end of 2003. The continuing violence not only hindered major return movements, but created new displacement. There was an increase of approximately 700,000 IDPs in 2003, bringing the total of IDPs to 3.4 million (UN OCHA 15 Aug 03). This was mainly due to the crisis in Ituri, where up to a quarter of the four million inhabitants had fled to other parts of the province and to North Kivu. Ituri has largely remained under the control of rival militias despite the strengthening of the UN peacekeeping force MONUC (United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo) in July 2003. Armed groups have reportedly mixed with IDPs in camps in Bunia town, causing security threats (Reuters 7 Sept 03, UN OCHA 9 Jan 04). In Maniema, many Mai Mai fighters have not given up their weapons and have established roadblocks on several axes around the main town, Kindu (OCHA 26 Dec 03). In South Kivu, fighting between Mai Mai fighters and a Rwandan rebel group resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians in November 2003 (UN OCHA 4 Nov 03). The UN, meanwhile, says the looting of DRC's natural resources has continued despite the establishment of the transitional government (UN SC 23 Oct 03).

Physical security

During 2002 and 2003, the UN reported unprecedented levels of violence by armed factions in eastern DRC, including cannibalism, systematic killings, rape and lootings (UN News Service 31 July 03). Since 1998, hundreds of thousands of girls and women - many of whom were displaced - have been raped. In 2003 alone, thousands of women were reported to have been raped in the Kivus, Maniema and Ituri. The UN Agency UNIFEM also denounced sexual mutilation and cannibalism by various armed groups against Pygmy women (UN News Service 4 Nov 03). Rape has been used extensively as a weapon of war by most of the forces involved in the conflict (HRW June 02, AI 27 Nov 03). Fighters also seem to believe that sex with young girls will make them invulnerable (AFP 13 Nov 03). With the improvement of the peace process, thousands of women have come forward for help, but there is a dire lack of appropriate medical and psychological treatment available. Few of those responsible have been brought to justice.

Many displaced children have been forced into the conflict. More than 10,000 children have been recruited by different parties to the conflict (Oxfam Aug 01, p.14). In Ituri, Save the Children said that it was difficult to escape the impression that the town of Bunia had been taken over by children, who were used by local militias to terrorise its residents (SCF-UK 9 June 03). Girls too are recruited, and often suffer both sexual abuse and forced labour (AI 9 Sept 03).

Humanitarian conditions

The humanitarian situation in eastern DRC remains desperate, as millions lack access to basic infrastructure (health centres, schools and roads), potable water, food, seeds, tools, clothes and straw to build houses.

Displaced people continue to suffer from high rates of death and illness due to war. While the most alarming humanitarian crisis was unfolding in Ituri in 2003, civilians continued to live in crisis conditions in many parts of the DRC. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) estimates that 3.3 million people have died as a result of the war since 1998 (IRC 18 Apr 03).

With DRC's collapsed healthcare structures, displaced people are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases. In Maniema Province, for example, 80 percent of healthcare structures have been destroyed during the fighting or subsequent looting (OCHA 2 Jan 04). Displaced people also suffer great exposure to HIV/AIDS infection as a result of the conflict. Many lack the means to protect themselves from infection as well as information about its transmission. In eastern provinces, up to 20 per cent of the population may be infected with HIV (IRIN 5 Nov 03).

The displacement of farmers, the burning of fields and food stocks, and the destruction of infrastructure have caused widespread malnutrition in eastern DRC, an area with considerable agricultural potential. According to the UN, nearly two-thirds of the population is estimated to suffer from food shortages (UN News Service 18 June 03). Between ten and 30 per cent of the population in some areas of Katanga, Orientale, and North and South Kivu suffer from acute malnutrition. Women and children are worst affected (IRIN 6 Nov 02).

Without food, medicines and shelter, displaced people have also been denied a range of other essential needs. Few have hope of attending school under the current war-torn education system, reducing their prospects for a more secure future. In Eastern DRC, for example, up to 70 per cent of children have no access to education (IFRC 17 July 02).

Improved access and return

Despite this bleak picture, there have been some positive developments for the displaced. Levels of fighting have reduced substantially following the withdrawal of foreign troops, the establishment of the transitional government, and the integration of former rebel groups into it. With the peace process taking hold, access

to many IDPs in remote areas has improved over the past months. Also, thousands of IDPs recently returned to areas they judged to be safe. Over 25,000 people, for example, have returned from the bush in Maniema, while in Bunia many who were hiding in the forests or had found refuge in North Kivu returned home (OCHA 21 Nov 03).

There is, however, no governmental or international plan for return, and few of those who go home receive any assistance, although they have generally lost all their possessions during displacement. A UN mission to Walikale, North Kivu, found in November 2003 that 10,000 civilians who had returned to their largely destroyed villages after months of hiding in the surrounding bush were in desperate need of help. For they could not access their fields, in fear of armed groups who continued to pillage their crops (UN OCHA 24 Nov 03).

National and international response

At the national level, the newly created Ministry for Solidarity and Humanitarian Affairs has to find solutions to answer the needs of millions of displaced. It plans to establish local offices throughout the country, but it remains to be seen if sufficient resources will be dedicated to making this happen.

The response of humanitarian agencies, which is so critical in this situation, is currently insufficient. UN agencies, national and international NGOs and the ICRC are providing IDPs with food and non-food items, health care, and emergency education. Some support child protection and reintegration activities for the displaced. With the improvement in the political situation, humanitarian agencies, like the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have recently opened offices in isolated locations to get closer to displaced communities. In several provinces, such as South Kivu and Katanga, UN and NGOs have set up IDP protection groups which register IDPs, monitor their needs, and use this information for a common approach. But the response remains inadequate. Logistical obstacles remain due to the sheer size of the country, the lack of roads and the high degree of geographic dispersion of IDPs. The Goma region in North Kivu, for example, receives most international assistance, while few agencies are present in the isolated province of Maniema.

Humanitarian agencies also need stronger financial backing from donors to help IDPs. The 2004 UN Consolidated Appeal amounts to US\$ 170 million, compared to US\$ 268 million for 2003 (OCHA 18 Nov 03, 19 Nov 02). It focuses on reducing vulnerabilities in affected communities by maximising coordination mechanisms to facilitate the transition between relief and development. This appeal, it is hoped, will generate a better response than the 2002 and 2003 appeals, which were only about 45 percent funded (OCHA 04 "Financial Tracking"). There are encouraging signs, as major donors pledged a significant increase in their assistance to the DRC following the establishment of the transitional government in mid-2003.

A stronger UN security presence may also help displaced people. Following the upsurge of violence in Ituri in mid-2003, the UN Security Council authorised the MONUC peace-keeping force, which had been present in the country since 1999, to use all necessary means to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence in Ituri and in the Kivus, under the "Chapter VII" of the UN Charter. Since June 2003, MONUC has also monitored the compliance of the arms embargo which was imposed by the UN Security Council on the Ituri region and the Kivu Province in order to diminish the number of small arms available in the region. It remains to be seen if the MONUC force will have the capacity to cover these regions effectively enough to help protect IDPs and other vulnerable populations.

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

Political developments

DRC political developments- Chronology: 1870-2002

1870s: Commissioned by King Leopold II of Belgium, the explorer H.M Stanley establishes the King's authority in the Congo basin.

1884-85: Leopold's claim on the Congo is formalized at the Berlin Conference. The "Congo Free State" was created as a personal fiefdom of the Belgian Crown.

1908: The Congo becomes a Belgian colony.

1960: The Congo becomes an independent state, with Patrice Lumumba as Prime Minister and Joseph Kasavubu as President.

1961: Lumumba is murdered, reportedly with US and Belgian complicity.

1965: President Kasavubu is ousted by General Mobutu, army chief of staff.

1990: Mobutu announces multiparty democracy but keeps significant powers.

1991: Anti-Mobutu sentiments explode in mass rioting and looting by unpaid soldiers in Kinshasa.

1992: Riots and looting by unpaid soldiers in Goma, Kisangani, Kolwezi; ethnic tensions rise between the Hunde, Nyanga and Nande and the Banyarwanda in North Kivu.

1993: Ethnic strife between the local populations and the Banyarwanda breaks out in Masisi area. The coup in Burundi against new Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye results in the arrival of some 80,000 Burundian refugees in Zaire.

1994: Genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda. Following the Tutsi led counter offensive, one million refugees, mainly Hutus, cross the border with Zaire.

1995: Renewal of the ethnic war in Masisi.

1996: Revolt of the Zairian Tutsis "Banyamulenge" in South Kivu; the ADFL's (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire) "Liberation" war led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila begins from the east.

1997: Mobutu is ousted by the ADFL forces and flees in exile to Morocco.

1998: Congolese rebel forces, backed by Rwanda and Uganda, start attacking Kabila's forces and conquer the east of the country. Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe come to Kabila's aid and push the rebels back from Kinshasa.

1999: First confrontation of Rwandan and Ugandan troops in Kisangani. Signature of a cease-fire agreement by all six of the countries involved in the conflict; MONUC observers are deployed in the DRC.

2000: Six-day war between Rwanda and Uganda in Kisangani.

2001: President Kabila is shot dead by one of his bodyguards; his son Joseph takes over.

2002: Eruption of volcano Nyiragongo in Goma. Accord signed between Presidents Kabila and Kagame of Rwanda committing Rwandan to withdraw its troops from the DRC and Kinshasa to address Rwanda's security concerns in the DRC." (MSF 19 Nov 2002, p64)

Six foreign armies from neighbouring countries have been involved in war in DRC (1996-1999)

"The humanitarian crisis is the result of a complex conflict. The war in the DRC has involved six foreign armies from neighbouring countries, together with a range of foreign and domestic rebel and militia forces. Its roots are embedded in the history of the Great Lakes Region, although much of the current conflict stems from the violence and mass displacements unleashed by the Rwandan genocide of 1994. Over two million people, mainly Hutus, became refugees in the neighbouring countries of Tanzania and the DRC (then Zaire). Refugees in the DRC numbered some 1.2m and included many of those responsible for the genocide. They were mostly located near the towns of Goma and Bukavu, and it was here that the seeds of the current conflict were sown – with the international community partly to blame. The refugee camps were situated too close to the Rwandan border, rather than 50km away as recommended under international law. This encouraged incursions back into Rwanda by the Interahamwe militia, whose presence inside the camps went largely unchallenged for at least the first nine months.

The presence of the Interahamwe in the Kivus region of the DRC has not been the only source of conflict for the wider Great Lakes Region. Operating in the same area, but further south, the *Forces de défense pour la démocratie* (FDD) have battled against the regime in Burundi. In the northwest, the presence of another rebel force was seen as a direct threat to the Ugandan government in Kampala.

In September 1996, a rebellion broke out in the Kivus, led by Laurent Kabila and his *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL), and heavily backed by the Rwandan and Ugandan armies. All of these parties wanted to overthrow the Mobutu regime in Kinshasa and neutralise the threat of the various foreign militias. However, while the rebellion was successful, with Kabila acceding to power in May 1997, the problems of regional security continued.

Relations between the new regime in Kinshasa and its former allies of Rwanda and Uganda deteriorated as the latter accused the Kabila government of failing to deal with the militias and even of arming them, thus threatening the security of both Rwanda and Uganda. In August 1998 a new conflict broke out, with the Rwandan and Ugandan governments providing support to the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD) in an attempt to overthrow the government in Kinshasa. Loosely allied to the RCD was the *Mouvement pour la libération du Congo* (MLC) of Pierre Bemba, based in the province of Equateur. In response to this threat, the Kabila government called upon the support of fellow SADC (Southern African Development Community) governments, claiming that DRC sovereignty had been violated. As a result, the governments of Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and Chad sent in troops to prevent the overthrow of the government. Burundi also became involved on the side of Rwanda and Uganda, for similar reasons." (APPG Nov 2002, pp8-9)

Lusaka cease-fire agreement and new President following assassination of Laurent Kabila in January 2001 (1999-2001)

- President Kabila, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia signing cease-fire agreement on 10 July 1999 in Lusaka
- Major rebel forces signing agreement on 31 August 1999
- Continued stalemate means absence of solutions to the problem of massive displacement
- Assassination of President Kabila on 16 January 2001 moved the peace process in a new direction (2001)

"The seven month long peace talks under auspices of Zambia between the parties to the DRC conflict concluded a first significant step- signature of a cease-fire agreement by the Heads of DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia on 10 July [1999] in Lusaka. Unable to overcome persisting internal divergences, the two factions of the RCD and the MLC abstained from signing the Lusaka agreement" UN OCHA 15 July 1999, "Context")

"Following intense diplomatic activity, especially by President Chiluba of Zambia and his Government and the Government of South Africa and others, representatives of the remaining rebel movement, RCD, signed the Ceasefire Agreement in Lusaka on 31 August [1999]. " (UN SC 1 November 1999)

"The signing of a cease-fire agreement in the summer of 1999, constituted a real prospect for bringing an end to the violent conflict in Congo DR. The agreement included the establishment of a joint military commission made up of African countries to monitor the implementation of the agreement and disarmament of the Interahamwe militia, another major goal included in the accord. The agreement also included the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in the DRC and opening a national debate among all domestic factions and civil society on the future of the DRC [the "Inter-Congolese dialogue]." (EPCPT October 2000, "prospects")

Renewed hope following coming to power of President Joseph Kabila

"Eighteen months of deadlock in efforts to end the war in the Congo came to a sudden end with the assassination of President Laurent Désiré Kabila on 16 January 2001. [...] His replacement by his 29-year old son Joseph consequently gave new hope to the peace process." (ICG 16 March 2001, sect. I)

"Since the change of power in Kinshasa in January 2001, the peace process in the DRC has gained new momentum. The ceasefire formally concluded in mid-1999 by the main belligerents has by and large been respected; the parties to the inter-Congolese dialogue have had a conclusive preparatory meeting in Gaborone and agreed to convene for substantive negotiations on 15 October; President Joseph Kabila has expressed his readiness to distance himself from the ex-FAR and Interahamwe, providing an opportunity to find a solution to the problem that has been at the heart of the regional conflict. The new government of the DRC has also taken a number of steps to stabilize the economy, ease restrictions on political activities and adopted a cooperative approach to the international community thus allowing the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC (MONUC) to deploy in all provinces of the country.

Rwanda and Uganda have withdrawn their troops from the frontline in accordance with the provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Uganda has also pledged to withdraw its troops from the DRC, with the exception of a few positions close to its border where they will pursue a limited objective of dismantling residual ADF forces. Rwanda has started to encourage the rank-and-file Hutu rebels in the DRC, notably in North Kivu, to desert and return home. Kigali has also offered a *de facto* amnesty to all rebels who were not involved in the 1994 genocide, in line with the formal amnesty in place in Uganda which has contributed to the dismantling or weakening of the Ugandan rebel groups.

Furthermore, the Rwandan authorities and the leadership of the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie - Goma* (RCD-G) have established contacts with some Mai Mai groups in South Kivu with a view to establishing local ceasefires. The *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie - Mouvement de Libération* (RCD/ML) is continuing negotiation with Mai Mai groups in the portions of North Kivu under

their control and their integration into the RCD-ML armed forces is now a likely perspective." (UNDP 28 Nov 2001)

Conflict in DRC consists of three different sets of dynamics involving security reasons and search for economic survival (Oct 2002)

- First level: regional dimension of the Great Lakes conflict
- Second level: armed struggle among the Congolese themselves for the control of national political power
- Third level: in eastern DRC, historical and continuing conflict between communities
- All these level have own logic but also influence each other

"The rationality behind the current conflict, indeed, should be seen as a mixture of security reasons and the search for economic survival. Today, the DRC war can be explained as the next phase in a much larger and more deeply rooted conflict consisting of at least three different, yet closely related, sets of dynamics. The most analysed of these is the regional dimension or the Great Lakes conflict, which at present is strongly linked to a larger regional struggle (involving at least six countries) for zones of political influence and economic control. This layer is related to the disparity of wealth between the different countries of the Great Lakes region and the relative weakness of the Congolese state. As a consequence, the presence of the Rwandan army on Congolese territory can be explained as part of a strategy to protect its borders from incursions from Interahamwe forces and to guarantee the Rwandan regime's economic survival. Although one should not read the Rwandan presence in the DRC as part of a broader strategy of Rwandan or Tutsi commercial expansionism, the search for economic and politico-military security of the Rwandan regime adds an additional dynamic to the Congolese conflict. The second level of conflict is the armed struggle among the Congolese themselves for the control of national political power. The causes for this level of the conflict are strongly linked to the two other layers and concern the political system and the access to resources. This national dimension, however, is strongly influenced by the respective links of the rebel movements and their foreign patrons. Finally, in both North and South Kivu, there is an historical but continuing conflict between different communities that is unrelated to, but highly influenced by, events in neighbouring countries. These conflicts are caused by a complex set of factors including access to and control over land, political representation and the respect of traditional authority. All three different levels exhibit a certain logic of their own but, at the same time, influence one another. In eastern Congo, however, the situation is very particular since local, national and regional dynamics are closely intertwined. When analysing the current situation in the Kivus, one has to acknowledge that the 10-year old political crisis has resulted in a situation that is characterised by a profound social disintegration, a shift from patrimonial to military control over resources, a growing importance of armed militia as an escape from further alienation (with violence becoming the main mode of discourse) and a total 're-tribalisation' of politics and society as a consequence of the search for strategies of control and resistance for which ethnic identity offers a perfect instrument." (JHA 28 Oct 02, sect.2)

Progress in the disarming of the militia and withdrawal of foreign forces (2001-2003)

- One of the most problematic elements of the Lusaka Accord is the disarming and demobilization of the militia including the Interahamwe (Sept 2001)
- Increased localized violence in Eastern DRC following cease-fire
- In July 2002 DR Congo agreed to make its border with Rwanda safe while Rwanda agreed to withdraw its troops from DR Congo
- Rebel group RCD said they were willing to negotiate power-sharing deal with Congolese government (Aug 02)

- DRC government declared all political leaders of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda persona non grata (Sept 02)
- Burundi agreed to withdraw remaining two battalions from DRC (Oct 02)
- Withdrawal of armed forces of Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe from DRC (Oct 02)
- According to UN panel in Oct 02, Rwanda and Uganda have put in place control mechanisms which do not rely on an explicit presence of their army in DRC
- By the end of April 2003, Uganda has withdrawn 1650 troops from eastern DRC

"One of the most problematic elements of the Lusaka Accord is the disarming and demobilization of the militia including the Interhamwe. The UN has committed to observing this process but it is the warring countries themselves who will carry the disarmament out." (SCF 10 July 2001)

"Although the Lusaka peace process launched in 1999 has generated numerous ceasefire agreements, it has still failed to produce a halt to the violence in the east of the country or a viable political solution to the conflict. The peace process has excluded various armed groups still active in the east of the country, including the *Interhamwe*, the Hutu militias involved in the Rwandan genocide, different Burundian rebel groups as well as the Congolese "Mai Mai" militias. The peace agreements have done little to stop the violence and repression. In the middle of 2001 the United Nations announced the beginning of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process of armed groups, specifically Interhamwe and ex-FAR. However, almost a year later, only a handful of fighters have been demobilized and disarmed in the process." (MSF 19 Nov 2002, p13)

"Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo have reached a peace agreement which could put an end to four years of fighting.

DR Congo has agreed to make their common border safe by flushing out Rwandan rebels sheltering in the east of the country, according to the French news agency, AFP. For its part, Rwanda has agreed to withdraw its troops from DR Congo, which are estimated to number as many as 30,000. But the peace deal, reached in Pretoria, South Africa, after five days of talks, needs to be approved by the presidents of Rwanda and DR Congo to be valid." (BBC News 22 July 2002)

To view the text of the peace agreement, please see Government of South Africa 30 July 2002, Peace Agreement between Rwanda and DRC [See document below]

"The Luanda accord [dated 6 Sept 02], brokered by Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, also arranged for the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from the DRC. Uganda has said that only one of its army battalions remain in the troubled northeastern DRC city of Bunia, at the request of MONUC, and along the slopes of the Rwenzori mountains." (IRIN 26 Nov 02)

"As the withdrawal of foreign forces proceeded, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 24 September declared all political leaders of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) persona non grata, and ordered them to leave the country within 72 hours." (UN SC 18 Oct 02, para.13)

"Burundi has agreed to withdraw its remaining two battalions of troops from the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, while Kinshasa has pledged that its territory will not serve as a rear base for Burundi Hutu rebel groups, delegations from the governments of the two countries said in a joint communique issued on Sunday at the end of talks in the Burundi capital, Bujumbura." (IRIN 14 Oct 02)

In December 2002, "The United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) on Wednesday sent observers to Bukavu, South Kivu, to investigate the alleged presence of Rwandan soldiers in the region after their official withdrawal in October." (IRIN 5 Dec 2002)

"The government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) officially bade farewell on Wednesday to the armed forces of Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe with a parade in their honour organized in the capital, Kinshasa." (IRIN 30 Oct 02)

According to UN Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo:

"14. The Uganda People's Defence Forces continue to provoke ethnic conflict, as in the past, clearly cognizant that the unrest in Ituri will require the continuing presence of a minimum of UPDF personnel. The Panel has evidence that high-ranking UPDF officers have taken steps to train local militia to serve as a paramilitary force, directly and discreetly under UPDF command, which will be capable of performing the same functions as UPDF. There will be little change in the control that Ugandans now exercise over trade flows and economic resources. As UPDF continue to arm local groups, only less conspicuously than before, the departure of Ugandan armed forces is unlikely to alter economic activities by those powerful individuals in the north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

15. Like UPDF, and under pressure from its closest allies, Rwanda has started withdrawing. It has prepared for withdrawal by putting in place economic control mechanisms that do not rely on an explicit presence of the Rwandan Patriotic Army. It has replaced Congolese directors of parastatals with businessmen from Kigali to ensure continuing revenue from water, power and transportation facilities. It has replaced local currency with Rwandan currency. RPA battalions that specialize in mining activities remain in place, though they have ceased wearing RPA uniforms and will continue the activities under a commercial guise. The Panel's sources have reported that RPA recently undertook an operation to obtain a large number of Congolese passports so as to give an appropriate identity to RPA officers who continue to be stationed at strategically important sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

16. The Panel has learned of other tactics for disguising the continuing presence of an armed force loyal to Rwanda. Reliable sources have reported an initiative by the Chief of Staff of the Armée nationale congolaise, Major Sylvain Mbuki, to reorganize the RCD-Goma forces in order to accommodate large numbers of RPA soldiers inside ANC units and local defence forces made up of pro-Rwanda elements." (UN SC 16 Oct 02, para. 14-16)

Power-sharing deal signed by parties to the Inter-Congolese dialogue - but fighting continues (Dec 02-Jan 04)

- Dialogue aims to establish transitional government
- Breakthrough of Congolese peace talks at the end of 2002 with signing of all-including power-sharing agreement in Dec 2003 and formal endorsement of the agreement in April 2003
- Former rebel groups can now function as political parties
- Fighting continues in the east - mainly between RCD-Goma and Mai Mai troops, as well as between RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani/ML troops
- In Oct 03, over 50 women and children killed in Ituri
- Ceasefire agreement between RCD-Goma and Mai Mai in South Kivu in Oct 03
- In Maniema Province, Mai Mai fighters continue to block several axes leaving from Kindu (Dec 03)

"As for the Inter Congolese Dialogue sanctioned by the Lusaka Peace Accord of 1999, it is aimed at establishing a transitional government and was designed to bring together representatives from the government, the political opposition, armed opposition groups and civil society to map out a future for the DRC." (UN OCHA 28 Feb 2002, p.15)

Mid-December 2002

"Warring parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo signed an all-inclusive power-sharing deal on Tuesday to establish a government of national unity and hopefully end four years of war, news organisations reported.

Under the agreement, reached after months of stop-start negotiations known as the inter-Congolese dialogue (ICD), President Joseph Kabila will remain in office for the next two years until the country's first elections since independence from Belgium in 1960 are held. He will be assisted by four vice-presidents, respectively representing the government, the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma, the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC) and the unarmed political opposition.

There will be 36 ministers and 25 deputy ministers, a 500-member National Assembly and a 120-member Senate.

The accord provides for a Higher Defence Council (Conseil supérieur de la défense) to be chaired by the president of the republic. An integrated national police force will provide security.

AFP reported that the accord permits ministers from the various groups to have their own bodyguards, but "abandons a proposal that 2,000 South African troops assure their security". The MLC was awarded the presidency of the National Assembly, having maintained that it needed the position to ensure a fair balance of power, AFP added.

Representatives of the government, rebel movements, militias, opposition parties and civil society all signed the accord - their first all-inclusive deal." (IRIN 17 Dec 2002)

April 2003

"Following is the message of Secretary-General Kofi Annan to the final session of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, delivered on his behalf by his Special Envoy M. Moustapha Niasse, in Sun City, South Africa on 2 April:

[...]

Yet no one should imagine that the All-inclusive Agreement will implement itself. The most complex and difficult tasks still lie ahead. During the Transition, the parties will have to prepare for elections, and at the same time address issues that lie at the root of the conflict, such as citizenship and land reform. They will also have to reunify the country, to create an integrated army, to demobilize soldiers, and to demilitarize politics by transforming armed factions into political groups. Even unarmed groups, which until now have been bitter adversaries, will now have to learn to work together for the public good.

[...]

Most urgently, you need to address the continuing conflict in the east, where the unfortunate population are in a situation that is arguably even worse now than it was before the agreements were signed. This is a moment, not for self-congratulation, but for solemn reflection, and for firm resolution to keep on working together, no matter how great the difficulties and disappointments that lie ahead.

The United Nations will continue to do its utmost to support your efforts. But our support will be of little value unless you yourselves are fully determined to implement your agreements." (UN SG, 2 April 2003)

"Amos Namanga Ngongi, the head of the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), known as MONUC, said on Wednesday that he 'deplored' the resumption of fighting in eastern regions of the country, particularly 'at a time when we are talking about war ending'. [...]

Asked about specific concerns, the MONUC chief of public information, Patricia Tome, told IRIN that the UN Mission had received reports of widespread movements of armed forces of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma), a Rwandan-backed rebel movement and signatory of the power-sharing agreement.

She said about 10,000 RCD-Goma troops had been concentrated in recent days between the South Kivu Province cities of Bukavu and Uvira, fighting Congolese Mayi-Mayi militias, including the Mudundu 40. She said the local Red Cross had reported 30 deaths, primarily of civilians.

MONUC's spokesman, Hamadoun Toure, added that a recent MONUC mission to the town of Burhale, located some 75 km southwest of Bukavu, had found only three residents remaining. People were said to be coming to the town during the day, and seeking refuge in nearby forests at night.

Meanwhile, in North Kivu Province, Tome said fighting between RCD-Goma and a rival rebel faction, RCD-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération, had been taking place around Bingi, Bunyatenge and Muhanga. MONUC had no casualty figures from these locations.

Toure said MONUC was in 'permanent contact' with all belligerent parties, urging them to cease hostilities and 'demanding that RCD-Goma return to its positions in line with all disengagement and redeployment plans'. He added that MONUC leaders had travelled to meet RCD-Goma representatives in both Goma and Bukavu in recent days, 'with a view towards putting an end to the military activities'.

Concerning the situation in the Ituri District of northeastern DRC, Ngongi said he 'applauded the current pacification process, yet condemn[ed] the continual hostilities in this part of the country'. He urged all parties 'to make peace so that unnecessary human losses come to an end'. He also welcomed the ongoing withdrawal of the Ugandan troops.

However, Toure admitted that the situation remained 'tense', and would remain so while MONUC was trying to build confidence among the various stakeholders." (IRIN, 30 April 2003)

"Former rebel groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been authorised to function as political parties, according to Theophile Mbemba, minister of the interior, decentralisation and national security of the nation's recently-inaugurated two-year transitional government." (IRIN 30 Sept 03)

End 2003- early 2004

"The United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) this Monday 6 October 2003 received information that a massacre had taken place at the locality of Katshelli 15 km southeast of Bule, about 60 km northeast of Bunia. MONUC immediately dispatched a multidisciplinary verification mission composed of troops of the Ituri brigade and human rights experts. The team was able to count 55 bodies mainly of women and children." (MONUC 7 Oct 03)

"An agreement to cease hostilities between forces of Gen David Padiri Bulenda's Mayi-Mayi militia and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) former rebel movement - both now parties to a national power-sharing government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) - was signed on Wednesday in Shabunda, South Kivu Province, under the mediation of the UN peacekeeping mission in the country, known as MONUC.

The accord calls for an immediate ceasefire, the free circulation of persons and goods, and the creation of a follow-up commission comprising three members from each of the two sides to monitor implementation of the agreement. MONUC reported on Thursday from the national capital, Kinshasa. It said a date and location for this commission would be announced shortly." (IRIN 3 Oct 03)

"Depuis bientôt deux semaines, les combattants Mayi-Mayi continuent de quitter Kindu pour retourner dans leurs anciennes positions. A leur arrivée, ils étaient nombreux à espérer une prise en charge par le gouvernement de transition. Ils croyaient recevoir USD 100 après leur réintégration au sein de l'armée nationale, comme à l'époque de feu Laurent-Désiré Kabila. Une rumeur racontait qu'une somme de USD 200 serait perçue par tous ceux qui remettraient leurs armes. Aussi, peu d'armes, sinon quelques vieux fusils, étaient rendus. Les ONGs qui étaient sur le terrain ont déclaré avoir vu des groupes de Mayi-Mayi

bien armés, certains avec des armes lourdes, qui quittaient Kindu et se dirigeaient, les uns vers Kalima (au nord), les autres vers Kasongo et Kibombo (au sud). Sur le plan humanitaire, les conséquences sont les suivantes : les combattants Mayi-Mayi ont érigé des barrières sur les axes Kindu-Kibombo, Kindu-Kasongo et Kindu-Lokando, réduisant de fait l'accessibilité aux populations qui y vivent." (UN OCHA 26 Dec 03, p7)

For a local perspective on the conflict and future developments, see Pole Institute, March 2003, Democratic Republic of Congo: Peace Tomorrow?, Goma [Link below]

A chronology of peace talks for DR Congo (1998-2003)

"Since war broke out in Democratic Republic of Congo on August 2, 1998, numerous efforts have been made to end the conflict through dialogue.

Herewith a chronology of the key talks on the war:

1998

Aug 8: The first summit on the DRC conflict brings together seven heads of state from southern and east Africa at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Sept 13-14: The annual summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) recognises Zimbabwe's, Angola's and Namibia's intervention on behalf of the Kinshasa government and condemns Rwanda and Uganda for supporting DRC rebels.

Oct 26-27: Ministers from 11 African countries meet in the Zambian capital Lusaka and adopt the framework for a ceasefire in DRC. Zambia acts as regional mediator.

1999

July 10: A ceasefire agreement is signed at a summit in Lusaka by the DRC government and its allies Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia, and by Rwanda and Uganda. The Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC, backed by Uganda) and the two factions of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD, backed by Rwanda) ratify the agreement in August.

2000

Jan 24-26: Seven regional heads of state meet in New York with UN mediators.

Feb 23: Seven African heads of state meet in Lusaka and adopt a new timetable for applying the DRC ceasefire.

2001

Feb 15: DRC's new President Joseph Kabila – who came to power after his father Laurent was assassinated in January – takes part in his first summit on the DRC in Lusaka, together with four other countries involved in the conflict and the rebel movements. Announcement of deployment of UN observers for DRC, MONUC, and appointment of Sir Ketumile Masire as Inter-Congolese Dialogue facilitator.

Oct 15: Inter-Congolese Dialogue officially opens in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa but is suspended after three days and later adjourned.

2002

Feb 25-April 19: Inter-Congolese Dialogue opens in Sun City, South Africa. The talks run on for six weeks and eventually result in a non-inclusive accord on power sharing, which is never implemented.

Sept 6: The DRC and Uganda ratify a protocol of agreement for Kampala to withdraw its troops from DRC soil.

Dec 17: All parties to the DRC war sign an agreement in Pretoria on a power-sharing transition government aimed at taking DRC through to its first democratic elections since 1960.

2003

March 6: After 11 days of talks in Pretoria, delegates adopt a draft constitution and a memorandum on the military and security arrangements during the transition period.

March 16-30: At the end of talks on integrating rebels into the DRC armed forces and on security measures during the transition period, only the RCD rebel group signs an agreement in Pretoria on a high command for an integrated armed force." (AFP, 31 March 2003)

1 April: In Sun City, South Africa, DRC government and rebel groups unanimously endorse a transitional constitution to govern DRC for two years. They also endorse the global agreement signed in Pretoria on 17 December 2002. [...]

29 May: Swearing-in of a transitional government is postponed because of an argument over the composition of the national army. [...]

30 June: Kabila names his transitional government to lead the country out of nearly five years of war to democratic elections in 2005." (IRIN 5 Jan 04)

Overview of armed groups

Overview of warring parties

The information below presents briefly the major armed groups involved in the DRC conflict prior to the Sun City Agreement. The information should be considered indicative only, and excludes numerous smaller armed groups and factions within and outside the main armed groups involved in the conflict.

"The number of non-state actors, often referred to as armed opposition, uncontrolled military groups, insurgents, etc. is continuously on the rise. In addition to domestic non-state armed groups, the DRC hosts a significant number of foreign rebel or insurgent groups, which consider the DRC as a rear base for launching raids on their respective countries. With the exception of Tanzania, Zambia and CAR, all other DRC neighbour countries attempt to neutralise their domestic armed opposition on the DRC soil. In simple terms, the internal struggles of Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola and to a much lesser extent (in the past) Republic of the Congo have been spilling over into the DRC. In eastern province of the Kivu, there is a noticeable amalgamation of foreign and local insurgent groups that are not believed to be entirely under the control of any state-parties to the conflict, although they regard Rwandan and Burundian armies

as their main target. Security-related problems encountered by relief personnel because of widespread insurrection have been regular and frequent and are expected to increase." (UN November 2000, p.21)

Congolese Armed Groups:

Forces Armées Congolaises (FAC)

"When Kabila came to power, he decided to reform the army. This was to become an integrated force comprised of soldiers of Mobutu's Forces Armées Zairoises (FAZ), and Kabila's own core force of Banyamulenge and Katangan gendarmes. However, neither of the latter elements was sufficiently well equipped or adequately trained to take command of the new FAC army. This explains the emergence of officers from the ranks of ex-FAZ troops, such as Jean-Pierre Ondekane, who is now leading the rebel movement. It also partly explains why Joseph Kabila, the president's son, was appointed FAC chief of staff. His initial military training was under the Tanzanians during the 1996 war, and he was receiving further training in China when the rebellion broke out in August 1998. Kabila has never won the loyalty of the ex-FAZ. They have not forgotten their humiliating defeat by the AFDL in 1996 and soon defected to the rebel side soon after this latest conflict began.

Most of the better-trained FAC troops belonged to the elite unit of the 10th Battalion stationed in Goma. It was this unit, numbering 25,000 men, which launched the rebellion on 2 August 1998 from FAC headquarters in Kivu. An official announcement that the FAC had started a war to liberate their country was broadcast over Radio Goma by one of their officers, Sylvain Mbuki. Kabila denounced them as traitors and puppets of Rwanda and Uganda. Their defection led directly to the loss of Kivu. They immediately started marching north towards Oriental and Equateur provinces, south to Northern Katanga and also towards the centre of the country; the FAC troops stationed in those provinces all defected to the rebel movement.

In response, Kabila has embarked on a massive recruitment exercise to plug the gap in the FAC's ranks. However, the deserters included the more experienced FAC soldiers and the new and obviously inexperienced recruits have not proved up to the job. Kabila has therefore had to co-opt more seasoned fighters from among the ex-FAR and Interahamwe militias, soldiers who formerly fought for Idi Amin, and the Burundian FDD in order to beef up his war machine." (ICG 21 May 1999, "The Congolese parties to the Conflict")

Mai-Mai

"The Mai Mai are the most important group of armed, Congolese, fighters who are neither signatories of the Lusaka Agreement nor mentioned by name in the text. Yet, in eastern Congo, they have become a force of such power that any attempt to conclude a peaceful solution to the current war will likely fail if they are not taken into account. Although there are many Mai Mai groups with different interests and goals, they do appear to have one common denominator which is the expulsion of foreign "occupiers" which translates into the Rwandan armed forces, their Congolese allies, the RCD and frequently appears to extend to all Tutsi.[...]

The Mai Mai have been given both moral and material support by the DRC Government approximately from the start of the second Congo War in the summer of 1998 up to the present. Indeed, in military terms, the alliance between Kinshasa and the Mai Mai has produced important victories for Kinshasa because it has pinned down Rwandan forces and undermined the RCD/Goma. No similar violent challenges to Kinshasa's authority has developed in the areas that it controls. In sum, the Mai Mai and the Hutu guerrillas in eastern Congo (both Rwandan and Burundian) had together become the greatest threat to the RCD/Goma and the RPA.

The Mai Mai are viewed by large segments of the population in Eastern Congo as patriotic fighters against the occupation of the Kivus by the Rwandans and "their puppets", the RCD/Goma. And, the alliance between the Mai Mai and the Hutu forces (ex-FAR, Interahamwe, newly recruited Hutu and FDD) gave the latter the protection and cover among the civilian population that was needed to operate effectively against

the "occupiers." Although the exact amount of control or influence which Kinshasa exerted and continues to exert over the Mai Mai is unclear, the Government has on occasion claimed that the Mai Mai are an integral part of the FAC and some of their leaders have been given important roles as generals in the FAC. If the Mai Mai are indeed part of the FAC then the ongoing attacks against the RPA and the RCD/Goma can clearly be viewed as breaches of the cease-fire agreement. This would obviously be an undesirable development from Kinshasa's point of view - and indeed, neither MONUC nor the Joint Military Commission has formally declared such a breach - and, this may be the reason why in recent months the Mai Mai forces have been designated the Force d'Autodéfense Populaire, FAP, especially by spokesmen of the Kinshasa authorities." (UNDP 28 Nov 2001)

Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie/Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD)

"The RCD [Congolese Rally for Democracy/Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie], composed of former Tutsi members of Kabila's government, former Mobutists, a number of intellectuals, and others, soon emerged as the political leadership of this coalition. The conflict in Congo grew during August and September [1998], eventually drawing in other states from the region, including Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Chad on the government side, and with Burundi apparently joining the Rwandans and Ugandans to support the RCD and the FAC defectors. Rwanda and Uganda claimed they had sent forces across the border to protect themselves against various armed groups which had been attacking them from bases in the eastern Congo, operating without hindrance from the Congolese government. Burundi continued to deny its involvement in the conflict despite regular sightings of their troops in South Kivu. The RCD proclaimed its goal to be the ouster of Kabila, while his backers stated they were protecting a legitimate government from foreign aggression. Outside observers suspected that the prospect of exploiting Congo's vast mineral wealth had attracted many of the warring parties. A number of other militia and rebel groups from the region joined the fray, while alliances between them and the warring parties were often unclear.

[...]

Victims and witnesses of abuses in eastern Congo frequently described perpetrators as "Rwandan," "Banyamulenge," or "Tutsi" military allied with the RCD, but were often unable to conclusively identify them as belonging to a particular army. Establishing the national identity of perpetrators was complicated by the fact that some Tutsi military among the Rwandan and Ugandan forces were born in Congo but have lived in all three countries; Kinyarwanda and Swahili are spoken in all three countries; and the use of uniforms by RCD forces was often haphazard. Commanders fighting on behalf of the RCD frequently wore civilian clothes and, in an apparent attempt to further hide their identity, often used their first names or pseudonyms only. Many residents of the east claimed that the RCD military was dominated by Tutsi from the Rwandan, Ugandan, Burundian or Congolese armies, increasing resentment among other Congolese ethnic groups vis-à-vis Tutsi in general." (HRW February 1999, chaps. I, IV)

"The founder members of the RCD are a heterogeneous coalition whose opposition to Kabila is the only common denominator. They come from diverse political backgrounds and only joined together in August 1998 to launch the rebellion against Kabila. The first three months of the conflict were spent attempting to co-ordinate the different interests of the various political factions within the rebel movement.

[...]

Most RCD officials interviewed by an ICG field researcher conceded that the multiplicity of political interests, including those of their major political backers, Uganda and Rwanda, are leading to a lack of cohesion in the movement. But these political differences are officially played down. In an interview with Reuters in Goma, RCD Vice-President Moïse Nyarugabo said: "This is normal and it can happen that any movement may contain some differences. But the differences we are facing we are facing as a team." (ICG 21 May 1999, "The Congolese parties to the Conflict")

RCD split into RCD-Goma and RCD-ML during 1999

"The rebel Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) on Wednesday [19 May 1999] named medical doctor Emile Ilunga as its new leader after Ernest Wamba dia Wamba was ousted on Sunday [16 May 1999] in an internal power struggle. The movement retained military commander Jean-Pierre

Ondekane and Moise Nyarugabo as first and second vice-presidents respectively. Wamba said he was a victim of a "coup", unilaterally ousted by his opponents within RCD." (IRIN-CEA 21 May 1999)

"The Ugandan army's sector commanders in fact exercised ultimate authority over all military and security matters in each district. Some RCD-ML units and cadres operated directly under their command." (HRW March 2001, sect.III)

Banyamulenge forces

"Motivated by a sense of desperation linked to the fear of being exterminated, the Banyamulenge forces are among the most violent in the Congo. The fact that the Banyamulenge community has lost so many of its youth in the war has contributed to the creation of a sense of great vulnerability within the community. It is said that Banyamulenge community leaders are attempting to distance themselves from Rwandan authorities, realizing that their association with Rwandan forces has resulted in a greater rejection of the community by other Congolese." (UNDP 28 Nov 2001, part 2)

"The Banyamulenge constitute the oldest Tutsi community in the DRC. Although they are prominent in the RCD, and have provided many troops for the movement, there have been a number of clashes between the Banyamulenge and the RCD-Goma.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame has vowed to crush Masunzu's forces, most of which are members of the Banyamulenge of South Kivu - a group whose protection is one of the principal reasons for Rwanda's military presence in the DRC. The RCD has also accused Masunzu of allying himself with members of Rwanda's Interahamwe militia - held responsible for the 1994 genocide." (IRIN 25 June 2002)

Local Defense Forces

"The local defense forces were initially set up by RCD-Goma to enable local communities to fend off isolated groups of armed bands. The concept only really took hold in North Kivu. Given finite military resources of rebel forces and the propensity of Interahamwe and ex-FAR to attack local communities, the local defense forces quickly became the vanguard of all confrontations with the armed non-state actors. These forces are to a large part constituted of individuals from the Congolese Hutu community. This reality is an outcome of the fact that this community constitutes the majority of the population in the Masisi, Rutshuru and Walikale territories, and that individuals of this community are more inclined to join the local defense forces in an effort to clearly distance themselves from the Interahamwe and ex-FAR in order to distance themselves from RPA attacks.[...]

Today, many of these forces are said to be undisciplined, and thus utilizing their authority to further individual gains. As a consequence, members of the North Kivu Congolese Tutsi community are apprehensive that large numbers of these undisciplined forces could join the Interahamwe movement." (UNDP 28 Nov 2001, part 2)

The Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC)

"A handful of Congolese exiles led by Jean-Pierre Bemba told the Ugandan president in October 1998 that they wanted to change their government at home, but did not want to join the RCD. Ugandan authorities sent the group to a crash military and ideological training course and weeks later flew them to Equateur to launch what would become the MLC. Less than two years later, "Bemba commended Ugandan soldiers for training 20,000 soldiers" for the MLC. Reporting on the September 2000 press conference at Gebadolite during which Bemba acknowledged the UPDF's assistance, the *New Vision* quoted him as urging the UPDF to continue withdrawing troops from the DRC: "We are proud of the Ugandans. But why should they die for us when we (Congolese soldiers) are doing quite well at frontline positions?" Unlike the RCD-ML, the MLC was fighting an active war directly against the government alliance. With crucial battlefield support from the UPDF, the MLC was able to roll back a major government offensive in the second half of 2000. In contrast with the other two major rebel groups, the MLC was also reported to be financially self-sufficient, mainly from taxes levied on local produce" (HRW March 2001, sect.III)

Rwandan Armed Groups

Rwandan Hutu armed forces (ex-FAR/Interahamwe)

"Of all the armed groups in the DRC named in the Lusaka Agreement for disarming and repatriation, the ex-FAR and Interahamwe, currently known as 'Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda' (FDLR), are by far the largest, most significant, and most difficult to deal with both politically and militarily. Leaders of the FAR and the Interahamwe, while still in power, organised and executed the genocide of 1994, and it was these same 'genocidaires' who fled into the DRC (then Zaire) in the summer of that year that have continued to lead the war against the present Rwanda government from Congolese territory. Indeed, the conflict between the force led by this group and the RPF led Rwandan government constitutes the spark that ignited the war which escalated to engulf the entire Central Africa region." (UNDP 28 Nov 2001, part 2)

"Although the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement refers to the ex-Forces armées rwandaises (ex-FAR) and the Interahamwe, evidence gathered since the signing of the Agreement indicates that these groups are now collectively known as the Armée pour la libération du Rwanda (ALIR), which is divided into two parts, designated as ALIR I and ALIR II. Despite, or perhaps because of, the multiplicity of sources with information on the Rwandan armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, establishing precise and reliable figures has proved particularly difficult. ALIR I and ALIR II represent the bulk of the foreign fighters to be disarmed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

ALIR I is believed to include in its ranks the majority of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe who fled Rwanda in 1994. Estimates of the number of ALIR I troops vary considerably according to which source is consulted. MONUC estimates that there are between 4,000 and 6,000 troops.

ALIR I is based in North and South Kivu and Maniema Provinces. It is believed to have two divisions, Division Arbre/Yaounde, which operates on the Shabunda-Fizi-Kabambare axis, and Division Boer/Douala, which operates on the Masisi-Walikale axis.

ALIR I fighters are currently thought to suffer from low morale following their failed attempt to invade Rwanda in May 2001. They are believed to be isolated and living in harsh conditions. MONUC is aware of indications that outside support that may once have been provided to the group is now no longer available, and has been trying, with the cooperation of the RCD and Rwandan authorities and the help of Mayi-Mayi representatives, to establish direct contact in order to discuss disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration with some ALIR I elements near Masisi, north of Goma.

ALIR II is said to be larger and better equipped than ALIR I. Its members are thought to be younger, and not to have participated in the 1994 genocide. Estimates of the group's size vary considerably, with some knowledgeable sources placing the number between 4,000 and 6,000.

ALIR II is believed to have at least one division with three brigades in the South Kivu and Katanga Provinces and headquarters in Lubumbashi. The existence of a second division remains unconfirmed. However, reports that there may be two or three more brigades in Katanga would, according to traditional military structures, tend to indicate the existence of a second division whose headquarters remain unknown. ALIR II is said to be equipped with more sophisticated weaponry than other groups, including light anti-aircraft guns." (UN SC 5 April 2002, para.19-26)

Burundian Armed Groups

Burundian Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD)

"The Burundian Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) forms the second largest of the armed groups, estimated at roughly 10,000 militia. They are also integrated in the FAC and are moving between the DRC, Burundi and Tanzania. They have shown consistent resistance in joining the Burundi peace process. Both the Rwandan and the Burundians Hutus fight alongside each other and with various Congolese resistance

groups, collectively known as Mai Mai, composed of many different groups and a few thousands fighters." (ICG 12 June 2001)

"When Laurent Kabila annulled his alliance with Rwanda and war broke out between them, he sought the alliance of FDD rebels and began to give them support. Burundi had sent some of its troops to the Fizi-Uvira areas to attack FDD rebels there, and this occupation of parts of the DRC became an added reason for Kabila's alliance with the FDD. [...]"

The FDD's links with Kabila left it with control of a swath of the territory in eastern Congo far larger than Burundi itself; this has given some of its leaders immense control and power and made them millionaires.[...]

It is widely suspected, if not known, that the FDD is currently headquartered in the Katangan capital of Lubumbashi and is said to be continuing to recruit and train troops from the Burundian refugee camps in Tanzania.[...]

The recent progress made in the peace talks in the DRC has meant that increasing numbers of FDD rebels have crossed back into Burundi particularly in the northwest Kibira forest area, thus destabilizing the country. It is also said that at a recent FDD congress in Lubumbashi, the FDD teamed up with the FNL, which it had invited to its congress. Its alliance with the ex-FAR/Interahamwe has also been strengthened [...]" (UNDP 28 Nov 2001, part 2)

"MONUC estimates that there are 3,000 to 4,000 FDD troops operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These are mainly located in the South Kivu and Katanga Provinces, along the shores of Lake Tanganyika. In Katanga Province, FDD are said to fight alongside the Forces armées congolaises (FAC) and in South Kivu they are known to have undertaken joint operations with Rwandan armed groups and with the Mayi-Mayi. They are also said to receive outside support from a variety of sources including the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its allies. MONUC has not been able to verify these reports. Approximately 1,000 FDD fighters were believed to be in Moliro, but were scattered when the Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) seized the village in mid-March." (UN SC 5 April 2002, para.17)

Front de Libération Nationale (FLN or FROLINA)

"The FLN [a Burundi military splinter group] is not mentioned in the Lusaka Agreement directly as an organization that has to be disarmed and demobilized. But it is a significant militia organization that has maintained bases and troops, though limited in number, in eastern DRC." (UNDP 28 Nov 2001, part 2)

Angolan Armed Groups

UNITA

"MONUC has no recent reliable reports of UNITA activity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, though the group may use that country's territory as a transit route for logistic supplies." (UN SC 5 April 2002, para.10)

Ugandan Armed Groups

Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

"Information gathered by MONUC indicates that only one of the six Ugandan armed groups mentioned in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is still active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, namely, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).[...]"

The Allied Democratic Forces are reckoned to have 200 to 300 fighters, mainly in the Ruwenzori Mountains close to the border with Uganda. Unlike some of the other foreign armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ADF are not known to have external allies. Like most other armed groups, ADF are believed to be only lightly armed." (UN SC 5 April 2002, para.12-13)

Main armed groups in Ituri (Aug 03)

"Here is a list of the five main groups involved in the peace process:

– The Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC, Hema)

Currently dominant in Bunia. Its power has been considerably reduced since the deployment of the multinational force in early June.

The UPC recaptured Bunia on May 12 after being chased out of town on March 6 by the Ugandan army. The group has adopted a new strategy of not responding to attacks, even if this entails allowing the population to be massacred, while saying security is a responsibility of the transitional government in Kinshasa.

The UPC has been backed since the end of last year by Rwanda, but there are now signs of a possible rapprochement with Rwanda's rival in the region, Uganda, which used to support the UPC before Rwanda stepped in.

– The Nationalist and Integrationist Front (FNI, Lendu)

Set up headquarters in Bunia at the end of July under the auspices of the United Nations and the multinational force, both of whom say they are determined to turn Bunia into a multiethnic town again.

The FNI has come in for criticism over the past month after a series of atrocities and ritual mutilations committed by Lendu militia in villages in the interior. The FNI has attributed the massacres to uncontrolled elements.

The FNI was created by Uganda early this year. In April, the two fell out and the FNI later joined forces with another group of Lendu fighters, the Patriotic Resistance Front for Ituri (FRPI), which has links to Kinshasa.

– The Party for the Unity and the Safekeeping of the Integrity of Congo (PUSIC)

A splinter group from the UPC and the third group to have set up headquarters in Bunia. The group is backed by one circle of military officers in the Ugandan capital Kampala. For the time being, PUSIC has accepted all the conditions laid down by the multinational force.

– Armed Forces of the Congolese People (FAPC)

A second, more recent, UPC splinter group. Backed, and well supplied by, another circle of Ugandan officers.

Hundreds of inhabitants in a 120-kilometre (75-mile) radius around Bunia have said that men from the FAPC (normally known as Jerome's men from the name of their commander) were involved, alongside the Lendu combatants, in a series of massacres over the past month.

The FAPC is thought to have formed a short-lived alliance with the FNI, which it withdrew from after some of the worst massacres, whilst continuing to work together with Lendu fighters on an informal basis.

– The Popular Forces for Democracy in Congo (FPDC)

The fifth and least prominent of the signatories to the Dar es Salaam agreement. Founded and backed by Uganda, its members come from the Alur ethnic group (opposed to the Lendu).

In addition to the five groups involved in the Ituri pacification process, two groups who are part of the wider transition process in the DRC also have men in Ituri.

They are Jean-Pierre Bemba's former rebel group, the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) and the Rally for Congolese Democracy-Liberation Movement (RCD-ML).

In addition to the organised armed groups, several small local ethnic militias also operate in Ituri." (AFP 31 Aug 03)

Fighting between splinter groups and ethnic violence causes total collapse of public authority in Ituri and Orientale Provinces (2002-2003)

- Conflict between the Hema and Lendu has previously occurred in 1972, 1985 and 1996
- Escalated conflict since mid-December 1999
- In February 2002 bloody ethnic clashes caused hundreds of killings and twenty thousands displaced
- Several hundred deaths in mid-2002 due to ethnic clashes; use of modern weapons such as Kalashnikov instead of traditional weapons
- Clashes now reportedly involve other tribes as well, and are fuelled by Uganda support to various parties (April 02)
- Killing of Ituri governor in Nov 02
- As of Nov 02, Uganda kept two battalions in Ituri
- Exploitation of natural resources fuels violence in Ituri
- DRC government announced the sending of 3000 police officers to stabilize Ituri (Sept 03)

"Ituri province, created in 1999 out of part of Orientale province, is rich in gold, timber, and coltan (colombo-tantalite, a precious mineral). In addition it produces substantial amounts of coffee. Because of its location near Lake Albert and the Ugandan frontier, Ituri is a locus of trans-border trade that offers lucrative opportunities for transporting and taxing goods.

Several groups rebelling against the Kinshasa government have fought each other and splintered within themselves as they struggled to get and keep control over this wealthy region. The conflicts over political preeminence and control of resources have taken place increasingly along ethnic lines and have spilled over to encompass groups not originally touched by these hostilities. Thus a long standing rivalry between Hema and Lendu over the control of land and access to fishing rights now brings violence to various groups – like the Nande, Gegere, Bira, and Alur -- said to be associated with one or the other of the original contenders. The conflict first involved some 40 percent of the local population – roughly the numbers of Hema and Lendu – but now brings devastation to far greater numbers. With the increase in attacks and victims on both sides, the level of fear has risen, making it easier for leaders to mobilize people for violence, supposedly as a measure of self-defense." (HRW 31 Oct 02)

"Ituri province is ruled by UPC (Congolese Patriotic Union) under Thomas Lubanga with Hema militias and the northern part of Nord Kivu including Beni, is under Mbusa Nyamwisi's RCD ML Kisangani (Congolese Rally for Democracy Liberation Movement) and Forced Combattantes Mayi Mayi – a tribal militia.

The Ugandan People's Defence Forces that entered DRC four years ago to flush out Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels, has a strong base in Bunia in Ituri." (WV 8 Nov 2002)

As of June 2002, "The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) – known as MONUC – is to investigate reports of up to 500 people having been killed in recent clashes between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups in the northeastern DRC province of Ituri, mission force commander Gen Mountaga Diallo told IRIN on Monday." (IRIN 10 June 2002)

"The ethnic clashes that have raged between the Hema and the Lendu since 1999 have grown and now include other tribes such as the Alur, Ngiti, Babira and N'do Okebo. The authorities and the military appear to do very little to control these tensions, and in many cases even fuel them. There is consistent information, including reports from the UN Human Rights Rapporteur, that the Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) has sided with the Hema tribe. Local sources indicate that some UPDF commanders have now also started to arm the opposing Lendu, making inter-ethnic clashes much more deadly." (Oxfam 25 April 2002)

"Unrest in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is extremely alarming, with an ethnic dispute being inflamed by the use of modern weapons, the military commander of the United Nations Mission to the DRC (MONUC) said on Sunday.[...]

Where as before conflicts between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups were resolved with traditional weapons now they are using Kalashnikov assault rifles. Even worse, the Hema, like the Lendu are both running training camps where hundreds of recruits trained in how to use modern arms." (AFP 9 June 2002)

"In July and August [2002], the ethnic conflict in Ituri in general and in the city of Bunia in particular, aggravated into clashes for the control over the city which led to a number of deaths, wounded, displaced and the inaccessibility of several quarters of the area up till today. In the context of the recent diplomatic alliances, national and international attention was drawn to the problem. Unfortunately, the initiatives by the Kinshasa government ended up with the hostage taking of the Minister of Human Rights during his visit. The continuation of the conflict and the fragility of the authorities presently in place are a likely source for the further destabilisation of the area and a major constraints for all humanitarian action." (UN 19 Nov 2002, p41)

"In August [2002], the UPC (Congolese Patriotic Union) of Thomas Lubanga, supported by Hema militias, dislodged Mbusa RCD ML Kisangani and its allies from Bunia- the main town in Ituri Province. The RCD ML Kisangani, which set up camp in Beni, took revenge on Jean Pierre Bemba by grabbing the town of Mambasa from his MLC (Movement for Liberation of Congo) in late October.

Rival tribes have always taken advantage of rebel rivalries to stage revenge massacres and rebel armies too have used ethnic conflicts to advance their motives. The situation in northeastern DRC remains volatile and people are likely to be displaced from time to time." (WV 19 Nov 2002)

"Ugandan army troops of the UPDF continue to occupy Bunia, the chief town of Ituri, although they have withdrawn from other parts of the northeastern Congo. Under the terms of a September 6 agreement between Uganda and Congo, UPDF troops may remain in Bunia until a new administration is established there. The U.N. Security Council confirmed this arrangement but reminded Uganda that 'as long as its troops are there, Uganda is duty-bound to ensure the protection of the population.'" (HRW 31 Oct 02)

"Uganda has sent two new battalions of soldiers to the strife-torn Ituri region in Democratic Republic of Congo's northeastern Orientale province, a small rebel group said.

In a statement sent to AFP in Kinshasa late Wednesday, the Ugandan-backed Congolese Rally for Democracy-Liberation Movement (RCD-ML) said a first battalion had arrived and another was on its way." (AFP 7 Nov 2002)

"Uganda on Sunday appealed to rival groups in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for calm after the region's governor Joseph Eneku was killed, along with nine bodyguards, in an ambush on Friday." (AFP 24 Nov 02)

"In March 2003, the UN brokered a ceasefire. An Ituri Pacification Commission was convened and agreed to set up an interim administration. The UN observer mission (MONUC) deployed approximately 700 Uruguayan troops to the town of Bunia in April 2003. They had a limited mandate to protect the airfield, UN facilities and sites of the Ituri Pacification Commission. In April 2003, following the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from Ituri, Hema and Lendu based militia groups began fighting for control of the town. Concerns over this upsurge in fighting and reports of mass ethnically based killings of civilians eventually led to UN Security Council Resolution 1484 (30 May 2003), authorizing the deployment of up to 1,400 troops under Chapter VII of the UN charter, which allows for the use of coercive force. It has a mandate to contribute to the safety of the civilian population. The Interim Emergency Multinational Force is led by the French and is now being deployed. However, it only covers the town of Bunia, leaving the rest of the district of over 4 million people unprotected, and runs only until September 2003, when additional MONUC troops are expected to be ready to deploy." (ODI June 03, p1)

For more information on the background of the conflict, please see Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, 31 Oct 2003 *Ituri: Stakes, actors, dynamics* [\[link below\]](#)

Main Parties to Current Crisis in South Kivu Province (Oct 02)

Main parties:

"Congolese Rally for Democracy -- Goma (RCD-Goma) supported by the Rwandan government.

Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), the Rwandan government army.

Burundian government troops.

Mai-Mai groups of local combatants.

Banyamulenge, Congolese people of Rwandan ancestry, opposed to the RCD-Goma and Rwandan government troops.

Rwandan rebels against the Rwandan government, some of them including soldiers of the former Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and the Interahamwe militia.

Burundian rebels against the Burundian government. [...]

In South Kivu, violence has been sparked by the withdrawal of Rwandan government troops, formerly dominant in the area, although latest developments indicate their renewed involvement, and also the involvement of Burundian forces.[...]

Rwanda has been the chief support of the RCD-Goma since this movement began its rebellion against the Congolese government in 1998. Since then several armed groups have split off from the RCD-Goma, and have started operating in the Ugandan-held areas of Orientale and Ituri provinces.

The RCD-Goma has retained its link to Rwanda and relied on Rwandan government troops to control most of South and North Kivu. In addition, Burundian forces also provided some military support to the RCD-Goma in South Kivu.

In late September and early October Rwanda recalled its soldiers from the Congo under the terms of an agreement signed on July 30 with the Congolese government; in return the Congo was to help disarm and

repatriate groups of rebels opposed to the Rwandan government based in the eastern Congo. In late September Congolese President Joseph Kabila banned all Rwandan rebel groups and ordered several rebel leaders to leave the country.

After the withdrawal of Rwandan government troops, RCD-Goma forces lost control of important parts of South Kivu, including the port of Uvira from which they fled on October 13. They were defeated by a coalition of Mai-Mai groups and two different groups of Banyamulenge, one led by Patrick Masunzu and the other led by a commander called Aron Nyamusheba. The Banyamulenge, Congolese whose ancestors had come from Rwanda, had originally provided many of the troops for the RCD-Goma, and the Rwandan government had frequently claimed to be in Congo in part to defend the Banyamulenge against other Congolese. But since early 2002 an important group of Banyamulenge led by Masunzu, once an officer in the RCD-Goma forces, rejected RCD-Goma control and fought to keep Rwandan and RCD-Goma troops out of their home territory on the high plateaus of South Kivu.

Since mid-October other local combatants reportedly fighting together with some Rwandan rebel groups have challenged RCD-Goma in the Ruzizi plain north of Uvira. Some of these Rwandan rebels are former soldiers of the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and Interahamwe militia who participated in the 1994 genocide of Tutsi in Rwanda, but the majority are recent recruits not formerly involved in the genocide.

Suspecting the backing of the Congolese government in Kinshasa for the forces challenging it in South Kivu, on October 14 the RCD-Goma broke off discussions with the Congolese government and began an offensive to retake lost territory. On October 19 local combatants abandoned Uvira and RCD-Goma forces reentered the town. According to one local source, RCD soldiers killed five civilians, among them a catechist accused of being a Mai-Mai, and arrested more than twenty people. "(HRW 31 Oct 2002)

Main causes of displacement

Plunder of natural resources by warring parties continues to be major factor causing displacement (1998-2003)

- In May 2001, UN report on exploitation of natural resources accused foreign armed forces and Congolese fighters of using DRC's natural resources to fuel the conflict
- In Nov 2001, the Addendum to the May report explored further the link between the exploitation of resources and the continuation of the conflict in DRC
- In Oct 2002, the final version of the UN report stated that due to elite criminal networks, the illegal exploitation of DRC's resources would continue, despite the withdrawal of foreign armed forces
- NGOs stress that the UN must address the role of multinational corporations in war (Oct 03)
- Various NGO reports show the central role of natural resources, such as coltan and diamonds, in the conflict

"While different actors have justified their involvement in the war on the basis of security, it is clear that one of the driving forces behind the conflict is a desire by the warring parties to have access to, and control over, the DRC's vast natural resources. This wealth is not being used to reduce poverty, either in the DRC or in other countries involved in the war. In fact, wealth from natural resources is sustaining the war and bad governance. Such military activity has been described as 'military commercialism'. Natural resource exploitation has become a key factor in determining military deployment, perpetuating the cycle of violence. Against a backdrop of deteriorating governance, this is very worrying. [...]"

Although troop numbers may have reduced in some areas, deployment is increasingly concentrated in mineral-rich areas. Zimbabwean troops are located in diamond, copper, cobalt, and timber-rich areas of the Kasais and Katanga. Rwandan troops have concentrated in coltan, gold, timber, and diamond-rich areas in the Kivus and Maniema. Ugandan troops, though reduced in number, are located near gold, timber, diamond, and, until recently, coltan-rich areas in Ituri and N. Kivu." (Oxfam 18 Jan 2002)

"The Panel's first report, issued on 12 April 2001 (document S/2001/357), states that illegal exploitation of the mineral and forest resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo was in the form of mass-scale looting, as well as systematic and systemic exploitation which required planning and organization. Key individual actors, on the one hand, including top army commanders and businessmen, and government structures, on the other, have been the engines of that systematic and systemic exploitation. The report names functionaries, companies, banks and individuals involved in the exploitation." (UN SC 14 Dec 2001)

To see the Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2001/357), 12 April 2001, [External Link]

For the UN SC 13 November 2001 Addendum to the report on exploitation of natural resources, please see source below.

May 2002, UN SC Interim Report on the exploitation of natural resources in the DRC "On either side of the ceasefire line, foreign armies have consolidated their presence and the struggle over maintaining control of natural resources and territory has become a principal preoccupation. Conflict over the resources has a different complexion on either side of the ceasefire line. Foreign forces in the west, in concert with certain Congolese parties, have entrenched themselves and continue to pursue their economic interests in the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while adopting a more discreet profile. Their activities may also include asserting a certain control over local economies. [...]"

In contrast to the relative calm along the ceasefire corridor and the quieter pursuit of the exploitation of resources in the west, the quest for natural resources in the east is characterized by armed violence of varying degrees of intensity among foreign armies, foreign armed groups, rebel armies and Mayi-Mayi groups. These conflicts incite others. Some of the conflicts are about dispersing opposition forces. Some are linked to rekindled ethnic tensions. Others are about large numbers of people bearing arms for survival purposes." (UN SC 22 May 2002, para.35-37)

October 2002 UN Report

"Issued on 21 October, the report stated that despite the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Congo, "elite criminal networks" had become so deeply entrenched that continuing illegal exploitation of the country's natural resources was assured, independent of the physical presence of foreign armies.

It accused three distinct criminal groups, respectively linked to the armies of Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe (the last-named linked to the DRC government), of benefiting from overlapping micro-conflicts. These groups, it said, would not disband voluntarily even as the foreign military forces continued their withdrawals." (IRIN 28 Oct 02)

To see the Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo, 16 Oct 2002, see [External Link]

According to a statement by several national and international NGOs: "The Security Council has failed to act on previous reports from the panel showing the link between the activities of multinational corporations and armed groups guilty of massacres and other atrocities." (HRW 27 Oct 03)

Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo

"Illegal exploitation remains one of the main sources of funding for groups involved in perpetuating conflict, especially in the eastern and northeastern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over the last year, such exploitation has been characterized by intense competition among the various political and military actors as they have sought to maintain, and in some instances expand, their control over territory.

45. In that connection, the power vacuum caused by the withdrawal of the Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF) and later by the Ugandan People's Defence Forces (UPDF), spurred the proliferation of militias. Those militias have vied for control over strategic zones where lucrative resources are located, and which were formerly held by the foreign forces. The Panel is of the opinion that the deteriorating security situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which resulted from intensifying armed confrontations among the militias, has had a direct impact on the level and nature of resource exploitation, compared to previous years. Overall, the transition of control from foreign forces to the armed groups has led to a temporary reduction in the volume of illegally exploited resources." (UN SC 23 Oct 03, para.44-45)

Study by Pole Institute (North Kivu)

"The study found that:

as crisis and war in North Kivu have severely hampered industrial mining, existing industrial mining concessions have been turned over to informal or artisanal mining, mainly of coltan. This phenomenon has led to a population exodus of all age groups with the aim of finding coltan;
as a result, agricultural and pastoral activities are being abandoned in favor of coltan. There is a real danger of food insecurity in North Kivu if the agricultural populations continue to leave their fields in order to mine coltan or turn their fields into mines;
young people, easily attracted by easy money, abandon school in favour of coltan mining. [...]
unplanned coltan mining and export in a context of State collapse and prolonged crisis has been a source of wealth for a handful of businessmen working with old and new mineral trading networks in Eastern Congo, but has also meant the emergence of a mafia economy organized around the rebel armies and their allies and the armed Mai-Mai groups. [...]

The coltan trade is closely intertwined with the activities of all armed groups present in the area. No demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programme can succeed without taking economic security into account. Proper regulation of mining and other trade is essential for disengagement and reconciliation programmes. [...]

Coltan is an abbreviation for columbite-tantalite, a mineral from which the precious metals Tantalum (Ta) and Columbium (Cb), also known as Niobium (Nb) are extracted. [...] According to mining specialists, 80% of known tantalite reserves are found in the Democratic Republic of Congo, almost entirely in the Eastern part controlled by rebel movements allied to Rwanda and Uganda." (Pole Institute Jan 2002)

For more information on the coltan trade and the role of European companies, please see "Supporting the War Economy in the DRC: European Companies and the Coltan Trade" by the International Peace Information Service (IPIS), January 2002 [External Link]

2002 and 2003 Study by Partnership Africa Canada (Ottawa), International Peace Information Service (Antwerp) and the Network Movement for Justice and Development (Freetown):

"The report provides details of numerous lucrative commercial enterprises undertaken by foreign armies in the Congo, suggesting that a failed state can offer significant financial rewards to the political and military elite of adjacent countries." (Partnership Africa Canada 17 June 2002)

"Where diamonds are concerned, instead of citing OECD guidelines with false teeth, the UN's DRC Expert Panel might have been better advised, where it had concrete evidence, to consult some basic definitions of war crimes. The Constitution of the Nuremberg Military Tribunal, for example, included as a war crime, the 'plunder of public or private property' and said that 'leaders, organizers, instigators and accomplices

participating in the formulation or execution of a common plan or conspiracy to commit [war] crimes are responsible for all acts performed by any persons in execution of such plan." (Smilie, June 03)

Reports by Amnesty International (2001 & 2003):

"Amnesty International is [...] concerned at reports of human rights abuses such as killings, torture, use of forced labour, including by children and prisoners, and displacement of population that have taken place in the context of the exploitation of the resources. For example, Amnesty International has received reports of unarmed civilians being killed during fighting between the RCD-Goma troops and Hutu armed groups over mining areas; of villages being burned down; or people attacked and forced to flee the area. An independent observer told Amnesty International delegates that 'when a new RCD-Goma or RPA commander is nominated in the mining area of Walikale, Masisi, or Shabunda, the insecurity in the region decreases. However, once a commander is in a region for a while, he understands that insecurity has an advantage. His troops start shooting, killing and provoking massive displacement of the population, in order to make access to the extraction of the mineral wealth easier because the population is dead or has fled.'" (AI, 19 June 2001)

"The report, entitled '*Democratic Republic of Congo - 'Our brothers who help kill us'*', identifies the drive to control and exploit the DRC's natural resources as the biggest single factor underpinning the continuing violence in the country.

The northern and eastern regions of the DRC, which are under the control of Congolese armed groups sponsored by Rwanda and Uganda, are rich in many precious resources, including coltan, gold, diamonds and timber. These resources have been systematically pillaged by the warring parties, with senior members of the Rwandese and Ugandan armies and their Congolese allies being the major beneficiaries. While they have grown rich beyond the dreams of avarice, the vast majority of the local Congolese population face widespread abject poverty, insecurity, displacement, abduction and death.

Wealth for a small military, political and commercial elite has come at a huge price. Hundreds of thousands of Congolese civilians have been tortured and killed during fighting to secure control of natural resources. Thousands of others have died due to malnutrition and lack of access to humanitarian assistance after being forced to flee their homes.

Foreign forces have also deliberately stoked inter-ethnic conflicts and mass killings in order to promote their economic interests. This has been the case in Ituri for example, resulting in further mass killings and large scale destruction of habitations. Thousands of women have been raped. Children as young as 12 have been forced into hard labour in the mines. Human rights defenders who have denounced these abuses have been beaten, detained, forced to flee or killed." (AI, 28 April 2003)

According to Human Rights Watch (2003).

"The Security Council has failed to act on previous reports from the panel showing the link between the activities of multinational corporations and armed groups guilty of massacres and other atrocities. The war in the DRC is estimated to have caused the deaths of more than three million people, the highest death toll in terms of civilian lives since World War II. According to the Panel of Experts, established by the Security Council in June 2000, the drive to control natural resources was a major motive for the war." (HRW 27 Oct 03)

Fighting between various armed groups causes desperate displacement situation in the Kivus (2000-2003)

- Splitting of North Kivu Province between two competing rebel groups

- Intensification of fighting between Rwandan army and Congolese rebel group in South Kivu caused thousands of IDPs (2002)
- Following the withdrawal of Rwandan troops, fighting between RCD and Mai Mai to control towns cause further displacement (Oct 02-Apr 03)
- Fighting between RCD-Goma and Mai Mai fighters in South Kivu areas of Bibokoboko, Cimuka, Bumbembe, Sange, Rusabaga and Mutarare (Aug 03)
- Fighting between RCD-K/ML and Mai Mai militias in North Kivu (Aug 03)
- Fighting between a Mayi-Mayi militias and a Rwandan rebel group in Mwenga, South Kivu (Nov 03)

"As a result of all the fighting, North Kivu has been split into two; one area controlled by the RCD-Goma with its headquarters in Goma town, and the remaining part controlled by the Ugandan and Kinshasa backed RCD-ML with its headquarters in Beni town. The RCD-Goma appointed Eugène Serufili as governor for North Kivu-Goma and RCD-ML chose Eric Paluku to head North Kivu-Beni." (IRIN 4 Nov 03)

"In mid-2002, Fighting between the Rwandan army and a Congolese rebel group has intensified recently in the South Kivu region of Eastern DR Congo, leading to an increasing number of displaced people, reports JRS in the Great Lakes region. The Rwandan army has been deployed in DR Congo since 1998 on the pretext of protecting their borders from hostile Hutu forces based there. Since March of this year however, they have become embroiled in a conflict with the Tutsi Banyamulenge rebel group, who themselves are a dissident breakaway group, having formerly been part of the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD). JRS in the region reports that the conflict has escalated in recent days with an increasing use of heavy arms and attacks on villages, leading the local population to flee. Some reports indicate that tens of thousands of people have become displaced as a result of the latest fighting. There are no humanitarian organisations in the area capable of intervening and providing much needed aid to the civilian population, with the region classed as a maximum insecurity area." (JRS 15 July 2002)

"Large-scale displacement of the local population has been reported in recent weeks both in Uvira and the Ruzizi plains. The Roman Catholic NGO, Caritas, estimates that 20,000 of 130,000 inhabitants had fled during the Mayi-Mayi advance on Uvira. The return of RCD-Goma to the town had led to the displacement of a further 37,700 people, mostly to surrounding areas in the Middle and High Plateau areas, Caritas and local NGOs reported. A few of those displaced had begun to trickle back to the town since then, UN sources said." (IRIN 30 Oct 02)

"Close to 1,000 people fled Uvira, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), on Friday after fighting broke out between rebel Rassemblement congolais pour la democratie-Goma (RCD-Goma) forces who control the town, and Mayi Mayi militia, local sources told IRIN.

"Six shells fell in the town, but no one has been able to see what damage they've caused because the shooting only stopped around 10 a.m.," the source said.

Hamadou Toure, spokesman for the UN Mission to the DRC, confirmed the fighting. "There has been sporadic shooting since 0500 local time," he said.

Uvira, in DRC's South Kivu province, lies on the shore of Lake Tanganyika on the border with Burundi. Radio Bonesha, reporting from the Burundian capital Bujumbura, said that a man and two children had been killed by a shell which landed on their home.

RCD-Goma spokesman Jean-Pierre Lola Kisanga said that fighting was particularly heavy around the port of Kalungu.

The RCD-Goma rebels, together with the pro-government Mayi Mayi militia and all other parties to the war in the DRC, signed a peace accord on 2 April to end more than four years of fighting." (IRIN, 25 April 2003)

"Some 98 Congolese crossed into Burundi's northwestern province of Cibitoke on Wednesday, fleeing renewed fighting in the eastern province of South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), according to local authority officials.[...]

He said the Congolese were fleeing fighting between fighters of the Rwandan-backed Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) and Mayi-Mayi militiamen in the South Kivu areas of Bibokoboko, Cimuka, Bumbembe, Sange, Rusabaga and Mutarare." (IRIN 14 Aug 03)

In North Kivu: "Persistent fighting between Mayi-Mayi militias and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération (RCD-K/ML) former rebel movement around the town of Butembo in northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has forced thousands to flee for safety, NGO German Agro Action (GAA) reported on Tuesday." (IRIN 12 Aug 03)

"Fighting that erupted on Friday between a Mayi-Mayi militia and a Rwandan rebel group in South Kivu Province, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), has resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that anywhere between 2,000 and 4,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) sought refuge in Mwenga. Some of the IDPs were reported to be staying with host families, while others were temporarily settled in sites set up by local authorities. Humanitarian agencies are reportedly overwhelmed by the sudden influx, and concerted efforts are underway to respond to IDP needs." (UN OCHA 4 Nov 03)

For political analysis of the conflict in the Kivus, see 'The Kivus: The forgotten crucible of the Congo conflict', International Crisis Group, 24 January 2003 ([click here](#))

In Maniema people flee insecurity (2001-2002)

- Besides insecurity, Southern Maniema's logistical isolation is another major constraint, exacerbated by the war
- Thousands of residents of Kampene (Maniema) fled into a nearby forest from attack of RCD-Goma, which aimed to regain town from Mai Mai in June 2002

"In the province of Maniema, the war between Mayi Mayi and RCD-Goma forces didn't directly touch the territories / health zones of Southern Maniema Kibombo, Kasongo, Kabambare (Lusangi HZ) and Pangi (Kampene HZ) until 8-10 months ago. By the end of August, the war had escalated between these two foes especially in the area north of Kasongo city, with the gold mining towns of Bikenge, Kampene, and Saramabila and the diamond mining city of Kibombo being the most sought after positions. The civilian population living on or near these front lines has not been spared, as campaigns are often characterized by innocent killings, rapes, lootings and general human rights abuses exacted by both parties. Today, with several thousand families hiding in forests and fields in fear of being seen by one armed group or another, it could be deduced that the belligerents in Southern Maniema are also targeting the civilian population.

Besides insecurity, Southern Maniema's logistical isolation is another major constraint, exacerbated by the war. Before the beginning of the second war in 1998, Maniema was considered the bread basket of Congo but that was before the railroad closed and river traffic halted for political reasons and feeder roads fell into decay. With few roads and trucks, the bicycle is the only feasible method of transportation of goods to and from Kasongo city for its 46,000 habitants." (OCHA 22 Nov 02, p1)

"Thousands of residents were forced to flee into a nearby forest when Rwandan-backed Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) forces attacked the town of Kampene, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Missionary Service News Agency (Misna) reported on Saturday.[...]

It reported that the fighting took place 6 and 7 June in Kampene, some 500 km southwest of Bukavu, in the Maniema region. Misna said that a month earlier, a Mayi-Mayi faction called the Kala Sawa (Righteous Brothers) had seized control of the gold- and coltan-rich area from RCD-Goma.

While the exact toll of the fighting in Kampene remained unknown, Misna reported that the town was deserted." (IRIN 10 June 2002)

Violent conflict between the Hema and Lendu people in Orientale province has caused major displacement (1999-2003)

- Renewed fighting and killing of 6 ICRC workers in April 2001
- 80,000 new IDPs since Jan 2002 (April 2002)
- Fighting between UPC (Congolese Patriotic Union) and RCD ML Kisangani (Congolese Rally for Democracy Movement for Liberation) cause more displacement end 2002
- More than 100,000 people are newly displaced by clashes between the Lendu and Hema tribes in December 2002
- In April 2003 the UN reported the massacre of at least 1,000 people (Hema victims of Lendu violence) in the northeastern district of Ituri
- Renewed fighting erupts in Bunia in May 2003, following the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from the area
- Rebel UPC group take control of Bunia in May 2003, after several days of fighting between rival ethnic militias that killed at least 30 people and forced thousands to flee
- According to MONUC, more than 60,000 people have been killed and 500,000 displaced in the northeastern Ituri district between 1999 and 2003
- Conflict was initially ethnic in nature (Hema v. Lendu tribes), but was later exacerbated by the involvement of armed factions engaged in a power struggle in the region
- Escalation of fighting in Nov 03

"[In December 1999 it was reported that] Ethnic clashes between the Lendu and Hema people in Ituri district of eastern DRC have broken out again in the past fortnight, displacing tens of thousands of civilians and greatly increasing humanitarian needs in an already difficult situation, the regional head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Philip Spoerri told IRIN on Tuesday.
[...]

The current clashes were at their most intense around Djugu, and had sent 20,000 to 30,000 displaced people towards nearby towns, particularly Bunia, for shelter, he said. In light of the renewed clashes, the ICRC hoped to reach 85,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in 10-15 sites in and around Bunia and Djugu by the end of January, Spoerri told IRIN." (IRIN 21 December 1999)

"The conflict in the district has cost the lives of thousands and caused over 150,000 people to be displaced within the region. Many villages have been razed to the ground; the fields that were used for crop cultivation are totally deserted. The conflict has led to the collapse of the already fragile healthcare system. In the past six months, the area has been ravaged by various epidemics including measles, the plague, and cholera." (MSF 2 February 2000)

Mediation Efforts and Reconciliation

By mid-February, the Front for the Liberation of Congo appeared to be reestablishing control in the area. Violence diminished and hopes for peace increased. Following a three-day conference attended by some 160 traditional chiefs and notables of Ituri province, the FLC managed to broker a peace agreement between representatives of the Hema and the Lendu peoples. Signed on February 17, the agreement called among other things for an immediate cessation of hostilities and the disarmament of all militia groups. Olivier Kamitatu, national secretary of the FLC, told Human Rights Watch that the new front, "as public authority," undertook to implement these and other provisions of the agreement, including to dismantle training centers for militia, control movements of soldiers, secure border crossings, and guarantee the free movement of goods and people along roads." (HRW March 2001, sect. IV)

"The killings of the six ICRC personnel in the vicinity of Bunia in April comes against a backdrop of ethnic massacres between the Lendu and Hema [...]. Following these killings, fresh fighting broke out between the Hema-Bagerere and the Lendu, around the Fataki and Djugu areas." (UN SC 8 June 2001, para.66)

Renewed fighting in Feb 2002 causes displacement of 15,000 around Bunia

"Humanitarian agencies in Bunia, northeastern DRC, have estimated that more than 15,000 people had been displaced in the surrounding area in the past few weeks by ethnic conflict involving the Lendu, Hema and Alur tribes, and among the political factions of several rebel groups." (IRIN 19 Feb 2002)

"The decades old tribal conflict over land has sucked in various rebel groups originally fighting the Kinshasa government of President Joseph Kabila. The Hema- relatively rich pastoralists now have the support of UPC (Congolese Patriotic Union). UPC took over Bunia from Mbusa Nyamwisi and his RCD ML Kisangani (Congolese Rally for Democracy Movement for Liberation) in September 2002. The political whirlwind fanned the massacre of Lendu- cultivators and tribes akin to them.

The survivors have been fleeing southwards towards Beni where Mbusa set up his base. Recently, more than 300 people, mostly Hema and Babira including patients waiting for operation in Nyakunde Hospital, were massacred. And at the end of October, RCD ML Kisangani took Mambasa from Jean Pierre Bemba's MLC (Movement for Liberation of Congo). Both incidents triggered revenge and exodus.

"Hundreds of people are again arriving in North Kivu Province in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) following fierce fighting between two rebel armies for control of Bafwasende and Niania in Province Orientale.

The RCD ML Kisangani (Congolese Rally for Democracy- Liberation Movement Kisangani) of Mbusa Nyamwisi took over Bafwasende and Niania from Roger Lumbala's rebel army triggering a mass exodus to Luna, Eringeti and Beni - the main town in northern Nord Kivu Province and base of RCD ML Kisangani." (WV 6 Nov 02)

"Over 100,000 people newly displaced by recent clashes between the Lendu and Hema tribes in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on Christmas Eve are in dire need in Beni town, 85 kms west of the border with Uganda.

World Vision, a relief and development agency has for the last two months been responding to immediate food and water needs of about 70,000 people coming from Bunia and the villages around it. During the same period, Merlin, another NGO has provided the much- needed survival kits and health care.

The newly displaced people wandering in this forested region of Congo are in need of food, clean water, shelter, drugs, clothing, blankets, kitchenware and utensils. Philippe Guiton, World Vision Africa Relief team leader will visit Beni this week to offer technical support.

The tribal conflict that has rendered hundreds of thousands homeless is exacerbated by a wider political conflict, mainly between warring rebel factions: the Congolese Rally for Democracy-Liberation Movement (RCD ML Kisangani) of Mbusa Nyamwisi and the Movement for Liberation of Congo (MLC), led by Jean Pierre Bemba.

Each of the warring parties seeks to control the resource-rich areas of Ituri where Bunia is found and North Kivu provinces where Beni and Goma are located. The influx of people moving from trouble spots in Beni, Butembo and Angita is believed to have risen to 200,000 people.

Bemba's MLC overrun Eringeti 50 km north of Beni and held it for three days. More than 14,000 IDPs are holed up in Eringeti. Around the same time, the Mai Mai warriors raided a prison in Beni, an action, which was characterised by heavy shooting in town." (World Vision, 9 Jan 2003)

"At least 1,000 people have been killed in ethnic violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the United Nations said on Sunday, one day after the signing of an accord to end over four years of war in the vast Central African country.

The massacres, which took place on Thursday in the northeastern region of Ituri, claimed 'at least one thousand victims', the UN mission in the DRC said in a statement sent to AFP's office in the Rwandan capital Kigali.

It said this information came from 'witness accounts' of the massacres, which took place in the parish of Drodó and 14 neighbouring areas.

According to lists compiled by local leaders, 966 people were 'summarily executed' in three hours of massacres, said the UN mission, which on Saturday sent a team to Drodó and the surrounding areas.

The UN mission said it had visited 49 seriously injured victims in a local hospital. Most had machetes wounds and some had been hit by bullets. The team had also witnessed '20 mass graves, identifiable by traces of blood that was still fresh'.

The UN mission, MONUC, said it would continue its investigations to identify those responsible for the bloodletting.

DRC's minister for human rights, Ntumba Luaba, called on the MONUC to help catch the killers. 'MONUC, which has already gathered some information on the massacre, must quickly pursue its investigation so the perpetrators are don't remain unpunished,' he told AFP in a telephone interview from the capital Kinshasa.

The violence came one day after the warring parties in the Democratic Republic of Congo signed a historic pact on Wednesday to end more than four years of brutal warfare.

The accord between the government, opposition parties and several rebel groups ended 19 months of tortuous peace negotiations. It enabled President Joseph Kabila to issue on Friday a new constitution which opens the way for a national unity government and the first democratic elections in the former Belgian colony for more than 40 years.

A commission, set up to try and bring peace to the troubled Ituri region, began work on Saturday." (AFP, 6 April 2003)

"Fighting involving heavy weaponry and light arms erupted on Wednesday between ethnic Hema and Lendu militias in the town of Bunia in Ituri District of northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The ensuing situation was described by residents as 'chaotic' and 'terrifying', with sporadic fighting continuing to erupt at irregular intervals on Thursday. The situation outside Bunia, however, remained largely unknown because of prevailing insecurity and lack of access.

The international NGO Medair said on Wednesday that insecurity had prevented it and other NGOs from carrying out their relief efforts, forcing them to take refuge in their homes. It reported groups of men and children, armed and drugged, roaming the streets, pillaging and killing.

One Bunia resident, who requested anonymity, said the current situation could be defined as an ongoing contest for control, on the one hand, between the Ituri Pacification Commission (IPC), which seeks to restore order in the region, and on the other hand ethnic Lendu and Hema militias fighting each other, while both trying to disrupt the establishment of order within Bunia by all means.

'The population, no matter what [ethnic] community, is in constant fear of looting and harassment by Lendu combatants,' the resident reported, and this was forcing thousands of ethnic Hema civilians, in particular, to flee.

[...]

The resident further cautioned that the exodus of ethnic Hema/Gegere from Bunia would result in an aggravated humanitarian situation at their destination points, and that continued restriction of movement for the humanitarian community due to insecurity would result in further deterioration of the humanitarian situation of populations in inaccessible areas.

Although specific information on the number of people displaced, injured or killed remained unavailable, at least 1,000 people sought refuge in the MONUC compound on Wednesday." (IRIN, 8 May 2003)

"The rebel group, Union des patriotes congolais (UPC) took control of Bunia on Monday after six days of fighting between rival ethnic militias, MONUC, the UN Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), told IRIN.

"The UPC is patrolling the town together with some soldiers from the PUSIC de Kawa [an allied rebel group led by Kawa Mandro Panga]", Patricia Tome, director of information for MONUC, told IRIN. She said apart from sporadic shooting, calm had returned to the town after a two hour battle which began at 06:00 local time.

The UPC, led by Thomas Lubanga, a Hema, formerly controlled Bunia, which is the principal town of Ituri district in northeastern DRC. Lubanga's fighters were chased out by Ugandan troops on 6 March. Fighting between rival Hema and Lendu militias intensified after the Ugandans completed their withdrawal from Bunia on 7 May following an agreement with the government in Kinshasa.

Local sources told IRIN that thousands of people who sought refuge at the MONUC base on Sunday night to escape the fighting were returning to their homes. However, news reports said that ethnic Lendus were leaving Bunia.

Lubanga told IRIN that Lendu militiamen had been practising extortion and that militias had been 'sowing terror in the town'.

[...]

Lubanga blamed the Kinshasa government for the violence, claiming that through an alliance with the former rebel group, Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Kisangani-Movement de liberation (RCD-K-ML), the government was arming and giving uniforms to Lendu militiamen.

According to MONUC some 30 people have been killed in the fighting in the past week, including children and several priests.

Aine Joyce, information officer for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said that some 30 international aid workers remained in Bunia to assess urgent needs. The rest were evacuated on Saturday" (IRIN, 12 May 2003)

"More than 60,000 people were killed, 50,000 houses burnt and 500,000 people got displaced in DR Congo's Ituri region between 1999 and September 2002, a reliable source at the UN Observer Mission in the country (MONUC) here said.

Violence against civilians and hard-line positions among belligerents in Ituri caused 'the most worrying humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo,' the source disclosed Wednesday.

Thirteen UN agencies and three NGOs need about 270 million US dollars in the short- and long-term to extend humanitarian aid to the most affected regions of DRC, including Ituri, where about 15 organisations are operating, according to the report.

Initially, the conflict in Ituri (Eastern province where Bunia is capital) was a feud between Hemas and Lendus, before the involvement of armed groups whose leaders are fighting in a power struggle over the region.

The rebel factions of RCD-National led by Roger Lumbala (supported by Jean-Pierre Benba's MLC), the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC led by Thomas Lubanga) and the Mbusa Nyamwisi's RCD-ML, evicted from Bunia and Mambasa, are engaged in the bloody struggle.

In the past two weeks, clashes have intensified between the first two movements, causing more than 100 deaths and several thousand persons freshly displaced." (PANA, 26 December 2002)

"In early November [2003], Bunia experienced an escalation in violent clashes between several entities: 1) between the two major ethnic Hema militias (the Rwandan-backed Union des Patriotes Congolese (UPC) and the Ugandan-backed Parti pour l'Unité et la Sauvegarde de l'Intégrité du Congo (PUSIC)), 2) between the UPC and MONUC, and 3) to some degree between the ethnic Lendu militia Forces de Résistance Patriotique en Ituri (FRPI) and MONUC following the arrest of the FRPI commander, Colonel Ngodjolo, for his alleged involvement in the assassination of an UPC advisor. A series of attacks occurred when approximately twenty UPC soldiers opened fire on several MONUC positions, including MONUC headquarters. These attacks prompted retaliation by MONUC, which initiated the arrest of suspected gunmen in armed assaults, night foot patrols, and a ban on all uniforms and public meetings within a designated perimeter around MONUC headquarters in Bunia. MONUC's approach brought renewed calm to the city, but questions remained regarding civilian control of Bunia. Also in Bunia, MONUC completed the re-training of a 70-member national police force. The French Cooperation allocated 180,000 Euros for the rehabilitation of judicial infrastructures such as courts and a prison in Bunia. The UPC militia returned its zones of control to the Ituri Interim Administration on November 14, 2003. Before this handover, Bunia was controlled by two administrations: the UPC and the Ituri Interim Administration (IIA). Having one administration governing Ituri and recognized by the national and international community is an important symbol of unity in the region, which will also improve the effectiveness, credibility, and legitimacy of the IIA." (USAID 30 Nov 03)

People flee fighting at the frontline in the Katanga Province (1998-2003)

- Majority of IDPs fled during the August-November 1998 fighting in northern Katanga
- Massacres and clashes despite setting-up of transition government in June 03

"Along with the first-wave displaced of the Kivus, the IDP caseload in Katanga is the oldest as it was mainly generated during the August-November 1998 fighting in northern Katanga. All major IDP categories (according to their mode of settlement) known in the DRC are represented in this province: there

are IDP camps in Lubumbashi, IDP resettlement sites south of the provincial capital, IDPs hosted in local communities and finally those dispersed in an area as large as 50,000 km². In total, there are some 250,000 displaced persons scattered in Katanga on both sides of the frontline." (OCHA 11 July 2000)

"Insecurity

Over the past six months, human rights organizations have reported massacres of civilians and clashes between Mai-Mai, self-defense forces (FAP) and the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC) along the former disengagement line in northern Katanga. When fighting broke out in May after the assassination of a Mai Mai chief named Makabe in Malemba Nkulu territory, thousands of people fled their homes to take refuge in the bush. A second larger displacement took place in October along the border between Mitwaba and Pweto territories as a result of a Mai Mai attack on a FAC base. Most of the 10,000 civilians who fled the violence are only now returning to their villages.

The problems between the Mai Mai and the FAC can be traced to Laurent-Désiré Kabila's call to arms in 1998, and the perception among the Mai Mai that while they were defending Lubumbashi and Kamina from Rwandan-backed RCD forces, FAC soldiers were looting their villages and abusing their families. As a result, most Mai Mai today don't trust the FAC, and feel they haven't been properly compensated for their efforts to defend Kabila Sr. They claim to be ready to turn in their weapons to the international community, but not to the local authorities.

Ethnic tension

During the last decade, Katanga has been the scene of violent ethnic clashes. In 1992 and 1993, Kasaians were victims of ethnic cleansing by the Mobutu regime in retaliation for the election of Etienne Tshisekedi as prime minister. The Governor of Katanga, Gabriel Kyungu, was encouraged to persecute people from Kasai province. Katangans themselves became involved, enticed by the promise of Kasaiian-held jobs at the Gecamines, the country's largest state-owned mining company. According to MONUC's human rights section, thousands of Kasaians were killed and over 500,000 sequestered in inhuman conditions before being evacuated by humanitarian organizations to Kasai, where most of them had never set foot before. Although tension has decreased in the past few years, there is a risk of flare-up especially during the pre-elections period when ethnicity may be exploited for political gain." (MONUC 27 Nov 03)

Women and girls from eastern Congo flee to escape sexual violence (2002)

"Women and girls of eastern Congo, their families, and the larger community have developed different strategies to protect them from sexual violence. Some families have sent their women and girls to safer locations. A Bukavu resident told Human Rights Watch researchers, "I have a girl in my house whose parents sent her away to keep her from being raped." In other cases, most of the family has fled to safer areas. A priest from a rural parish said, "Women, girls and young men are not in the villages anymore—you only find old people." (HRW June 2002, p75)

Many displaced who had found refuge in Goma had to flee again when the Nyiragongo volcano erupted (2002)

- Eruption of Mount Nyiragongo near Goma in Jan 2002
- As a result of the disaster, assessments indicate that around 15 per cent of Goma town has been destroyed, 120,000 people have been made homeless and 147 have died

- With their property destroyed and their livelihoods wiped away, the entire Goma population has been affected

"Perhaps among the most unlucky are those who fled violence only to be forced to flee again from Goma as the Nyiragongo erupted: chased away one more time but by natural disaster. [...]"

The eruption of Mount Nyiragongo near Goma, on January 17 [2002], has caused a severe natural disaster in an area that has already suffered from years of conflict and distress. The lava flowed into the city and nearby Lake Kivu, causing fires, devastating the area, and generated an estimated 350,000 people to flee towards neighboring Rwanda. The vast majority of those who fled the town on January 17 returned home as early as Sunday 20 January and decided to stay in Goma despite fear due to a number of heavy earthquakes, continued eruptions, opening of fissures by earth tremors and serious risks of lethal gasses emission.

As a result of the disaster, assessments indicate that around 15 per cent of Goma town has been destroyed, 120,000 people have been made homeless and 147 have died.

With their property destroyed and their livelihoods wiped away, the entire Goma population is affected. Relief agencies and local authorities continue to debate options for the support of affected families. Possible options include moving to sites near Goma, resettling in neighboring towns, or returning previously displaced people to their areas of origin. The Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD), which controls the area, has banned any reconstruction on top of the recent lava flows and has announced that two sites outside of Goma (Lac Vert and Mugunga) would be available for resettlement. However, a survey of homeless Goma residents by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) revealed strong resistance to settling in the outside of Goma or in other towns.

The specificity of this natural disaster is that it has happened in a stateless area, ravaged by war and this situation has further complicated the response by the humanitarian actors. For example, the extent of the distrust between the two populations has been a factor leading to a much earlier return of the population to Goma and the suspicion of "hidden motives" about declaration and advice from RCD have also created a specific dynamic to the crisis. " (UN OCHA 28 Feb 02, pp.4 & 14)

POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES

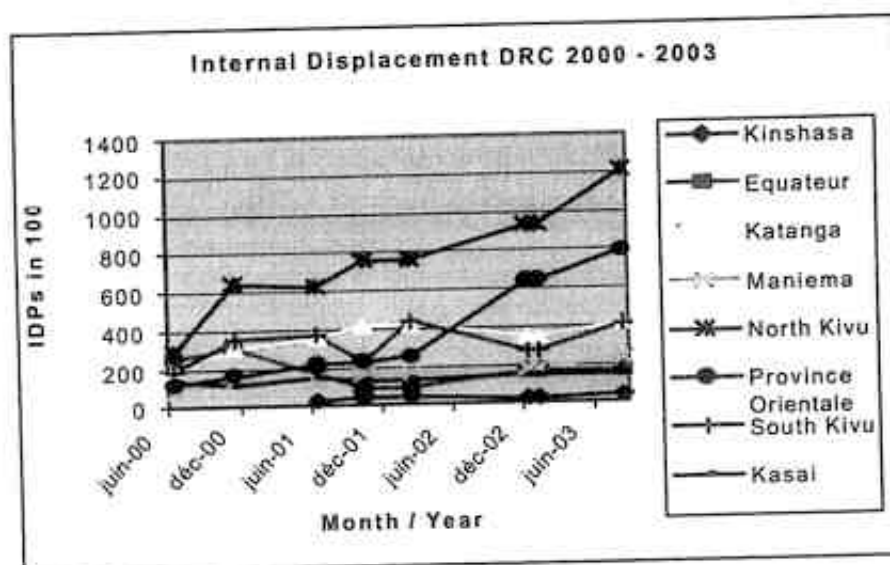
Total national figures

Approximately 3.4 million people displaced in DRC as of end 2003

"A fifth year of uninterrupted war in large parts of the DRC further eroded coping mechanisms, and pushed entire populations to near exhaustion. This was reflected in the startling increase in IDP numbers from 2.7 million in January 2003 to 3.4 million in August 2003." (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03)

Major increase mainly due to the crisis in Ituri:

"Despite continued efforts by humanitarian actors to reach the victims, it is estimated that out of the 4 million inhabitants of Ituri, 500,000 to 1 million were displaced, and out of this million displaced, only 110,000 of them who reached Oicha and Beni towns in North Kivu received assistance." (UN OCHA 15 Aug 2003, p23)



(UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p18)

Over 2.7 million IDPs, mainly in eastern DRC (December 2002)

- 500,000 additional IDPs since the beginning of 2002, mainly in Ituri and South Kivu
- 400,000 IDPs are now in South Kivu, compared to 235,000 in Aug 02
- More than 2.7 million IDPs at the end of 2002, according to UN figures

Country	IDPs		Refugees		Total affected population	Changes %

							(in figures)
	July 2002	Dec 2002	July 2002	Dec 2002	July 2002	Dec 2002	
DRC	2,275,000	2,706,993	346,540	331,241	2,621,540	3,038,234	+15.90% (+416,694)

Click here for map, 'Democratic Republic of Congo: Affected Populations by Province, Internally Displaced (UN OCHA, January 2003)

"The recent aggravation of violence in rebel-held areas (mainly in Ituri region, South Kivu, Kindu, Shabunda and northern Katanga) increased the number of displaced persons by at least 500,000 since the beginning of the year, putting considerable pressure on the humanitarian community's response capacity. The continuous eruption of cholera epidemics in many provinces (Kasais, Katanga, Orientale and Kivus) is an indication of the exhaustion of the population's survival strategies after years of protracted crisis and the need to reinforce the existing emergency response and coordination mechanisms." (UN 19 Nov 2002, p27)

"The Humanitarian Coordinator described the situation in the border region of Uvira, the Hauts Plateaux and Fizi- Baraka as a "creeping disaster", with over 100 villages deserted and 20,000 newly displaced families, bringing the total number of internally displaced people in South Kivu to an estimated 400,000." (UN SC 18 Oct 02, para.60)

2,275,000 IDPs as of August 2002

- UN estimates of IDPs remained stable from February 2002 to August 2002

LOCATION	ORIGIN	FIGURES
Equateur	DRC	85,000
Katanga	DRC	415,000
Maniema	DRC	160,000
North Kivu	DRC	760,000
Orientale	DRC	250,000
South Kivu	DRC	435,000
East and West Kasai	DRC	130,000
Kinshasa	DRC	40,000
TOTAL IDPs	2,275,000	
Victims of Nyiragongo eruption	120,000	
TOTAL Affected Population :	2,395,000	

(UN OCHA August 2002 & UN OCHA 31 July 2002)

2,275,111 IDPs as of February 2002:

"...the reported total number of IDPs (which shows an increase of 11% or 230,000 persons over the period [since September 2001]) reflects only a fraction of what is actually happening on the ground. In practice, a displaced person cannot be accounted for more than once and in today's Congo, the population who fled their villages and found asylum in another area have had, in many cases, to flee again and once again as frontlines move, violence erupts and their temporary refuges are no longer safe. Perhaps among the most unlucky are those who fled violence only to be forced to flee again from Goma as the Nyiragongo erupted; chased away one more time but by natural disaster. [...]"

This number also does not take into account the latest displacement due to interethnic clashes in Ituri (Orientale Province). (UN OCHA 28 Feb 02, p.14)

Other vulnerable groups include about 200,000 people who live hidden and are totally destitute (Feb 2002)

OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS IN THE DRC	
Estimated child soldiers	6,000
Widows	15,000
Handicapped including war wounded	25,000
Urban vulnerable+/-	3,500,000
Hidden population/ total destitution	200,000
Food insecure	16,000,000
Host families (estimate) 87,500 (households) x 5 (individuals) =	437,500
TOTAL	20,987,500*

*It is recognised that several of these groups will, naturally, overlap, possibly rendering this figure slightly exaggerated.

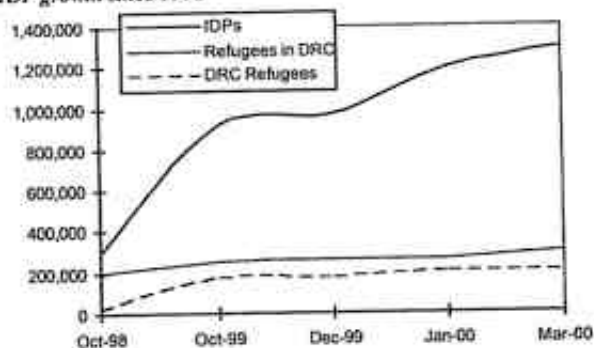
(UN OCHA 28 Feb 02, p.14)

Over 2 million IDPs in DRC by end of September 2001

According to UN estimates, there were about 2,045,000 IDPs in DRC as of the end of September 2001 (UN OCHA 30 September 2001).

There were about 2,002,500 IDPs in DRC by the end of December 2000. (OCHA 31 December 2000, p.3) This represents a significant increase during the last of part 2000, since there were 1,4 million IDPs by June 2000 and 1,8 million by September 2000. (UN November 2000, p.15). This is despite the fact that an estimated 810,000 former IDPs have returned to their habitual place of residence. (OCHA 31 December 2000, p.6).

IDP growth since 1998



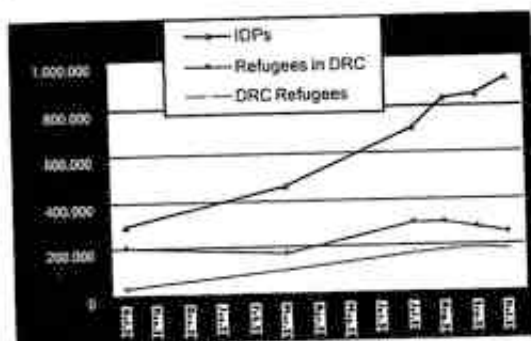
(OCHA 17 April 2000)

According to the United Nations, "The vast majority of the 2 million people displaced by war are children and women." (United Nations 7 June 2001)

960,000 IDPs in DRC by end of 1999

"[By January 2000 there were] some 960,000 internally displaced persons in eight of the 11 provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and over 300,000 refugees from six of its nine neighbouring countries. Recent humanitarian Assessments reveal that over 2.1 million people (internally displaced persons, refugees, urban vulnerable) or 4.3 per cent of the population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo face critical food insecurity. Another 8.4 million (mostly urban populations and farmers in the proximity of the front line), or 17 Per cent of the population, face moderate but rapidly growing food insecurity." (UN SC 17 January 2000, para. 24)

"The reporting period [1 October - 15 November 1999] saw new population displacements (Kibali-Ituri, Orientale; Walikale, North Kivu, and Mongala, Equateur) but also return of entire communities in South Kivu. Nevertheless, the overall number of IDPs grew from 830,000 to 916,000 (increase by 75,000), as illustrated on the accompanying graph. This considerable increment is attributable to continued hostilities between Hema and Lemu ethnicities and volatile security in Haut Uele districts of Orientale province." (UN OCHA 15 November 1999, "Humanitarian Action")



500,000 IDPs in DRC by end of 1998

"The number of IDPs is believed to have almost tripled since the outbreak of hostilities in the DRC and is estimated to have reached the level of 500,000 persons scattered in North and South Kivu, Orientale, Maniema, Kasai, Equateur and Katanga provinces. In rebel-held areas, the current conflict is marked by patterns some of which are similar to those that affected humanitarian action during the 1996-1997 war in former Zaire, i.e. all communities of Northern and Southern Kivu are considered - and consider themselves as - collective targets for military attacks. Massive, durable displacements are expected to have been amplified during the last three months. The situation is usually different in other parts of the DRC, where the populations are only afraid of looting and side-effects of military confrontations. Thus, they only leave their houses for as long as fighting, looting or take-over of a town will last at local level." (UN December 1998, p.14)

It should be noted that USCR apparently subscribed to a more careful estimate of IDPs by the end of 1998:

"The outbreak of renewed war in Congo-Kinshasa in August uprooted hundreds of thousands of people, some for a few days, others for the rest of the year. At year's end, displacement persisted primarily in the eastern one-third of the country.

Although an estimated 300,000 persons were internally displaced at year's end and some 130,000 were refugees in neighboring countries, some aid workers estimated that 80 percent of the population in some eastern regions—a million or more people—might have fled their homes temporarily for several days at different times during the year. Such estimates were impossible to confirm because much of the country remained inaccessible to local and international aid workers." (USCR 1999, p.59)

100,000 believed to be displaced by the end of 1997

- After the main civil war ended (May 1997), eruptions of violence in eastern Congo/Zaire pushed additional tens of thousands from their homes
- About 40,000 Congolese fled early in 1997 hundreds of kilometres westward with Rwandan refugees to the city of Kisangani

"The number of residents who became internally displaced during the civil war remains uncertain. More than 100,000 were already uprooted in eastern Zaire prior to the civil war due to ethnic conflicts. Poor roads, impenetrable forests, and pockets of insecurity impeded full assessments of humanitarian needs in the country's vast isolated areas throughout 1997.

A UN funding appeal in March estimated that nearly a half-million Congolese/Zairians were displaced. U.S. aid officials estimated in August that some 230,000 probably were uprooted within the country. A UN human rights official reported in mid-year that 250,000 to 400,000 were displaced. An international NGO put the number at 190,000. All sources agreed that the most pervasive displacement was in the chronically unstable Masisi zone of eastern Congo/Zaire, near the town of Goma.

USCR site visits to eastern Congo/Zaire during 1997 concluded that up to half the population in some areas of the east were at least temporarily displaced during the war. Many were able to return home after several weeks, but thousands of families endured long-term displacement caused by lingering insecurity in their home areas. USCR estimated that up to 150,000 people remained internally displaced at mid-year, but a majority were "invisible to outsiders because they are dispersed," USCR's report noted.

About 40,000 Congolese fled hundreds of kilometers westward with Rwandan refugees to the city of Kisangani early in the year. More than 70,000 fled to Tanzania. Smaller numbers entered Uganda, Burundi, Sudan, Zambia, and other countries as refugees. As many as 10,000 former Zairian soldiers and their families reportedly fled to Central African Republic.

[...]

In the second half of 1997, after the main civil war ended, eruptions of violence in eastern Congo/Zaire pushed additional tens of thousands from their homes. Some 8,000 people converged on the town of Goma in late April. At least 15,000 fled to Rwanda. Entire areas of Masisi zone, in the east, lay deserted, with 15,000 homes burned and 1,000 people dead." (USCR 1998, pp. 60-61)

400,000 believed to be displaced by the end of 1996

"Uprooted Zairians were the virtually forgotten victims of their country's widening civil war [after October 1996].

An estimated three million Zairians lived in the conflict zones. An estimated 400,000 became internally displaced, and approximately 50,000 others became new refugees in Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda. An additional 1,000 or more Zairian or Rwandan Tutsi fled to neighboring Congo to escape anti-Tutsi violence in the Zairian capital, Kinshasa.

In addition to the new Zairian refugees created during 1996, tens of thousands of Zairians remained refugees from previous years." (USCR 1997, p.107)

Disaggregated figures

Distribution of IDPs by province (July 99-end 2003)

- Great increase of IDPs in Orientale due to crisis in Ituri (mid-2003)
- The majority of displaced persons were found in the eastern provinces of North Kivu, Katanga, Orientale and South Kivu, (Aug 2002) The majority of displaced persons were found in the eastern provinces of North Kivu, Katanga, Orientale and South Kivu, (Aug 2002)
- about 1 million IDPs in the Kivus as of Aug 2002
- The number of IDPs in Equateur decreased greatly from Dec 2000 to Sept 2001
- The number of IDPs in Orientale increased greatly from Dec 2000 to Sept 2001 and then increased again in Feb 2002
- The number of IDPs in Katanga increased by 100,000 IDPs between Dec 00 and Sept 01

November 2003

LOCATION	ORIGIN	FIGURES
Equateur	DRC	168,000
Katanga	DRC	412,000
Maniema	DRC	234,000
North Kivu	DRC	1,209,000
Orientale	DRC	791,000
South Kivu	DRC	413,700
East and West Kasai	DRC	145,000
Kinshasa	DRC	41,000
TOTAL IDPs		3.4 million

(based on numbers provided by UN OCHA, 18 Nov 03, p19)

Area	July 1999	June 2000	Dec 2000	Sept 2001	Feb 2002	Aug 2002
Equateur	100,000	250,000	300,000	85,000	85,000	85,000
Orientale	70,000	215,000	160,000	230,000	250,000	250,000
North Kivu	160,000	287,000	640,000	760,000	760,000	760,000
South Kivu	195,000	220,000	350,500	225,000	435,111	435,000
Katanga	150,000	250,000	305,000	415,000	415,000	415,000
Maniema	20,000	110,000	137,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
Eastern	60,000	30,000 and	30,000 and	130,000	130,000	130,000

Kasai & Western Kasai		140,000	80,000			
Kinshasa	N/A	N/A	N/A	40,000	40,000	40,000
Total	775,000	1,502,000	2,002,500	2,045,000	2,275,111	2,275,000

Source: UN OCHA 15 July 1999, 11 July 2000, 31 December 2000 (p.11), 30 September 2001; 28 February 2002, p.13; August 2002; 31 July 2002

New survey of IDPs in camps in Kalemie, North Katanga (Jan 04)

According to survey on internal displacement in 4 IDP camps in Kalemie:

Effectifs globaux pour l'ensemble des sites d'hébergement de Kalemie

« La détermination du nombre exact des déplacés des guerres hébergés dans les différents sites de la ville de Kalemie a été un des objectifs principaux de l'opération de recensement la fin du mois de décembre 2003. Il en ressort que plus de 7.000 familles séjournent dans les quatre sites déjà cités, quelques uns depuis le début de l'année 2003, à la lumière de la distribution qu'offre le tableau suivant.

Tableau n°.1 : Répartition des effectifs des familles des déplacés de guerre par site

Sites	Fréquences absolues	Fréquences relatives
Kabutonga	477	6.7%
Lukwangulo	1052	14.7%
Lumbwe	3088	43.1%
Makala	2549	35.6%
Total	7166	100.0%

Lumbwe reste le site le plus peuplé avec 3088 familles recensées. Cet effectif est relativement inférieur à celui de plus de 3.900 déclaré par le comité du camp au terme de l'entretien que l'on a eu avec lui en début de l'opération. Il y aurait probablement eu tendance à la surestimation des effectifs pour en tirer certains avantages notamment d'ordre matériel. On aura donc réussi à élaguer au moins 800 familles fictives pour ce seul camps. C'est à Kabutonga qu'on aura réussi à élaguer le moins de faussaires possibles, soit à peine une vingtaine.

Il a été estimé nécessaire de mettre en évidence la répartition des effectifs des répondants au regard de leur sexe dans la mesure où la vulnérabilité des individus en grande partie en dépend. Ainsi donc comme en témoignent les éléments du tableau suivant plus de la moitié des répondants était des femmes. » (UN OCHA Jan 04, p10)

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

Continued displacement despite new transition government (Jan 04)

- Wave of displacement in North & South Kivu in November and December 2003

North Kivu

"Rape and abduction of women and girls, and pillage of crops by armed groups continue to plague the southern Lubero region, North Kivu Province of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a joint UN-NGO humanitarian assessment mission reported on Thursday.

More specifically, the mission visited several towns and villages in the Kayna health zone, where widespread displacement of thousands of people, and inaccessibility to thousands more, has outstripped humanitarian organizations' abilities to meet the health, nutritional and educational needs of vulnerable populations.

Many armed groups continue to be active across the region, including the forces of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération (RCD-K/ML), RCD-Goma and Mayi-Mayi militias, all of which are now part of the Congo's unified national government and military. Also present are elements of the Interahamwe, Rwandan Hutu militias that fled their country after playing a major role in the 1994 genocide of some 800,000 Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus."

South Kivu

"A wave of attacks has displaced some 20,000 people since late December in the volatile South Kivu province bordering Rwanda, say aid agencies and MONUC, the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. [...]

The attacks took place near the towns of Bunyakiri and Hombo, about 100 kilometres (60 miles) northwest of Bukavu. UN officials said witnesses had spoken of 10 deaths, but this figure had not been verified. Lapierre blamed the attacks on the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR), an extremist Rwandan Hutu group that includes thousands of "Interahamwe" gunmen accused of committing the 1994 Rwandan genocide." (Reuters 12 Jan 04)

"Fighting that erupted on Friday between a Mayi-Mayi militia and a Rwandan rebel group in South Kivu Province, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), has resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that anywhere between 2,000 and 4,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) sought refuge in Mwenga. Some of the IDPs were reported to be staying with host families, while others were temporarily settled in sites set up by local authorities. Humanitarian agencies are reportedly overwhelmed by the sudden influx, and concerted efforts are underway to respond to IDP needs.

This new round of displacement follows a recent humanitarian needs assessment mission conducted jointly by several UN agencies in South Kivu. The mission found widespread humanitarian needs in the region from Uvira to Fizi, which is south of Mwenga." (UN OCHA 4 Nov 03)

Batwa "Pygmy" population has been displaced and marginalized (Aug 03)

- Batwa have been evicted from their original homeland in forests without compensation
- Since the beginning of the conflict, Batwa have been accused of collaborating with the opposite side

"A group of Pygmies, the Batwa, face particular challenges. The Batwa, who live in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), number an estimated 70,000-87,000, according to Minority Rights Group International

Starting in the late 1960s, with the establishment of the Kahuzi-Biega Forest in South Kivu, DRC, and still continuing today, international conservation groups have joined with national governments to forcibly expel Pygmies from newly declared game parks and forest preserves. They are evicted from their homelands and offered neither compensation nor recourse. Homeless, they take up a marginalized status on the periphery of local communities. [...]

It is a social taboo to share food, occupy the same bench and socialize with Batwa in public spaces. While other citizens are issued birth certificates and identity cards free of charge, Batwa must undergo an involved bureaucratic process. Without these cards, it is difficult to enroll in schools and receive government-funded health care, which are otherwise guaranteed to other vulnerable people in the country. [...]

[...] [I]n the DRC, where many more Batwa are able to maintain their lives in the forests than in any other country in the Great Lakes region. However, these forests are popular among rebel groups and are often the battleground for the conflicts raging there today. The Batwa have been accused of exchanging information, becoming spies, or joining an opposing side, and so often become victims of violence. Amnesty International recently reported cannibalistic incidents of armed groups killing the Batwa and forcing prisoners to eat the flesh. While some Batwa do join with rebel and government forces that can provide subsistence, many more are innocent victims of armed conflict." (RI 12 Aug 03)

In Ituri, hundreds of thousand of people flee clashes and violence targeted at them (2003)

- 500,000 to 600,000 civilians flee to avoid being indiscriminately attacked, mutilated and killed.

"MONUC multidisciplinary special investigation teams have confirmed that massacres of both Lendu and Hema have been perpetrated in Ituri since February 2003. From 17 January to 6 March, in an attempt to take over full control of the Ituri region, a militia group known as the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) engaged in large-scale military operations in four localities, resulting in killings, destruction of property and the displacement of a large number of people. Eyewitnesses stated that around 330 civilians were killed in Bogoro, which was completely destroyed, and reported 160 additional deaths in Mandro. In Drodoro, there were killings on a scale hitherto unknown in the area, hundreds of civilians being murdered in a series of well-coordinated summary executions near the parish and 16 neighbouring locations. Twenty mass graves have been identified by MONUC. MONUC, together with forensic experts from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, dispatched a second investigative mission to this area, but its work had to be cut short because of the deteriorating security conditions.

The humanitarian impact of the armed conflict for the 4.6 million inhabitants of Ituri has been catastrophic. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, between 500,000 and 600,000 internally displaced persons - many of whom remain in hiding and cannot be accounted for - in addition to nearly 100,000 refugees from Uganda and the Sudan, are dispersed throughout the area." (UN SC 27 May 2003)

"Alarmed by recent reports that thousands of women and girls are being brutally raped, mutilated and killed in the Ituri province of Eastern Congo, UNICEF said today that all actors - political and military -- must put an end to such acts. [...]"

Children and women are being indiscriminately attacked, mutilated and killed. Much of the area's basic infrastructure was destroyed last month, leaving the majority of the population without access to food, water, shelter and basic essential services.

An estimated 20,000 children and 20,000 women were displaced by the recent outbreak in fighting. Children have seen their mothers, fathers and siblings killed. They have witnessed brutal violence and live in constant fear." (UNICEF 6 June 03)

People of Malemba-Nkulu, Katanga, have fled to urban areas or forest (Nov 2002)

- Since early 2002, population of Malemba-Nkulu have not stop fleeing fighting or cholera
- In Songwé, the majority of IDPs come from territories controlled by the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD)
- Little return movement, as people fear Mai Mai and Congolese Armed Forces

"Depuis le début de l'année, les populations du territoire de Malemba-Nkulu n'ont pas cessé de se mouvoir d'un coin à un autre du territoire, certains trouvant refuge au niveau de zones urbaines plus sûres, d'autres se réfugiant dans la forêt.

Des centaines de déplacés se trouvent au niveau de Malemba-Nkulu, Lubundoy et Kabambulu, ces derniers fuient soit les combats, soit le choléra et sont originaires des villages du territoire de Malemba-Nkulu pour la plupart.

Au niveau de Songwé, la majorité des déplacés proviennent de l'autre côté du fleuve, de Kalémie, Kongolo, Kabalo et de Manono, territoire sous contrôle des rebelles du RCD.

Le mouvement de retour reste fort timide, les gens craignant toujours les exactions des Mayi-Mayi ainsi que des FAC." (OCHA 24 Nov 2002, p5)

Forced displacement from areas rich in mineral wealth in the Kivus and in Maniema (2001-2002)

- In the Kivus, reports that activities of the Rwanda Army and of soldiers of the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie have led to the displacement of villages as the armies have moved into areas in order to 'secure' a mining site
- In Maniema, reports that the Mai-Mai and the Interahamwe have forcibly moved people out of rural areas where they want to be involved in mining and exploiting other resources

According to a report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Great Lakes Region and Genocide Prevention:

"It was also reported that the activities of RPA and RCD soldiers have led to the displacement of villages as the armies have moved into areas in order to 'secure' a mining site. Numerous cases were mentioned by local sources in North and South Kivu. There are also reports from Masisi, Walikale and Maniema that the Mai-Mai and the Interahamwe have forcibly moved people out of rural areas where they want to be involved in mining and exploiting other resources. For example, it was reported that the Mai-Mai took control of the gold and coltan area of Kampene (Maniema) in May 2002. As they have taken control of villages near to mining sites, the population has fled which in turn has sometimes attracted the RPA and RCD to try to take the villages themselves. Displacement has led to population movement into other villages, towns and forests, which has increased malnutrition and food insecurity and exerted pressure on depleted health and education services." (APPG Nov 2002, p29)

According to Amnesty International:

"Large-scale population displacement is particularly prevalent in areas rich in mineral wealth. In the Masisi territory of North-Kivu, on 29 June 2000, the RCD-Goma and RPA reportedly fired continuously into the air for an hour-and-a-half, terrorizing the local population and forcing thousands of people to flee, leaving the area empty and easy accessible to troops. In another case, 34,000 were displaced during the months of July and August 2000, and a further 27,000 in September and October 2000, due to fighting around the town of Shabunda, a rich coltan mining area. [...] Most of these Internally Displaced People are receiving no humanitarian assistance." (AI 19 June 2001)

Changed frontline and strategy by armed groups in South Kivu make the displaced flee greater distances (2000-2001)

- Previously IDPs used to make efforts to stay near their villages and fields
- Anticipation of an all-out war, affected communities flee on far greater distances
- New strategy of uncontrolled armed groups to destroy villages forces IDPs constantly on the move from village to village in search for protection from attacks by the numerous armed factions
- In some instances, people in South Kivu are displaced five or more times, in various directions, as fighting breaks out in their places of refuge

"For much of 1999 humanitarian agencies were able to trace and reach most of IDP communities, since their movement was generally stable once away from insecure areas, i.e. IDPs were on the move for some time and making efforts to stay near their villages and fields. The displacement patterns of South Kivu noticeably changed starting from November-December 99, but especially in January 2000 when the frontline stretched from western parts of Maniema province down to Shabunda and even Kalonge. The dramatic shift of the frontline that has also led to significant changes - the Mayi-Mayi activity is now perceived by the civilian population, especially in towns, as a resistance movement, with which it overwhelmingly sympathises. Thus a qualitative change in the patterns of displacement- in search of security and in anticipation of an all-out war, affected communities flee on far greater distances. If the current levels of tension were to be sustained for another month, the majority of rural areas of South Kivu might be deserted and a significant rise in refugee numbers in Tanzania might occur." (OCHA 15 February 2000)

"The fact that uncontrolled armed groups in the Kivus are much better armed and co-ordinated than previously results in focused fighting of longer duration. On a number of occasions during the reporting period the uncontrolled-armed groups (UAGs) have gained the upper hand over RCD forces. A distinct change in the modus operandi of these groups has been observed: it would appear they no longer fight, loot

and withdraw. In many instances they fight for control of villages or territories and remain there as an occupying force. This was notably reported by recent IDPs from Masisi in North Kivu.

[...]

The most important pattern of displacement in South Kivu during the reporting period has been the change in strategies of attacks on populations and thus the change in displacement practices. Those dwelling in forests habitually displaced from settlements to camps further into the forest in order to be out of the way of whatever insecurity arising. This would be sufficient to keep them protected until their villages were safe and they could return. This method of self-preservation is no longer adequate. It would appear that there are previously unknown UAGs operating who are clearing entire areas with the express purpose that people do not return to their villages. As a result, waves of people who had been living rough in forests are now being swept before UAGs, constantly on the move." (OCHA 17 April 2000)

"The continued fighting in North and South Kivu provinces in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has displaced nearly half a million people in recent months. Congolese have fled from village to village in an illusory search for protection from attacks by the numerous armed factions in the region. Host communities up to this point have welcomed internally displaced people (IDPs). Individual households have swollen to twenty or more people in some areas. However, African hospitality and limited international resources are reaching their limits." (RI 5 May 2000)

"This province [of South Kivu] has seen the development of a pattern of displacement in which civilians, whose villages are raided for food and livestock, have to flee either to neighbouring villages, or to large towns such as Bukavu. In some instances, people are displaced five or more times, in various directions, as fighting breaks out in their places of refuge. In other cases, people have returned to their home villages once security returned, only to be displaced by fresh fighting. For the most part, they flee without belongings and many of those who return discover that their villages and farms are burned or otherwise destroyed by armed belligerents." (ACT 13 July 2001)

IDPs remain close to their places of origin (1999-2000)

- Most IDPs are not housed in camps but have merged into host communities
- Some communities already enduring the stress of the conflict have to shelter other displaced persons fleeing other more insecure areas
- People living along river and roads used by the armed forces settle in the nearby forests and hills
- Civilians flee to temporary sanctuaries in response to rumors of approaching troops
- When the relative calm during the day gives way to terror at night people seek refuge outside their villages

"In rebel-held areas, the current conflict is marked by patterns some of which are similar to those that affected humanitarian action during the 1996-1997 war in former Zaire, i.e. all communities of Northern and Southern Kivu are considered - and consider themselves as - collective targets for military attacks. Massive, durable displacements are expected to have been amplified during the last three months. The situation is usually different in other parts of the DRC, where the populations are only afraid of looting and side-effects of military confrontations. Thus, they only leave their houses for as long as fighting, looting or take-over of a town will last at local level." (UN December 1998, p.14)

"A characteristic feature of displacement in eastern DRC is the fact that IDPs are not housed in camps but have merged into host communities. Their conditions remain precarious due to lack of farming land, vital services and general insecurity. Remaining in proximity to their places of origin, the displaced are prone to be subjected to the same hazards and abuses that caused them to flee in the first place. On a number of occasions during 1998-99, the displaced and local communities were stranded in combat areas and were removed by military authorities in a bid to create security zones.

[...]

Having fled hostility, displaced communities (IDPs) live in forests in overcrowded, inadequate shelters, with insufficient food, contaminated water supplies and no sanitation. Adverse forces at times accentuated by persecutory practices and abuses perpetrate the vulnerability of this group. In most cases they have to endure the side effects of the war - looted property, destroyed infrastructure, including health facilities and often damaged housing, when they finally return to their hometown or village. In addition, a significant number of such communities has to shelter other displaced persons fleeing other often more insecure areas." (UN July 1999, pp.8-9)

"Since the beginning of the war the roads and navigable rivers in DRC have become a source of danger for most civilians. These axes are used for movement of troops that are typically accompanied by looting and extortion. Hence, the strategy adopted by riverside and roadside populations, to settle in the nearby forests and hills where they could eventually cultivate. In case if the short-distance displacement took place within the harvest season, the prospects of losing the entire output are greater. On the other hand, in instances when the population has sufficient flexibility to prepare its displacement, certain belongings and food reserves are being spared. Because of widespread fears of the military, civilians often flee to their temporary sanctuaries in response to rumours of approaching troops. In high insecurity areas however, the population flees longer distances and for a longer time and eventually become "people in the forest" (see above). This phenomenon of proximity flight is especially noticeable on most significant axes. However, it is also the case with secondary axes overburdened with sustained presence of regular armies, passage or retreat of smaller groups of deserters or uncontrolled-armed groups." (UN November 2000, p.15)

"The number of displaced people around the Kahuzi Biega national park, near Bukavu, is increasing, independent humanitarian sources in the region told IRIN.

During the daytime, some of them work or go looking for food. At night, they seek refuge in banana plantations along the road towards Miti, Murhesa and Kafulumaye. The sources said they were fleeing attacks by Interahamwe militia, Mayi-Mayi and other armed groups hiding out in the forests. Relative calm during the day gives way to terror at night, when these militia groups carry out looting sprees, raping women and killing people who get in their way.

The forest-dwelling pygmies are not immune from attack. Aid organisations have requested them to integrate into society so that they can benefit from food distributions, as it is impossible to care for them in the forests." (IRIN 1 August 2000)

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

General

All parties to the conflict carry out gross human rights abuses with impunity (2002-2003)

- MONUC confirms serious human rights abuses by MLC and RCD-N troops in Mambasa territory between Oct-Dec 2002 - including executions, mutilation, cannibalization and forced displacement of Pygmie communities from the forest
- Massive human rights violations are continuing especially in rebel-held eastern areas of the country (controlled or contested by RCD-Goma, MLC and UPC)
- Impunity of perpetrators of gross human rights violations, especially high-ranking military officers, is major obstacle to promotion of human rights and peace
- According to the UN HCHR, some violations constitute crimes that could be brought before the International Criminal Court, among others
- Rights of women and children are particularly violated in rebel-held areas, where sexual violence is used as a tool of warfare
- Humanitarian access is difficult to populations in need, many of whom have been forcibly displaced and are seeking refuge in forests in the east
- Plundering of natural resources underpins gross violations of human rights
- Militia in Ituri orders the population home, otherwise they will be treated like enemies (May 03)
- UN special rapporteur on the human rights situation in DRC says that the crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity may have been committed in Ituri (Sept 03)

"MONUC Investigation Mission's preliminary report confirms human rights abuses by MLC and RCD-N troops at Mambasa and in the villages on the Mambasa/Mangina main road.

On 31 December 2002, MONUC deployed a multidisciplinary Investigation team to Mambasa, Mangina, Beni, in North-Kivu and Ituri - consisting of members from the Human Rights, Child Protection, Civilian Police sections as well as two members from the Public Information Office - following the serious allegations of human rights abuses perpetrated by MLC and RCD-N troops during their occupation of Mambasa territory on 12th-29 October 2002, since their return to the territory on 29 November, and during their advance towards Beni.

The investigation team interviewed 368 peoples - victims and witnesses alike- during the two weeks spent in Mangina and Oicha villages where tens of thousands of displaced people found refuge. The investigation mission received testimonies corroborating 'systematic looting and rape as well as summary executions and abductions, as war weapons, practiced by MLC and RCD-N military forces (including 19 UPC elements during the period from 12-24 October), in an operation which the aggressors termed 'erasing the blackboard' presented to the population as 'a vaccination operation', aimed at looting every house and raping every woman'. The summary executions particularly targeted the Nande community in Mambasa and the Pygmies as well as the populations in the villages located on Mambasa-Beni main road.

The report also confirms that among the people executed, mutilated and cannibalized, there were members of the Pygmies' community forced to leave the forest." (MONUC, 15 January 2003)

“3. The human rights situation remains grave throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Despite having committed themselves to political and judicial reform for the promotion of human rights, all parties to the conflict continue to carry out gross violations of human rights with impunity. There has been a widespread failure to provide minimum guarantees to the particular needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable people: women, children, the internally displaced and those affected by HIV/AIDS.

4. MONUC, OHCHR, and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have continued to document massive violations of human rights continuing in the country, especially in areas controlled by the rebels of the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie*, Goma (RCD-G), the *Mouvement de libération du Congo* (MLC) and the *Union des patriotes congolais* (UPC). In Government-controlled territory, concerns continue over the administration of justice because of the weakness of the judicial system. In the territories controlled by the rebels, reports continue to be received of massive human rights violations, especially in the east of the country. The Special Rapporteur is scheduled to undertake a mission from 28 February to 10 March 2003 and she will report on her findings to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-ninth session in late March.

5. It is in this context that I visited the country to make a first-hand assessment of the human rights situation in the light of the signing of the Pretoria Agreement of 16 December 2002. During my stay, I held consultations with a wide section of actors in Kinshasa and Kisangani, including President Kabila and members of his Government, leaders of RCD-Goma, former President Masire (the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue), the international diplomatic community, MONUC, humanitarian groups and civil society representatives.

6. My overall assessment is that the prevailing human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is alarming and a threat to the fragile peace process. Despite the conclusion of the Pretoria and other peace agreements, the ongoing war in eastern Congo is causing massive violations of human rights and terrible suffering to thousands of civilians. The fighting in the Uvira area, clashes in the Ituri District and atrocities committed in the Beni-Mambasa area have led to the displacement of thousands of people.

7. Both the Government and rebel leaders have acknowledged that there are violations of human rights. However, the impunity of perpetrators of gross human rights violations, especially high-ranking military officials, is a major obstacle to the promotion of human rights and genuine peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some of these violations constitute international crimes that could be brought before various courts, including the International Criminal Court. The Democratic Republic of the Congo ratified the Rome Statute on 30 March 2002.

[...]

10. The rights of children and women are violated all over the country, but especially in the rebel-controlled areas, where sexual violence against women and girls is a tool of warfare. Much emphasis was also put on the discrimination against women under Congolese law and the need to remedy this. I was informed that the recruitment of child soldiers as well as the use of women and children as forced labour continue in spite of efforts to put an end to these practices.

11. The already worrying humanitarian situation is deteriorating in view of the difficulties humanitarian groups face in reaching populations in need, many of whom have been forcibly displaced from their homes and are seeking refuge in the inhospitable forests of the eastern region. These are rebel-controlled areas. The belligerents prevent the humanitarian workers from crossing their respective zones of control. Ensuring safe access for humanitarian workers is especially crucial given the large number of internally displaced persons.

12. The continued plundering of natural resources and State revenues remains a destabilizing factor and underpins gross violations of human rights. The rapidly deteriorating state of the economy, exacerbated by the continuing conflict, is also a cause for concern. The dramatic reduction of household incomes has led to

extortion by magistrates, soldiers, policemen, teachers, school administrators, doctors and nurses, thus rendering the entire public administration ineffective." (UN SC, 24 February 2003)

"Military authorities of the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) ordered the population in Bunia and the displaced people who found refuge at Monuc headquarters to return home, otherwise, they will be treated like enemies." (MONUC 28 May 2003)

"The UN special rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Julia Motoc, said on Sunday that there were indications that genocide may have occurred in the eastern district of Ituri.

"The crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity that may have been committed in Ituri must be answered for," she said at a news conference in Bunia, the main town in the embattled Ituri District." (IRIN 1 Sept 03)

UN reports cannibalism, systematic killing and rape (31 July 03)

"Two United Nations reports on human rights violations occurring late last year and earlier this year in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) point to instances of cannibalism, systematic killing, rape and looting, and unprecedented violence arising from the proliferation of rival factions.

One of the reports, both of which were transmitted to the Security Council by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, was compiled by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) after an investigation team visited Mambasa in the eastern Congo and heard testimony indicating a pattern of looting, killing and violence against women by the armed factions during fighting last October and December.

The team noted acts of cannibalism, and tactics to force family members to eat parts of their loved ones, that could be considered part of a policy of psychological torture, mainly conducted against the Nande and Pygmy populations.

In all the team interviewed 368 people – victims and witnesses alike. One witness reported that soldiers killed his brother and four other people, including a three-year-old child, then took the heart of one of the victims and sucked the blood from it.

Another said soldiers killed his father, cut his chest open, removed the heart, cooked it and ate it in front of him. In yet another reported case, soldiers under the command of a woman executed six people out of a group of 13, pulled out their hearts and forced the other prisoners to taste the human flesh.

The second report, by the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC), on the violence in the Drodro area in Ituri province in April, concludes that the proliferation of rival factions and militias that are manipulated by warlords and some neighbouring countries explains the unprecedented violence that has swept Ituri for a number of months." (UN News Service 31 July 03)

In July 2003, MSF denounced in a report the lack of protection and assistance in Ituri. See MSF, 25 July 2003, *Ituri: Unkept Promises? A Pretense of Protection and Inadequate Assistance*, [Link below]

In July 2003, Human Rights Watch (HRW) described the ethnically targeted violence in northeastern DRC. See HRW, 8 July 03, *Ituri: "Covered in blood" – Ethnically targeted violence in northeastern DR Congo*, [Link below]

Armed men in IDP camp in Bunia are security threat (Sept 03)

"United Nations troops in Congo's northeastern town of Bunia have begun to confiscate illegal weapons to stop tribal fighting in the town, amid complaints of increased violence and lawlessness since they took over from a French-led European force a week ago.

The European force was deployed in June to stop attacks on civilians by armed rival ethnic Hema and Lendu militia and to enforce a no-weapons policy in the town.

Residents say civil disturbance is on the increase, with neighbourhood murders, gunfire at night, and demonstrations and looting near the refugee camp in town.

On Saturday, U.N. troops confiscated several weapons in the camp, after a demonstration ended in fighting. Uruguayan U.N. troops fired in the air to disperse the crowds.

"A quick reaction was made, the camp was surrounded, people arrested and weapons found," Major Abou Thiam, a Senegalese U.N. military press officer, told Reuters late on Saturday night.

According to Thiam, a hand grenade belonging to a 13-year-old boy, 12 machetes, two axes, four knives and 49 daggers were confiscated along with a wireless communication device.

Residents said the U.N. force has been slow to confiscate arms.

"We the population have been arresting people with weapons in the camp for some time because the reaction from the U.N. has been too slow," said 55-year-old camp resident Theophile Ngoy." (Reuters 7 Sept 03)

Landmines are difficult to locate but present danger for civilian population and humanitarian workers (Nov 02)

- Kisangani, Ikela, as well as the Uvira region are thought to be heavily mined

"There is little information on the presence of mines in the DRC. Information gathering seems very difficult, but it is certain that most of the belligerents and their alliances have laid landmines more or less extensively, essentially along the frontlines. The presence of these mines is a risk for humanitarian workers and the civilian population." (UN 19 Nov 02, p62)

"While less of a hazard than in other mission areas, mines and unexploded ordnance are still present in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Most mines were planted in 1999 and 2000. In particular, the areas of Kisangani and Ikela are heavily mined. Reportedly, FAC, RCD, UPDF and RPA frequently used mines in the Mbuji-Mayi, Kabinda, Kabalo, Pweto, Beni, Buta and Tshopo areas. As a consequence of the conflict in Burundi, landmines were planted in Kivu in the Uvira region, close to the Burundi border. It is believed that Uvira, Baraka, Makobolo and the Ruzizi Valley are mined. Reportedly, UPC has also used mines in the recent fighting around Bunia." (UN SC 18 Oct 02, para.64)

Need to protect civilians in areas left by Rwandan and Ugandan troops (Nov 02)

- According to senior UN relief official, armed groups in Eastern DRC are deliberately inciting ethnic hatred

"The provisions of the Pretoria and Luanda agreements and the resulting withdrawals of the Ugandan and Rwandan troops from large areas in the east and the North of the DRC have already started to impact on the humanitarian situation in several ways, the most important being a widespread fear of anarchy and total disorder that might be created by the vacuum resulting from the rapid withdrawals in some areas in eastern and northern DRC.

The protection of civilians in evacuated areas remain of concern in view of past experiences and behaviours of some armed elements. In this regard any future role for the Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC) in protecting civilians in areas of its proximity and ensuring the respect of Human Rights and Humanitarian International Law will be indispensable. (UN OCHA 19 Nov 2002, p38)

According to UN Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Carolyn McAskie, "Armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are deliberately inciting ethnic hatred as part of the ongoing fighting there, and unless the international community acts to forestall it, the country faces a 'massacre of horrific proportions.' [...].

[...]

In one incident, a hospital was surrounded and hundreds of people were killed, Ms. McAskie said, while children have been turning up in hospitals with mutilations and machete cuts. Sexual violence has also been used as a weapon of war by most of the forces involved in the conflict." (UN News Service 23 Oct 02)

Serious protection issues in Malemba-Nkulu, Katanga (2002-2003)

- Total impunity of armed groups committing human rights violations
- MSF reported lootings and burning of villages, and torture, causing tens of thousands of IDPs from Malemba Nkulu, Kikondja, Kitenge, Mukubu and Mukanga
- Rape, looting of food stocks, destruction of goods and forced displacement are common
- In Oct 02, The new administrator of Malemba-Nkulu said to the UN that IDPs would be send back home as soon as possible and that humanitarian assistance would not be allowed

"Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) called on Thursday for greater humanitarian intervention in northern Katanga Province of southeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where civilians were still suffering the consequences of armed conflict and untreated diseases.

"Although this government-controlled part of the country has been considered peaceful during the past years of war, civilian populations are subjected to extremely violent attacks and suffer from gravely insufficient assistance," the international relief NGO reported.

It recounted numerous instances in which various armed groups had pillaged and burned down villages as well as beaten and killed civilians, causing tens of thousands in the region to flee to areas often inaccessible to aid groups because of continued hostilities. It warned that this lack of access could allow otherwise treatable diseases such as cholera to erupt, "with catastrophic consequences".

Among others, it cited Malemba Nkulu, Kikondja, Kitenge, Mukubu and Mukanga as areas that had been particularly hard-hit by fighting.

"It is high time that the public authorities assume their responsibilities with regard to the abandoned Congolese people of northern Katanga," MSF said." (IRIN 12 Sept 03)

"Il est apparu que de nombreuses violations des droit de la personne sont intervenues tout au long de l'année et que bien que les combats aient cessés, la population continue à subir des exactions.

La signature d'accords de paix entre le gouvernement et certains groupes Mayi-Mayi, le dépôt d'armes de certains de ces groupes, la levée de nombreux barrages, le remplacement des FAC par les PPU contribuent à détendre l'atmosphère.

Cependant la population continue à être harassée par les hommes en armes qui bénéficient d'une impunité totale.

Le viol, le pillage des stocks alimentaires et de semences, la destruction et le vol des biens domestiques, le déplacement forcé, les tracasseries aux barrages restent monnaie courante et sont perpétrés à la fois par les troupes gouvernementales et les Mayi-Mayi.

A proprement parlé la région est une zone de non-droit, plus aucuns services de l'Etat chargés de la protection du citoyen ne fonctionnent, et la loi du plus fort est d'application.

Lors de notre rencontre avec le nouvel Administrateur du Territoire, ce dernier nous a décrit une région pratiquement pacifiée et son intention de ne plus permettre aux déplacés de rester dans les centres urbains, d'interdire l'aide humanitaire et de les renvoyer chez eux au plus vite.

Les déplacés à Malemba-Nkulu n'ont ni le droit de louer voire d'acheter un lopin de terre.

Bien que l'objectif d'un retour chez eux des déplacés soit louable et à terme la meilleure solution, toutes mesures prises afin de contraindre ou forcer les déplacés au retour ne peuvent être soutenues.

Recommandations

*Promouvoir la présence sur place d'une antenne du bureau des Droits de l'Homme des NU ou de la section droits de l'homme de la MONUC dans la région ou à défaut des missions régulières.
Soutenir la population déplacée qui fait le choix volontaire du retour par la distribution de kits de retour."
(OCHA Oct 02, p9)*

Several IDP groups subjected to forced labour (2000-2003)

- IDPs forced by armed groups to undertake agricultural activities, services and transportation
- HRW reported in 2002 that women and girls are abducted by combatants and have to provide sexual services and domestic labor
- Deportation of civilians into "labor camps" in Ituri (Aug 03)

"Various field observations conclude that several IDP groups are being systematically subjected to non-remunerated activities, or basically forced labour. The most unfortunate ones find themselves in the hands of military, various militia groups and warlords, held as prisoners or hostage and employed for agricultural activities, services and transportation. Most strikingly, this category is not a rare sociological phenomenon, but a common arrangement practised in many parts of the country along the roads of exile. There are other categories of displaced that are being regularly exploited, however this kind of subservient labour arrangement is of economic origin and is not coercive: extremely impoverished urban displaced, for instance, migrate into the country side in search of food for labour arrangements. Typically, displaced in this category remain in villages and are used as subservient labour force." (UN November 2000, p.15)

"Combatants abducted women and girls and held them for periods up to a year and a half, forcing them during that time to provide both sexual services and gender-specific work. In addition to being raped, women and girls were obliged to do domestic labor, such as finding and transport firewood and water, gathering and preparing food, and doing laundry for the men who held them captive. [...]"

When combatants moved camp, they forced the women and girls under their control to transport their belongings. When they raided to seize goods, they obliged the women and girls to carry their loot to their bases.[...]

The captors ordinarily held the women and girls at places distant from their homes and often in areas that were unfamiliar to them, making it difficult for them to try to escape. In some cases, women and girls were kept under armed guard.

Women and girls held in the forest ordinarily lived in conditions of misery in temporary shelters constructed of leaves, wood, and sheets of plastic. In one case captors deprived the women of sleeping mats and forced them to sleep on the ground. In some cases, women and girls had no shelter and were exposed to drenching rains whenever the weather was bad. Often short of water and with no soap, women found it difficult to stay clean." (HRW June 2002, pp61-62)

"Some 100 civilians of the Hema people are reported to have been deported to "labour camps" organised by Lendu militias near Fataki, about 80 km north of Bunia, in the troubled Ituri District of northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Missionary Service News Agency (MISNA) reported on Tuesday.

It reported that the prisoners were abducted during fighting that took place between the end of July and the beginning of August, during which an estimated 80 civilians were killed on or about 20 July.

"Women and young people are being held in slavery," one witness told MISNA.

Others talked of the existence of "labour camps" in an area between 10 and 20 km from Fataki, where prisoners are forced to do agricultural work at gunpoint." (IRIN 27 Aug 03)

Women and children

Displaced children need protection from recruitment by armed groups (2001-2003)

- Displaced children are particularly vulnerable to forced recruitment - as soldiers, domestic servants or sex slaves
- They are often sent to the frontlines and forced to commit human rights abuses, says Amnesty International (Sept 03)
- In Nov 02, the UN Secretary General named all groups which recruit children
- In Feb 03, the UN SG reported that children were still present in all armed groups in DRC, sometimes representing up to 35 percent of troops, and were being sent to front lines
- New recruitment, sometimes of already demobilized child soldiers, continued in early 2003
- In Ituri, militias used children to terrorize the town of Bunia (June 03)

- Issue of impunity for war crimes and other abuses against children, including recruitment of child soldiers, was highlighted by the UN SG as a particular concern

"War and poverty have also led to the displacement of many children. Some are orphaned or unaccompanied and forced to live on the streets. Such children are at particular risk of recruitment into the armed forces. An independent observer told Amnesty International that all over the Kivus 'children have become cannon fodder and slaves: they are recruited to become soldiers. Girls and sometimes boys are forced to become domestic servants or wives of combatants, and sometimes they are also used for child labour and exploited without payment to work in the mines. [...]"

The break-down of the political, social and economic infrastructures (schools, communities, household, health facilities), as well as displacement, weaken or destroy children's immediate source of care and protection, making them an easy target for recruitment. Unable to adequately provide for their children's needs, some parents in the region believe that recruitment into the armed forces will offer their children the food, education and security they need, and encourage separated from their families, displaced or have limited access to education." (AI 19 June 2001)

"It is argued that children in different fighting factions have distinct social backgrounds, distinct explanations of how or why they came to be with an armed group, distinct experiences within the particular armed group and distinct prospects for social and economic reintegration. Because of the variations in their backgrounds and future prospects, it is very important to seek to understand how different communities perceive the role their children have played in the conflict and how receptive these families and communities are to the children's return. Further needing to bear in mind is the fact that over the course of years of fighting many child soldiers will be demobilizing as adults, yet their experiences as child soldiers will surely have repercussions for their long-term reintegration." (UNDP 28 Nov 2001)

According to the UN Secretary General:

"In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Pretoria and Luanda Agreements with the Governments of Rwanda (July 2002) and Uganda (September 2002), which support the principles laid down in the Lusaka Agreement of 1999, provide a concrete opportunity to move forward with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan forces, coordinated by MONUC. In May 2001, several parties appearing on the list in the Democratic Republic of the Congo made commitments to my Special Representative to refrain from recruiting children into their armed forces or groups. These same parties are also signatories to the Lusaka Agreement, which imposes a similar restriction. In addition, in November 2001, the Democratic Republic of the Congo ratified the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, setting 18 as the age limit for all recruitment into the armed forces. A disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process for child soldiers has been initiated with the Government and RCD-Goma.[...]"

Parties to armed conflict that recruit or use child soldiers

1. Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
2. Mouvement national de libération du Congo (MLC)
3. Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD)-Goma
4. Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD)-National
5. Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD)-Kisangani/ML
6. Union des patriotes congolais (UPC) (Hema militia)
7. Masunzu's forces
8. Lendu militias
9. Ex-FAR/Interahamwe
10. Mai-Mai" (UN SC 26 Nov 02)

36. Child soldiers are still present in all armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in some cases representing up to 35 per cent of the troops, and are being sent to the front lines. New recruitment, sometimes of already demobilized child soldiers, continues. Against that backdrop, the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement or reintegration of child soldiers made halting progress. The Mission's Child Protection Advisers investigated reports of military camps in which minors were being trained and raised those issues with the appropriate authorities. In collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund, MONUC monitored and provided advice on the disarmament, demobilization or reintegration processes for Congolese child soldiers being set up by the RCD-Goma, and by the Government, which is preparing a new disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement or reintegration phase in Lubumbashi. MONUC is preparing to monitor implementation of the commitments made by MLC and RCD-K/ML to demobilize child soldiers under the Gbadolite Agreement of 30 December. There is a particular need to focus on setting up reintegration programmes, with the necessary resources to implement them, throughout the country in order to prevent demobilized child soldiers from returning to the army (voluntarily or forcibly) or the street, as has already happened in some cases. MONUC has contributed funds from the Norwegian Trust Fund to the non-governmental organization (NGO) Let's Protect Children, which runs a transit centre and reintegration project for demobilized child soldiers and other children in Musienene.

37. Child Protection Advisers participated in joint investigations into serious human rights violations where children were among the victims, including in Ankoro, Domiongo and Mambasa, and monitored the situation of minors in detention. Funds were provided to an NGO, the Bureau international catholique de l'enfance, for training social workers, lawyers and others on issues relating to juvenile justice and child rights. An increasing number of requests for seminars on child protection, including from police and judicial authorities, were received.

38. A particular concern is the need to address the issue of impunity for war crimes and other abuses against children, including the recruitment of child soldiers, as highlighted in my November 2002 report on children and armed conflict (S/2002/1299), which contains a list of parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo responsible for recruitment of child soldiers. MONUC has monitored proceedings in Kananga regarding 36 military personnel accused of raping and pillaging in Domiongo in October 2002, some of whom have now been sentenced to death. Several of the 40 females raped were minors and at least two children were killed. MONUC remains seriously concerned about numerous irregularities in the proceedings relating to that case." (UN SC, 21 February 2003)

"Since Bunia, in war-torn Ituri district of eastern Congo, plunged into violence and chaos about a month ago, it is difficult to escape the impression that the town has been taken over by children. Groups of heavily armed children – some in their pre-teens – now dominate the town and terrorise its residents. Atrocities of an enormous scale have been committed, including random killings, rape, looting and arson.

Children have been the immediate authors of many of these crimes. But, the gun-toting children are themselves being controlled by adults. Bunia highlights an appalling trend: the increased use of children in armed conflict. There are a number of reasons why these children need to be seen as victims of war.

First, warlords are increasingly aware that under international humanitarian law, they may have to answer tomorrow for crimes committed today. The use of children conveniently distances them from these acts. Second, the ethnic dimension of many conflicts (including Ituri's) further eases the involvement of children, who need to understand no more than which tribe is "good" or "bad". Third, where abject poverty is the norm many children – and their parents – find it difficult to see alternatives. The deeper the poverty, the more susceptible children and families become to "patriotic" appeals for recruitment into armed groups." (SCF-UK 9 June 03)

"Children have been abducted in the streets or taken from classrooms, refugee camps or camps for the internally displaced. Many others have also been taken from their homes at gunpoint, as their distraught parents looked on helplessly. Others have reported being picked up while playing in their neighbourhood or

walking along the road. Some children are known to have voluntarily joined the army or militia forces on being separated from their families and in conditions of poverty and the collapse of basic social services such as educational and health centres.

Once recruited, children are usually sent to training camps along with adult conscripts for military training and indoctrination. Here, they are subjected to violent treatment and in some camps, children have died from deplorable conditions. After a few weeks of training, the children are deployed to the frontlines for combat to be used as cannon fodder. Frontline missions include serving as decoys, detectors of enemy positions, bodyguards for commandants, or sex slaves. Most girl soldiers have reported being sexually exploited or raped by their commanders or other soldiers. Boys and girls are also often used as porters for ammunition, water and food, or as cooks.

Once on the frontlines, children are repeatedly forced to commit abuses, including rape and murder, against enemy soldiers and civilians. Some have been made to kill their own family members, while others have been forced to engage in cannibalistic or sexual acts with the corpses of enemies killed in battle. Children are often given drugs and alcohol to steel their emotions as they carry out these crimes." (AI 9 Sept 03)

For further information on the recruitment of children as soldiers in DRC, see 'Child Soldier Use 2003', Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 7 November 2002 [\[reference below\]](#)

Rape of hundreds of thousands of girls and women by all forces in eastern DRC (2000-2003)

- Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have both reported extensively on sexual violence as a weapon of war (2001 & 2003)
- Rape is a form of reprisal, but superstition of fighters plays a part too (Nov 03)
- Church sources in Eastern Kasai reported systematic rape of school age girls by Rwandan troops (July 2000)
- Worsened security situation for women in Kabinda (Kasai Oriental) reported in September 2000
- In September 2001, women fled to Bukavu to escape being raped
- In its Oct 01 report, the UN Secretary General said that internally displaced women are often preyed upon by armed elements and have been the victims of torture, sexual and other abuses and ethnically motivated killings
- The UN reported in January 2002 that 40 women in Shabunda (South Kivu) had been victims of sexual violence by Mai Mai elements
- Girls living on the streets due to war or poverty are extremely vulnerable to sexual predation once they reach puberty
- Churches, women's associations and human rights NGOs denounce violence against women and girl
- Lack of response of de-facto authorities to protect women and girls
- Rape and abduction of women and girls continued as of end 2003, with the report of sexual mutilation and even cannibalism

"Nothing better defines the de-humanization process that has developed over a decade of turmoil in eastern DRC than the culture of rape of women and girls by armed groups." (UN OCHA 26 Nov 2001, p.34)

"Sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war by most of the forces involved in this conflict. Combatants of the RCD, Rwandan soldiers, as well as combatants of the forces opposed to them – Mai-Mai, armed groups of Rwandan Hutu, and Burundian rebels of the Forces for the Defense of Democracy

(Forces pour la défense de la démocratie, FDD) and Front for National Liberation (Front pour la libération nationale, FNL) – all frequently and sometimes systematically raped women and girls in the last year." (HRW June 2002, p23)

According to Amnesty International, "Rape of girls and women of all ages has been extensively used by all forces. Many women have been subjected to rape and other forms of sexual violence by members of the security forces," the Amnesty report said. However, rape is seriously under-reported because of the social stigma that victims must endure." (IRIN-CEA 27 June 2001)

"The conflict has also been marked by the deliberate and widespread use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as a weapon of war. The victims are believed to number tens of thousands. In many cases rape was followed by the deliberate wounding or killing of the victims. On occasion armed political groups have committed rapes deliberately to humiliate civilian populations accused of collaborating with enemy forces. Thousands of women and girls have been abducted from their homes and forced to remain with armed groups as sexual slaves. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among combatants has added considerably to the trauma faced by these women. Victims also suffer social stigma and fear of being ostracized by their community and abandoned by their families. Medical and psychological treatment appropriate to the needs of the victims is uniformly absent throughout the DRC. Few of those responsible for these extraordinarily brutal crimes have been brought to justice." (AI 27 Nov 03)

"Most of the time, rape is a form of reprisal: when a group takes a village, they punish the women they suspect of having collaborated with the group there before. [...]
Superstition also plays a part: sex with young girls supposedly adds to a fighter's invulnerability." (AFP 13 Nov 03)

"In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where hundreds of thousands of women are thought to have been raped since 1998, sexual mutilation and even cannibalism were reported in 2003, with armed groups particularly targeting Pygmy women for cannibalism and genocide," according to a UNIFEM fact sheet." (UN News Service 4 Nov 03)

"In general, refugee and internally displaced women are often preyed upon by armed elements and have been the victims of torture, sexual and other abuses and ethnically motivated killings. Rape has been used as a weapon of war. The situation is particularly dire in the eastern provinces. The recruitment of able-bodied males into armed forces and factions have left households headed by women and girls to fend for themselves in a country whose economy and infrastructure has been decimated by years of war." (UN SC 16 Oct 2001)

In Eastern Kasai "Although the need for relief supplies (mostly medicines) is great, local church sources prioritise the protection of displaced and give an appalling account of violence (systematic rape of school age girls) civilians are subjected to by Rwandan troops." (UN OCHA 11 July 2000)

"In Kabinda, the security situation for women has greatly deteriorated. Many cases of rape, occurring when women go to work in fields, have been reported. This situation has created a food shortage since women do not dare walk to the fields as well as an exodus of women toward Mbuji Mayi, the only accessible town from Kabinda." (OCHA September 2000, p.10)

In South Kivu: "The fear of rape defines daily life in rural south Kivu, where rape became a privileged weapon and a normal practice in this heinous war, although much unknown due to the stigmatization of rape victims." (UN OCHA 26 Nov 2001, p.34)

" There were reports that Interahamwe militia in South Kivu Province often raped women. [...]

Rwandan troops and RCD rebels also reportedly engaged in the rape of women in public and often in the presence of their families and in-laws. A woman raped in this manner generally is forced out of the village,

leaving her husband and children behind. According to a number of credible human rights organizations, marauding bands of armed men in the occupied territories often put victims of rape through further abuse by inserting rocks, sharp sticks, and hot peppers into their vaginas." (US DOS 4 March 2002)

"40 femmes du territoire de Shabunda ont été victimes de violences sexuelles et dépouillées par des éléments maï-maï. Elles se sont mobilisées pour dénoncer ces pratiques dans un document adressé aux autorités locales et à diverses institutions internationales en faveur du rétablissement de la paix." (UN OCHA 2 Jan 2002)

"Girls living on the streets due to war or poverty are extremely vulnerable to sexual predation once they reach puberty. If they cannot find a home or are not taken in by a child welfare center, they are almost certain to have to sell sex to survive. They may opt to join life in the training camps, where they are used as porters, sex slaves, or spies to infiltrate enemy encampments." (RI 6 Feb 2002)

"A U.N. official said that women and girls in Shabunda, like those who live from the charcoal trade in Kahuzi-Biega National Park "are very vulnerable for reasons having to do with livelihood and survival. They are the ones who go looking for wood, food, fruits, and they are taken when they are doing that. But they have to keep doing it even after they are raped." And after being displaced and often unable to cultivate normally for three seasons, the population is desperate." (HRW June 2002, p43)

In North Kivu

"Rape and abduction of women and girls, and pillage of crops by armed groups continue to plague the southern Lubero region, North Kivu Province of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a joint UN-NGO humanitarian assessment mission reported [...]." (IRIN 11 Dec 03)

Churches, women's associations and human rights NGOs denounce violence against women and girls

"Churches and some local NGOs provided both material and emotional support to women and girls who had been raped, otherwise sexually abused, or abducted.[...]"

An increasing number of women's associations and human rights NGOs have begun denouncing abuses against civilians in the context of the current armed conflict, and violence against women and girls in particular. Investigators went regularly into the rural areas of North and South Kivu, speaking to the victims and witnesses, and they have pulled together a substantial amount of information about sexual violence." (HRW June 2002, p76-79)

Lack of response of de facto authorities to protect women and girls

"The de facto authorities, the RCD and Rwandan forces that support them, have taken few meaningful steps to protect women and girls against rape either by its soldiers or those of its adversaries." (HRW June 2002, p79)

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)

Health

3.3 million people are estimated to have died as a result of DRC war, according to IRC (2003)

- DRC's mortality rate is higher than UN reports for any country in the world
- Health conditions are far worse in the east of the country than in the west
- Death attributed to violence decreased dramatically in 2002
- Mortality in eastern DRC decreased in 2002 compared to previous years

"A complex and violent conflict has raged across much of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since August of 1998. In 2000 and 2001, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) surveyed areas in the five eastern provinces of the country to document the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis. With improved access and security during 2002, the IRC was able to measure the mortality rate among 9.3 million people accessible in the east, and among 31.2 million people in the west, by conducting a statistical sample survey. In both the east and the west, 10 health zones were selected systematically, proportional to population, and 225 households were interviewed in each health zone. The findings indicate that:

The mortality rate in the DRC is higher than the United Nations reports for any country in the world. The crude mortality rate (CMR) among the people surveyed in the east was 3.5/1000/mo. (95% CI = 2.2 - 4.9); the figure was 2.0/1000/mo. (95% CI = 1.5 - 2.6) among those surveyed in the west. This indicates a national mortality rate of 2.2/1000/mo. if the 5 million inaccessible easterners are ignored, or 2.4/1000/mo. if the inaccessible are assumed to have the same mortality as the surveyed eastern population. This rate is twice the African average and almost twice the 1.3/1000/mo. reported by UNICEF for the DRC in 1997, the year before the war began.

Health conditions in the east are far worse than in the west. Aside from having a higher crude mortality, the under-five-year-olds in the east die at twice the rate of those in the west: 9.0/1000/mo. [95% CI = 4.0 - 14.0] vs. 4.4/1000/mo. [95% CI = 3.2 - 5.7]. Likewise, population growth is non-existent in the east and is 1.6% per year in the west. People in the west have a higher birth rate, one-third the rate of lost pregnancies, and lower rates of death from disease. In three of the ten health zones visited in the east, more than half the children die before the age of two years.

The rate of death from violence in the east has decreased dramatically. Compared to previous IRC surveys, in 2002 people in the east reported less than one-tenth the previous reported rate of death from violence. Both in places surveyed in the past and again in 2002, and as an overall average, the rate of violent death decreased dramatically in 2002 compared to the previous three years. In past surveys, violent death rates have consistently been correlated with the overall crude mortality. Probably not by chance, the only surveyed health zone with a large recorded outbreak of violence, Kisangani Ville, was the one place where the CMR increased from previous mortality surveys.

Mortality in the eastern DRC decreased in 2002 compared to past years. The CMR of 3.5/1000/mo. recorded during the 2002 surveys contrasts with the IRC's previous CMR estimate of 5.4/1000/mo. for the period August 1998 to April 2001. In four out of five locations previously surveyed during this war and revisited as part of this survey, the CMR dramatically decreased. The lower rates of death and violent

death, and an increase in the areas accessible to survey teams, all indicate an overall improvement of conditions in the eastern provinces.

Based on past and current IRC data, it is estimated that 3.3 million people have died as a result of this war. While this estimate could vary from 3.0 to 4.7 million depending on assumptions about the populations excluded from the survey, the conclusion remains the same: this is the most deadly war ever documented in Africa, indeed the highest war death toll documented anywhere in the world during the past half-century.

Many factors may have contributed to the improved health conditions in eastern DRC in 2002. While historians, public health workers and politicians would benefit from studying the causes of this exceptionally deadly conflict, they may profit still more by determining what caused the favorable turn of events during the fourth year of the war.

Nevertheless, the present CMR of at least 3.5/1000/mo. among 9 to 14 million people in eastern DRC is a crisis of extraordinary proportions, and the adverse consequences of this war continue. If the world's peacemakers and the international community fail to give due attention to this crisis at this crucial time, all of the gains made to date could easily be lost. It is hoped that the positive trends in mortality rates documented in this report will encourage diplomatic and humanitarian efforts and inspire the international community to stay the course toward peace." (IRC, 8 April 2003)

Conflict causes degradation of the health care system (2001-2004)

- Deterioration of health system has resulted in spread of cholera, HIV/AIDS and malaria
- Health care systems paralysed in many provinces as qualified staff have fled war-affected regions
- At least 37 per cent of the population don't have access to any formal health care
- Situation in rebel-held areas is even worse due to war damage
- Health personnel run the risk of being taken hostage or prisoner

"A recent study by the IRC indicated even a maternal mortality rate of 3,000 per 100,000 live births in the rebel-controlled areas. The very high levels of maternal mortality are associated with early sexuality and motherhood (the teenagers of less than 20 years contribute for 20% to the total fertility), too many pregnancies and births (the total is estimated at seven children per woman), unspaced pregnancies (the average period between two births is less than two years), motherhood at a late age, and induced clandestine abortions associated with unwanted pregnancies that affect 30% of the teenagers. All of this occurs in the context of rising On top of that are the high HIV/AIDS infection rates (see HIV/AIDS paragraph)." (UN, 16 January 2003, p41)

"A dearth of recent statistical data from across the country makes a full assessment of the population's access to health services difficult.[1] However, conservative estimates of the coverage of health facilities show that at least 37 per cent of the population, or approximately 18.5 million people, have no access to any form of formal health care.[2]

In government-held areas, the share of central government expenditure allocated to the health sector is less than one per cent – and has been barely more than this since Independence in 1960. As a result, the health system has always been run as a 'private' service, with patients required to pay. In areas under RCD control, there is no budget for health services. Additional support to the 307 Health Zones into which the country is divided comes mainly from churches and other organisations. However, in 2000, 100 Health Zones received no external assistance, either from the government or from outside agencies. In addition, there is a severe lack of human resources. In 1998 there were only 2056 doctors for a population of 50 million people, and of these, 930 were in Kinshasa.[3] [...]

In rebel-held areas the situation is even worse, because a large number of the medical facilities in areas which were already under-resourced have also suffered war damage. In Masisi (North Kivu), 40 per cent of all health infrastructure has been destroyed, including the hospital in Mweso which was gutted and used by soldiers. In the Djugu territory in Ituri, many health centres were completely destroyed as the inter-ethnic war raged through its towns. All that now remains is rubble, medical staff having fled or been killed. In rebel-held parts of Kabinda Health Zone (Kasai Oriental), the disengagement of warring parties in March has allowed medical staff from health outposts to reach the town for the first time in more than a year. They reported that in 12 areas only one of the health centres has any medicine, and the rest are not functioning at all. Many have been looted, and have little or no essential equipment."

[Notes:

[1] Access is defined as both geographical and economic, ie being within a reasonable walking distance of a functioning health service and being able to afford to pay for the consultation and treatment.

[2] Figure published in the 8th Report of the Secretary General on the UN Organisation Mission in DRC (S/2001/572), 8th June 2001. However, OCHA estimates that the percentage could be as high as 75%, meaning that over 37 million people would be denied access to health care.

[3] Etat des Lieux du Secteur de la Santé, Avril-Juin 1998, Ministère de la Santé Publique] (Oxfam August 2001, pp.15-17)

"Dans les 18 zones de santé du Maniema, environ 80% des structures sont à réhabiliter, environ 90% ont besoin de médicaments essentiels et équipement." (OCHA 2 Jan 04, p4)

"The DRC epidemiological profile for 2003 has been marked by the upsurge of epidemic outbreaks. The war and the consequences of insecurity significantly increased this risk, as did the lack of funding for the minimum package directed against the seven leading diseases and the weakness of surveillance system played a role in those outbreaks. WHO Statistics for 2003 illustrate the horrendous human cost of the conflict: Cholera: 17,086 cases, 573 deaths; Measles: 40,136 cases, 1,941 deaths; Meningitis: 6,573 cases 1,650 deaths; Monkey pox 459 cases, 23 deaths; Malaria: 2,122,878 cases 374,520 deaths." (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p8)

Outbreak of cholera in Kasai Oriental and in Katanga Provinces (2001-2003)

- Cholera cases increased in Katanga province in early 2003, following a huge epidemic in 2002
- Current epidemic started in September 2001, spreading in late 2002 from Katanga to Eastern Kasai province, causing a total of more than 1,200 deaths
- Causes include lack of access to food and health care, poor hygiene, and contaminated water

"Since January 2003 the local health authorities and MSF have registered an increase in cholera cases in Katanga province. The new outbreak follows a huge epidemic in 2002.

"At the moment we count almost one hundred cases per week in Lubumbashi town and some three hundred in the whole of Katanga," said Alain Decoux, MSF Head of Mission in DRC. Meanwhile in East Kasai province the epidemic does not show any sign of stabilisation, with an average of 250 new cases per week.

"In Mbuji Mayi town the figures seem to have decreased slightly but in the periphery, especially the mine sites, there has been a new increase during the past two weeks."

This means that cholera is continuing to spread from village to village.

'The health care system in DRC lies largely in ruins', explained Luc Nicolas, operational coordinator for MSF in Brussels. 'Cholera is now becoming a permanent reality in the two provinces.'

The first outbreak of the current epidemic dates back to September 2001. Since then a total of 19,000 cases has been counted, with more than 1,200 deaths. During the last months of 2002 the epidemic spread from Katanga to East Kasai province, where MSF teams have counted more than 3,800 cases and 209 deaths since then." (MSF, 21 February 2003)

Not only a lack of sufficient access to health care and food are the main reasons for the cholera outbreaks. Hygiene is also very problematic. The majority of villages in East Kasai with cholera cases are involved in diamond mining. The waste water of this industry goes directly into the river Lubilanjé that is used for drinking water by the population. The epidemic is spreading along the river, from the south to the north, because of the tradition of putting corpses into the river." (MSF 18 Oct 02)

IDPs are more exposed to HIV/AIDS infection as a result of the conflict (2001-2003)

- IDPs have no means to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS infection nor access to information about its transmission
- 800,000-1 million children are orphaned because of AIDS
- Eastern provinces have the highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection, with 20-22 percent of population affected
- Coordination of actions against HIV/AIDS in the eastern DRC is not operational and inaccessibility to different HIV/AIDS services is still a major problem in regions outside government control

"Multiple troop movements and population displacements in the DRC, and to and from neighbouring countries with high HIV prevalence rates, have left the DRC well set for "an explosion of HIV/AIDS", according to WHO focal point Dr Tshioko Kweteminga, cited in an agency situation report late last week. [...]

National statistics collected through the health information system suggested that there were just under 10,000 new HIV cases last year but public health authorities have estimated – based on information from five regional sites – that there were in the region of 173,000 new HIV cases each year in the DRC, and almost 1.3 million adults and children living with HIV." (IRJN-CEA 15 August 2001)

"In both government- and rebel-controlled areas, the population has suffered greater exposure to infection as a result of the conflict. People who are internally displaced, or who have lost all means of earning a livelihood, do not have the resources to protect themselves from infection, nor access to information about HIV/AIDS transmission. Health structures have limited capacity to test patients for HIV or to screen blood used in transfusions. Women living close to military camps, with no source of income, have turned to prostitution, despite the risks involved, in order to support themselves and their families.

Human rights organisations have also registered many cases of soldiers raping women. In addition to mental and physical injury and the risk of pregnancy, rape victims are particularly vulnerable to contracting HIV because body tissues are more likely to be torn. There are six foreign armies fighting on Congolese soil, and on average, soldiers' rates of infection can be up to four times higher than those of civilians.[1] [...]

Unlike most other diseases, AIDS affects adults of child-bearing age particularly, leaving the very young with no one to care for them.

[Note: [1] "No Excuses", Christian Aid, 2001" (Oxfam 6 August 2001, p.28)

"The eastern provinces have the highest rates, with the number of people infected having increased fivefold (from 4 to 22 per cent) over the past two years in towns such as Goma, Bukavu and Beni." (UN SC 8 June 2001)

"The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) may have reached 20 percent in certain regions of the country, according to Dr Francois Lepira, director of the national programme against AIDS (Programme national de lutte contre le sida).

The announcement came on Monday as the country's Ministry of Health presented its new multi-sector plan to fight HIV/AIDS in what it says are some of the hardest-hit regions of the country, namely the provinces of Kasai Oriental in central Congo, Katanga in the southeast, South Kivu in the east, and Orientale in the northeast." (IRIN 5 Nov 03)

"Surveys among blood donors in eastern DRC show HIV/AIDS prevalence rates around 20%, four times higher than the National AIDS Control Programme figures." (UNICEF 11 Feb 2002)

According to the UN:

"1. The coordination of actions against HIV/AIDS in the eastern DRC is not operational, as the Central coordination Offices do not have the means for action.

2. The inaccessibility to different HIV/AIDS services is still a major problem, especially in the regions outside government control. Condoms, tested blood, voluntary tests and advice, treatment of STI, treatment of secondary infections, prevention of mother to child transmission are not available to over 20% of the population." (UN OCHA 19 Nov 2002, p63)

WHO says clear shift to public health approach needed to focus on the main killer conditions (2000-2001)

- Malaria is the no one cause of the population of 20 million in the east and accounts for 65% of all causes of morbidity (June 2001)
- Up to 70% of the population is now excluded from accessing basic health services
- As a result of difficult living conditions and lack of access to health care, diseases which had almost been eradicated are now recorded
- As of Nov 2001, less than 25% of the population have access to basic health services according to UN estimates

"Malaria is the number one cause of mortality for the population of nearly 20 million in the east. There are big problems of security, logistics and infrastructure, low access to health services, no preventative activities and a real lack of standardization of approach to surveillance and treatment. [...]

Health care in DRC must be redirected from the current facility-based curative care to a public health approach focused on the main killer conditions if humanitarian interventions are to address the unacceptable mortality and morbidity evident in the country. This was the key message of a joint WHO-UNICEF mission which spent late July in DRC.

The mission found that, despite good intentions, up to 70% of the population is now excluded from accessing basic health services, while all forms of preventative public activities are severely curtailed, not least because salaries of health service workers are linked to curative care. This observation led to the mission's second key recommendation: that "health worker remuneration must be separated from payment by patients... and linked to performance of a package which directly targets the main killers, both in the health centre and at household level." (WHO 9 August 2001)

"As a result of difficult living conditions and lack of access to health care, diseases which had almost been eradicated, such as bubonic plague and whooping cough, are now being recorded. There have also been numerous epidemics of measles and cholera, and reported cases of haemorrhagic fever, monkey pox, and meningitis." (Oxfam 6 August 2001, p.19)

"More than half of the health zones do not receive any external support and less than 25% of the population have access to basic health services (UN OCHA 26 Nov 2001, p.42)

"Malaria accounted for some 36 percent of all causes of morbidity in December 2000 and grew to 65 percent of all causes of morbidity by the end of June 2001. [...] (Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, DRC)." (IFRC 1 Jan 2002, Sect.3)

Civil war inflicts unbearable hardship on women and children (2000-2002)

- Violence perpetrated against women a feature of the war
- Number of women dying as a result of pregnancy is three to five times higher than the African average
- Significant number of women and girls are infected with STD through rape, the most deadly being HIV/AIDS and do not seek medical treatment
- UNICEF/DRC government study shows high level of malnutrition, insufficient vaccination of children, very limited access to prenatal care; rising infant and childhood mortality and significant decrease of number of children attending school (Oct 02)

"The number of women dying as a result of pregnancy is three to five times higher than the African average. Under-nourishment, forced and economic prostitution, overwork for insufficient compensation, untreated ailments and the psychological strain of maintaining large families are exacting a terrible toll. Out of the 2.5 million babies born in an average year, 20% will not reach their first birthday. Infant mortality is 50% higher than the African average." (UN 26 Nov 2001, p.42)

"A significant number of women and girls are infected with sexually transmitted diseases through rape and for any or all of the above reasons [such as stigma of rape] do not seek treatment unless it is absolutely necessary. The large majority of rape victims interviewed had never received any medical treatment after the rape, and often did not even tell doctors about the rape when they gave birth. Social workers and medical staff confirmed that only a small minority of victims ever get any treatment. Thus, many relatively easily treatable sexually transmitted diseases remain untreated, some causing considerable pain and inconvenience to the woman, and some causing irreversible consequences. The most deadly disease that can be contracted through rape is HIV/AIDS. Not only are the lives of HIV-positive women and girls shortened and their livelihood possibilities seriously impaired, but being HIV-positive or even being suspected of being positive adds to the stigma of rape to make for a double stigmatization of these women and girls. One woman who had been raped said that her husband rejected her, saying he was afraid that she had contracted HIV and would "contaminate" him. ¹⁷⁷ The scarcity and high cost of HIV testing makes it more difficult for women who are not infected to demonstrate this to their husbands and families." (HRW June 2002, p.69)

UNICEF study on women and children:

"A new study by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has shown that the condition of women and children in the has not improved since the last such study was carried out in 1995.

According to the latest "Enquete Nationale sur la Situation des Enfants et des Femmes", released on Monday, malnutrition of children and their mothers remains high, vaccination of children is still insufficient, access to prenatal care remains very limited, infant and childhood mortality are continuing to rise, and the number of children attending school has decreased significantly. In a statement, UNICEF said that the myriad of problems documented by this latest study "date back many years, and their solution was to be found in a radical change of development policy and greater awareness-raising of communities".

The information for the 'Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2' was gathered by a team of 355 people from April to October 2001 in all provinces of the country, in an effort to evaluate progress made since the 1990 World Summit for Children. 10,305 households were visited for the study, which received the technical and financial support of UNICEF and the US Agency for International Development. "" (IRIN 16 Oct 02)

For more information, see the study:

UNICEF/Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction of the DR Congo July 2002. Enquête nationale sur la situation des enfants et des femmes MICS2/2001. Rapport d'analyse, Kinshasa, [reference below]

Nutrition and food

Malnutrition on the increase among IDPs in eastern DRC (2001-2003)

- Nearly two-thirds of the population suffers from food shortages (June 03)
- Many populations have exhausted their coping mechanisms, and are unable to meet their basic nutritional needs
- As a result of massive displacement, between 10 and 30 percent of population in some areas in Katanga, Orientale, North and South Kivu suffer from acute malnutrition (Nov 02)
- In 2001, 16 million people (33 % of population) were estimated to have critical food needs as a result of prolonged displacement and other factors

"Murder and rape are increasing in the war-ravaged eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and children are slowly dying of starvation, with nearly two-thirds of the population estimated to suffer from food shortages, United Nations officials reported today even as the Security Council was being briefed on the latest peacekeeping efforts." (UN News Service 18 June 03)

"During 2002, the general acute malnutrition remained unchanged. Areas that were previously inaccessible, such as North Katanga, experienced an improvement in the rate of malnutrition. However, areas such as South Kivu and Ituri saw an increase in armed conflict lead to increased rates of acute malnutrition.

A June 2001 study by WHO and UNICEF reported that the majority of the Congolese live on US\$ 0.20 a day, and consume less than two thirds of the calories required to meet their basic needs and remain healthy. With the continuation of the war in certain areas and the continued economic instability, many populations will remain vulnerable as they cannot meet their basic nutritional needs. Without intervention, these families will not possess the coping mechanisms needed to react and adjust to crisis. This coupled with limited access to basic social services and limited access by humanitarians to the most vulnerable places millions of Congolese in a precarious state. Overall, the coping mechanisms that enabled most of the population to survive crises are by now totally exhausted. Insecurity and bad infrastructure make it difficult to gain access to the most vulnerable population, and this holds for punctual and sustainable humanitarian interventions." (UN, 16 January 2003, p43)

"Between 10 percent and 30 percent of the population are suffering from acute malnutrition in many areas of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), says the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Those most affected are women and children.

The hardest-hit areas are Kiambi, Nyunzu, Manono, Pweto, Pepa, Kalemie and Malemba-Nkulu in Katanga Province; Bunia, Mahagi, Mambasa and surrounding villages in Orientale Province; Shabunda, Walungu, Ngweshe, Bunyakiri and the plain of Ruzizi in South Kivu; and Beni, Butembo, Rutshuru and Masisi in North Kivu Province.

The high rates of malnutrition were attributable to massive displacement resulting from ongoing fighting in the region, Ad Spijkers, the FAO's representative in the DRC, told IRIN. Forced to flee at a moment's notice, people had been unable to carry away food, seeds or tools with them. Moreover, the displaced people had also become a huge burden on the areas to which they had fled.

"Under these conditions, everyone - that is the displaced populations and the families in the areas they flee to - loses the capacity to feed themselves," he said.

General insecurity in the region was uprooting people repeatedly as soldiers, rebels and militia groups looted villages and emptied homes of food, drugs, stocks of seeds, electric household appliances, tools, and clothing, he said.

Malnutrition in eastern DRC, an area with enormous agricultural potential, was a new phenomenon, except for parts of South Kivu where the density of the population was significant and the soil not very fertile, said Spijkers." (IRIN 6 Nov 02)

"Some 16 million people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are estimated to have critical food needs as a result of prolonged displacement, the rupture of traditional sources of supply due to war and the alarming increase in prices." (UN SC 8 June 2001, para.57)

Displaced in Fataki, Ituri, in urgent need of aid (Sept 03)

"Troops of the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUC, launched an operation on Thursday to secure the northeastern town of Fataki, Ituri District, as an NGO there reported that some 5,000 displaced residents were in need of urgent aid.

"All we have been able to provide them is medicine, plastic sheeting and some utensils, they need food and blankets as they are sleeping in the open," Etienne Ndeykos, director of the Roman Catholic NGO Caritas in Bunia, told IRIN on Wednesday.

He said that the displaced, who had fled to Bule, a centre about 5 km from Fataki, were living in deplorable conditions in an enclosure, under the coordination of two Caritas priests. He said Fataki was deserted as roving gangs had looted and burnt houses. He added that a Caritas team would leave Bunia, the main town of Ituri, for Bule on Thursday to make another needs assessment tour of the displaced.

The acting commander of the Ituri Brigade, Brig-Gen Jan Isberg, said on Wednesday at a news conference in Bunia that the Fataki operation would entail ground and air units to rid the town of militiamen and return it to its residents. Combat helicopters would drop soldiers into the town, he said. Isberg said MONUC would also consider providing security to humanitarian organisations dealing with the displaced in Fataki." (IRIN 4 Sept 03)

Background on Fataki humanitarian situation:

"A series of militia attacks on the town of Fataki, 60 km northwest of Bunia, have left 200 people dead, 237 abducted and the town deserted, an official of the Hema militia group Union des patriotes congolais (UPC) told IRIN on Sunday.

UPC spokesman Saba Rafiki said the Lendu began these attacks in mid-July, looting then burning homes and shops. Most of the town's residents had fled to Bule, some 7 km from Fataki, he said. There the displaced were receiving aid from Caritas, a Roman Catholic NGO, Rafiki said.

Fataki was under UPC control before the attacks, he said, but bands of thieves and other attackers had been raiding and looting the deserted town. The UN Mission in the DRC, known as MONUC, sent two reconnaissance helicopters over the town on Saturday and reported it was empty of its residents and destroyed. " (IRIN 1 Sept 03)

In Fizi, South Kivu, food insecurity is closely linked to insecurity for IDPs and returnees (Oct 03)

"A recent humanitarian needs assessment mission conducted jointly by several UN agencies has found widespread humanitarian needs in the region from Uvira to Fizi in South Kivu Province of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Priorities for humanitarian action are protection/security, water, health and food security, according to the mission, conducted from 16 to 20 October by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, The United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

The population of the region visited was estimated to be about 375,000 people, including 76,500 internally displaced persons (IDPs), 44,500 internal returnees and 5,000 returnees from neighbouring Tanzania - many of whom had been refugees for five to seven years. "Hundreds if not thousands" of Rwandan refugees who wished to remain in the DRC were also reported.

The mission reported that although a greater sense of security seemed to have returned among the population, residents remained apprehensive about the possible eruption of renewed hostilities, given the presence of a wide range of armed elements in the region.

Serious concerns about the safety of civilians in the region persist. The mission said that a "considerable number of people remained displaced in inaccessible areas, with no intention of returning to their homes until their security could be guaranteed by all military actors". The mission also cited one local NGO as having reported that from August to mid-October 2003, 452 women and seven men had been raped along the Makobola-Baraka-Katanga axis.

Food insecurity was found to be closely linked to continued insecurity: despite being a very fertile region, many residents had refused to resume cultivation of their fields, the systematic pillage of crops having become common practice among armed groups. On top of this, the steady return of IDPs and refugees had placed a considerable burden on already food-insecure populations. The mission reported that malnutrition "was clearly visible" among populations to which they had access." (UN OCHA 31 Oct 03)

IDPs in Mambasa, Orientale province, face food shortages (2003)

- Most of the residents of Mambasa are continuing to hide in the forest waiting for rebel groups to leave
- People are unable to access their fields during harvest season, so are entirely dependent on humanitarian aid

"Tens of thousands of displaced residents of the northeastern town of Mambasa are threatened by hunger, even though three rebel groups have begun to withdraw from the area, according to the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), known as MONUC.

"There are no more than 300 people remaining in Mambasa. It is a ghost town, because its residents are still hiding in the forest waiting for the rebel groups to leave," Patricia Tome, MONUC's chief of public information, said at a news conference in the capital, Kinshasa, on Wednesday. About 30,000 people normally live in Mambasa.

"It is now the harvest season, but the population does not have access to its fields, and will therefore depend entirely on international humanitarian aid - but this must be sent as soon as possible," she said.

The heads of the three rebel movements - Jean-Pierre Bemba of the Mouvement pour la liberation du Congo (MLC), Roger Lumbala of the Rassemblement congolais pour la democratie-National (RCD-N), and Mbusa Nyamwisi of the RCD-Kisangani-Mouvement de liberation (RCD-K-ML) agreed in the northwestern DRC town of Gbadolite on 30 December to withdraw their forces to the positions they held prior to the most recent outbreak of hostilities.

[...]

The latest round of hostilities among the three rebel movements erupted only three days after the ceasefire was signed, and resulted in the new displacement of thousands of people. According to MONUC, some 130,000 people were already displaced in the surrounding region." (IRIN, 8 January 2003)

See also 'Informations sur la sécurité alimentaire en RDC No. 27,' FAO, 30 December 2002 [\[click here\]](#)

FAO survey in Kinshasa, Kasai Oriental and Katanga found significant shortfall of calorific and protein intake (July 2002)

"The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has found significant levels of caloric deficiency and food insecurity in poor and densely populated areas of the capital, Kinshasa. This finding results from a survey conducted in June in the city's Masina Pascal and Kingasani Mont-Kali communes.[...]

The average size of the Kinshasa household was found to be 8.8 people, an increase of 10 percent from the year 2000. It can be explained in part by the arrival in the capital of populations fleeing conflict zones and poverty in rural areas, as well as by a growth in population.[...]

The study also highlighted the situation in the central DRC province of Kasai Oriental and the southern province of Katanga where, despite a stabilisation of food prices, an "alarming shortfall" of caloric and protein intake, due largely to unemployment, was found. FAO expressed particular concern for the hundreds of thousands of people living in areas of Katanga inaccessible to humanitarian assistance due to continued military activity." (IRIN 19 July 2002)

Alarming high malnutrition rates among displaced and other children (2001-2002)

- In rebel-held areas, global malnutrition rates among children under five have reached 41 % and severe malnutrition rates up to 25.79% (SCF-UK & Nueva Frontiera surveys)
- In certain parts of government-held areas, global malnutrition rates among children have reached 42% (SCF-UK survey)
- In remote areas of Equateur Province, majority of children under 5 suffer from malnutrition and child mortality rates are reportedly unacceptably high (Dec 01 & Feb 02)
- World Vision found a 13.9% rate of serious malnutrition among children under 5 in Rwanguba health zone (North Kivu)
- In Kindu (Maniema Province), IDP and resident children show alarming signs of malnutrition (June 2002)
- Malnutrition of small children in Baraka, South Kivu (Feb 2002)

"In rebel-held areas, the rates of global malnutrition among children under five reported in the past year have reached 41 per cent,[1] with severe malnutrition rates of up to 25.79 per cent.[2] These figures were recorded at the point at which the humanitarian community gained access to previously isolated communities. Consequently, it is reasonable to expect that in areas of the east which continue to be too insecure to allow any form of assistance to be delivered, the situation is at least as bad, and possibly worse. Displaced populations inaccessible in the forests are in a particularly bad nutritional state, as illustrated by WFP's figures for South Kivu, which show that 75 per cent of malnourished children currently registered in feeding centres belong to families which have just emerged from the forests. When Manono and Kiambi (northern Katanga) became accessible in January 2001, Nuova Frontiera conducted a nutritional survey which found a global malnutrition rate among under fives of 32.07 per cent and a severe malnutrition rate of 25.79 per cent" (Oxfam August 2001, p. 26)

In the Kivus. "Children, as usual, are being disproportionately impacted by the displacement. Therapeutic and supplementary feeding centers remain full. However, a shortage of therapeutic dry milk is being felt, and many local centers which care for hundreds of children are scrambling to supply this life-giving commodity." (RI 14 September 2000)

"In Mbandaka, Gbadolite and more especially in the more remote areas of Equateur Province, MONUC has observed that the majority of children under 5 suffer from malnutrition, that child mortality rates are reportedly unacceptably high and that the expanded vaccination programme in Gbadolite has been interrupted since mid-2000." (UN SC 15 Feb 2002, para. 74)

"An assessment of the health, nutrition and food security of people living in Rwanguba health zone, a war-affected area northeast of Goma in North Kivu province, has found a 13.9% rate of serious malnutrition among children under 5. World Vision has been addressing malnutrition among war-affected children in North and South Kivu provinces since 1998." (WVI 19 Mar 2002)

"41,684 displaced persons are now living in Kindu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and among this population 2,933 children between the ages of 0 and 5 are showing signs of malnutrition, according to a recent emergency assessment facilitated by OCHA and FAO Kindu [...]."

To make matters worse, Kindu's 131,000 residents, who's number of malnourished children have registered even higher than the displaced children [...], may themselves be facing a humanitarian crisis if the security situation doesn't change soon." (UN OCHA 25 June 2002)

In Baraka, "Families more recently displaced from the interior of Fizi are sheltering in some of them. In December there were estimated to be over 15,000 displaced people in the vicinity of Baraka, and there are additional smaller concentrations northwards along the lakeshore. There have been repeated outbreaks of cholera in recent months. The latest ones in Baraka have been somewhat stemmed by dispatch of serum from Uvira by ACF, but a new major outbreak has just been reported in and around Kazimia. With the rains in progress there is evidence of new planting of manioc and other food crops which is in some measure due to seed deliveries sent down, again by ACF, to local organisations that they worked with when they were here several years ago. There is no other evidence of any humanitarian supplies reaching Baraka or anywhere else in Fizi over the past couple of years. Malnutrition is evident particularly in small children. The most urgent needs are for nutrition and basic medicines, followed by non-food items, farming tools and, on the Plateau, veterinary supplies and seeds, particularly beans, maize and new banana stocks (there seems to be some sort of blight affecting the bananas). After that it is a question of rehabilitating schools and health posts, and supplying roofing sheets." (1A Feb 2002)

Shelter

IDPs in eastern DRC seek shelter in towns (2000)

- Lack of camps for IDPs from the Kivus make people move in with family and friends or squat wherever they can in the towns
- IDPs in Ituri seek shelter at trading centres, churches and schools

"The largest groups of displaced are in Goma and Bukavu. One church worker told Human Rights Watch that at least a quarter of the population of Goma is now comprised of people displaced from the interior. But even in the small community of Kavumu in South Kivu there are more than 4,000 displaced persons, some 1,200 from Bunyakiri and Walikale and nearly 3,000 from Kalonge. These are the numbers of those officially registered and the actual number may be far higher. There are no camps for the displaced so they move in with family and friends, themselves already impoverished, or they squat wherever they can in the towns. As one church worker commented, "They have no work, no home, they're not accustomed to the city. They become beggars, are exposed to illnesses. They are the most affected by cholera, AIDS, and other diseases." Recently displaced persons told Human Rights Watch researchers that many of those who remained in their communities are too afraid of attack to spend their nights at home and sleep outside the house where they are exposed to inclement weather and to illnesses such as malaria." (HRW May 2000, chapt. III)

Majority of IDPs are not housed in camps but have merged into host communities (1999-2000)

- In rural communities IDPs are often absorbed by host villages, accommodated and fed for the initial stages
- In urban areas it is not uncommon that continued stay of IDPs creates discontent

"A characteristic feature of displacement in eastern DRC is the fact that IDPs are not housed in camps but have merged into host communities. Their conditions remain precarious due to lack of farming land, vital services and general insecurity. Remaining in proximity to their places of origin, the displaced are prone to be subjected to the same hazards and abuses that caused them to flee in the first place. On a number of occasions during 1998-99, the displaced and local communities were stranded in combat areas and were removed by military authorities in a bid to create security zones." (UN July 1999, p.8)

"The great majority of displaced persons are relatively well received by foster communities thanks to the family or tribal ties. In urban areas, IDPs are sheltered and fed by their foster families thus becoming an additional burden on the already poverty-stricken urban households. It is not uncommon that the continued stay of IDPs creates discontent that eventually bursts into a conflict with the subsequent expulsion of the displaced. In rural communities on the other hand, IDPs are often absorbed by host villages, accommodated and fed for the initial stages. With the approval of traditional chiefs, the displaced subsequently receive land plots and in due course overcome their dependence on the local community. Eventually, the relations between the displaced and their hosts improve, as the former start contributing to the general well-being of the community." (UN November 2000, p.18)

IDPs seeking shelter in the forest constitute be the most vulnerable IDP group (2000)

- Forest dwellers lack access to health care and subside on wild foods
- This IDP category estimated at 200,000

"Tragically, it is estimated that less than half the displaced communities and families are receiving humanitarian assistance. Those vulnerable and displaced populations left without assistance are hiding in the forests, inaccessible as a result of insecurity and some who emerged for their hiding places in August [2000] were disturbingly described as 'living in animal-like-conditions.'" (OCHA 31 December 2000)

"This group of displaced is legitimately believed to be the most vulnerable among all IDP communities. Most commonly, these people have been displaced several times, having left their home communities seeking security in remote and barely accessible areas. Communities then cleanse a portion of forest and start cultivating. This category of displaced has practically no access to health care and is reduced to consuming wild berries and "non-human" and raw food. Ashamed of their physical appearance and nudity, precarious health conditions (infections, dermatosis, parasitosis, etc.), "forest dwellers" avoid any contacts with the outside world and seek to further distance and alienate themselves from the neighbouring communities. The previous (1996-1998) experience with similar groups of displaced suggested that practically every family loses on average one child under five. Because of its survival tactics, this group is the hardest to access and assist. The largest concentrations of people in the forest were observed in Shabunda (South Kivu) and Bokungu-Ikeia (Equateur). The number of people in this category is estimated at 200,000." (UN November 2000, p.15)

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

Conflict has had terrible impact on already failing education system (2001-2003)

- Displacement has caused many children to quit school
- UNICEF estimated for 2000/2001, 3-3.5 million children between 6-11 in DRC do not receive any formal education; 2 million are estimated to be girls
- Situation is the worse in eastern part of DRC where IFRC estimates that 70% of children do not go to school at all
- 47% of children in North Kivu and 42% in South Kivu have never attended school, according to UNICEF 2002 study
- A higher percentage of girls have never attended school
- Parents lack the financial means to pay school fees and schools refuse students which have not paid the fees
- Difficult to enroll children following displacement

"The education system has suffered from the devastating effects of the war as well as from bad governance over the past decades. The national budget spent on education has dropped to 0.3%. It is estimated that only 30% of children attend and finish primary school and just 12% actually finish secondary education. Some children are unable to attend school either for economic reasons or the lack of any educational services and infrastructures in their region, or they have been obliged to quit school due to the war (displacement, insecurity problems, etc). This puts the future of the country in a precarious situation." (UN, 16 January 2003, p44)

"The conflict in the DRC has had a terrible impact on an education system that was already failing. In 1998, the Ministry of Education reported that 40 per cent of children of primary school age were not attending school. The situation for girls was even worse. Nationally, half of all girls were not in school; in North Kivu, the figure was 69 per cent. The investment that was made in the Congolese education system in the 1970s and 1980s has been squandered. School enrolment rates plummeted from 94 per cent in 1978 to an estimated 60 per cent in 2001. Adult literacy rates fell from 74 per cent in 1992 to 58.9 per cent in 1998. There are no reliable figures for 2000/2001, although UNICEF estimates that there are currently between 3 and 3.5 million children aged between 6 and 11 who are not receiving any formal education. This figure exceeds the total population of the neighbouring Republic of Congo. Of these children, approximately two million are girls.

In eastern DRC, insecurity, poverty and the frequent closure or destruction of schools will have reduced attendance to a fraction of the 1998 figures. Many parents can no longer afford to send their children to school." (Oxfam 6 August 2001, p.29-30)

[In Malemba-Nkulu, Katanga] "Le secteur éducatif bien que bénéficiant du soutien de l'Unicef, est à l'image de toute la zone, sinistré. Bâtiments brûlés et pillés dans de nombreux villages, fuite des élèves, carence d'enseignants et non-paiement des salaires, non-paiement du minerval, absence de matériel d'enseignement (craies, bancs, tableaux), fournitures scolaires rares et trop onéreuses." (OCHA Oct 02, p9)

"Close to 70% of the children in the occupied territories have not been able to go to school at all, and the educational system is in an acute crisis. Most schools have no books, and teachers are paid a few dollars a month taken from contributions from parents." (IFRC 17 July 2002)

La proportion d'enfants n'ayant jamais fréquenté l'école primaire est élevée en RDC (31%). Elle est plus importante en milieu rural où elle atteint 39%, contre 14% en milieu urbain. Entre les provinces, les disparités sont importantes, notamment entre Kinshasa où 9% d'enfants n'ont jamais fréquenté l'école, et certaines autres provinces dont le Sud-Kivu (42%), l'Equateur (44%) et surtout le Nord-Kivu (47%).

Les filles sont plus nombreuses (35%) que les garçons (28%) à n'avoir jamais fréquenté l'école. Cette disparité entre les sexes existe également en milieu rural (44% de filles contre 34% de garçons) et dans la plupart des provinces. [...]

Deux faits complémentaires peuvent expliquer cette situation : le manque réel de moyens financiers permettant aux parents de payer les frais de scolarité, et la pratique actuelle qui consiste à ne pas admettre les enfants non en règle de paiement de minerval avec l'école. Dans certains cas, les élèves sont expulsés pour un ou quelques jours seulement de retard de paiement. Cette pratique résulte, selon les chefs d'établissements, de la nécessité d'avoir les moyens nécessaires pour faire fonctionner l'école, y compris le paiement de la « prime » due aux enseignants. Ceci pose le problème de la responsabilité de l'Etat congolais vis-à-vis du financement de la scolarisation des enfants. Sa démission et le fait de faire endosser cette charge aux parents conduisent à la non-fréquentation, momentanée ou prolongée, d'une bonne moitié des enfants congolais.

Plusieurs autres causes sont citées pour expliquer la non-fréquentation scolaire. Il y a d'abord un ensemble de causes dites « autres », que les mères n'ont pas voulu ou pu déclarer au moment de l'enquête. Il peut s'agir des causes pour lesquelles elles se sentent coupables, car il semble invraisemblable qu'un parent ne sache pas pourquoi son enfant ne fréquente pas. Il faudrait approfondir les analyses sur cette question. L'éloignement des écoles par rapport aux domiciles des enfants est une autre cause de non-fréquentation de 9% d'enfants : 11% en milieu rural et 2% en milieu urbain.[...]

Dans certains milieux ruraux, les enfants doivent franchir des kilomètres pour effectuer les va-et-vient entre leurs villages et leurs écoles. La situation serait particulièrement dramatique dans la province Orientale, au Kasai Oriental et au Bandundu. Il se pose là un problème de la carte scolaire, c'est-à-dire de la distribution de l'offre éducative en fonction de la demande sociale de chaque milieu.

Les maladies prolongées constituent également une cause de non-fréquentation scolaire ; elles gênent indistinctement les enfants en milieu urbain et en milieu rural.

Les changements de résidence provoquent aussi la non-fréquentation scolaire, principalement dans les milieux urbains, sans doute parce qu'ils exigent de faire réinscrire les enfants dans les écoles des nouveaux lieux de résidence. Or l'inscription d'un enfant dans une école, notamment en ville, au cours d'une année scolaire n'est pas aisée." (UNICEF/Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction of the DR Congo July 02, pp75-79)

Following volcano eruption 45 schools destroyed in Goma temporarily left some 24,000 children out of school (Feb 2002)

- Almost all the schools reopened end of February following the building of 200 temporary classes

"A survey conducted by the Education department in Goma points to a total of 45 schools (26 government schools, 16 private schools and three non-formal schools) destroyed by the volcano eruption out of an estimated total number of 150 schools. Many schools, secondary in particular, were near the city centre

where the lava flow passed, hence the relatively high number of schools destroyed. The primary and secondary schools destroyed leave some 24,000 children out of school." (UN OCHA 19 Feb 2002)

"[A]vec l'aide des ONG qui ont construit plus de 200 classes temporaires, presque toutes les écoles ont réouvert leurs portes le 25 février. UNICEF se dit prêt à envisager de répondre à des besoins supplémentaires en fourniture scolaires et d'étudier la question de l'indemnisation des professeurs." (UN OCHA 7 March 2002)

Most displaced children have no access to basic education (2001-2002)

- 400,000 displaced children of primary school age have no access to basic education
- UN says that absolute majority of IDP children have been deprived of formal and informal schooling since 1998
- The fact that displaced children have almost no access to education make them more vulnerable to enlistment into armed forces
- In eastern Katanga, parents pay double school fee to enable displaced children to also attend school

"Displaced children in particular have little or no chance to continue with their education. Of the two million displaced people, approximately 400,000 are thought to be children of primary school age. These children have no access to any form of basic education, prejudicing their opportunities later in life, and increasing their risk of enlistment into armed forces in search of a better situation." (Oxfam August 2001, p.29-30)

"In Eastern Katanga province, parents are actually paying double school fee to enable displaced children to also attend school, and health clinics are desperately trying to cater for the IDPs." (WV 30 July 2001)

"The absolute majority of IDP children have been deprived of proper or any schooling since 1998. In urban areas, there is a marked increase in the number of dropouts with primary school attendance declining, as many families are unable to afford exorbitant education fees. For the first time since the beginning of the war, the CHAP 2001 will attempt to revive the importance and value of the education sector, through launching a series of primary education campaigns in areas of population displacement." (UN OCHA 26 Nov 2001, pp.47-48)

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

General

Displacement caused by years of war, as well as natural disasters, means agricultural production is at all-time low (2003)

- Many populations have abandoned their fields due to displacement or to look for other means of subsistence
- Former main agricultural areas - especially the Kivus, northern Katanga and Ituri - are now producing about 10 percent of their pre-war agricultural output
- In more stable areas, farmers are often reduced to survival cultivation, lacking the necessary inputs to resume their activities or increase production

"Situated on the Equator, the DRC has a wide climatic variety and immense agricultural resources. However, only ten percent of fertile land is being exploited. Due to four years of war, worsened by several natural disasters as the eruption of volcanoes, drought, etc., the agriculture sector has suffered immensely and the production has decreased as never before. The low population purchasing power and the lack of sufficient and balanced food have led to endemic malnutrition in the population.

Ever since the beginning of the war, the original trade circuits have been cut and roads and other infrastructure have further deteriorated. In addition, populations have abandoned their fields as a result of displacement or in order to look for other means of subsistence. Others turned to subsistence agriculture only.

The most affected zones, especially the Kivus, northern Katanga and Ituri, used to be the main agricultural production areas in the country. Presently, the agricultural production of these parts of the country is estimated at ten percent of the pre-war production.

In the relatively stable areas, weak purchasing power and the destruction of infrastructures has turned farmers back toward survival cultivation. They actually lack the most basic essential agricultural inputs (tools or seeds) to resume their activities or to increase production." (UN, 16 January 2003, p42)

For detailed studies of the economic and food security situation in areas of North Kivu, see:

Save the Children Fund (SCF), "Update of the Household Economy Analysis of the Rural Population of the Plateaux Zone, Masisi, North Kivu, DRC" – SCF report, 31 Jan 2003

SCF, "Household Economy Analysis of the Rural Population of South-Western Bwito, Rutshuru, North Kivu, DR Congo" – SCF report, 31 Jan 2003

Isolation and food insecurity of IDPs and other vulnerable people in Kindu, Maniema (Sept 2002)

- Conflict caused destruction of infrastructure, financial paralysis, massive population displacement, strong reduction of economic activity, acute problems regarding food security and malnutrition
- Almost no assistance to Kindu population by the international community, 14 percent of whom were displaced as of mid-2002

"La situation de conflit a entraîné la destruction des infrastructures de développement, la paralysie financière, un déplacement massif des populations, une forte contraction de l'activité économique, une baisse importante de l'offre des produits vivriers, des problèmes aigus de sécurité alimentaire, de malnutrition et de précarité des conditions de vie. Cette situation particulière, combinée avec l'absence prolongée de toute assistance interne ou externe à la population de Kindu (exception faite d'une assistance modeste dans le secteur sanitaire et d'une distribution des vêtements sous l'égide de OCHA) mérite une réaction de compassion de la Communauté nationale et internationale pour soulager tant soit peu le traumatisme de la population de Kindu qui se pose la question simple et forte : « qu'avons-nous fait pour mériter cela ? » [...]

La ville de Kindu est actuellement enclavée, laissée exsangue dans tous les domaines, et a connu plusieurs événements majeurs depuis 1996. La ville a subi les conséquences de deux guerres de 1996 et de 1998, et des affrontements dans son hinterland entre différents groupes armés depuis septembre 2001. Les miliciens Mayi-Mayi opérant à la périphérie de la ville paralysent toute l'activité économique, les ménages agricoles ne savent pas exploiter les terrains de haute production situés dans l'hinterland de la ville et l'approvisionnement en denrées de base se fait avec beaucoup des difficultés.[...]

A la situation difficile et désespérée des populations de Kindu s'ajoute la détresse particulière des groupes de personnes vulnérables composés d'orphelins, de vieillards abandonnés à eux-mêmes, d'enfants de la rue, de déplacés et sinistrés de guerre. L'enquête - OCHA RDC - estime le nombre de déplacés à environ 14% de la population de Kindu à la fin du mois de juillet 2002, soit environ dix huit mille personnes. La ville de Kindu compte plusieurs milliers de familles sinistrées à cause de la paralysie de l'activité économique." (UN OCHA Sept 2002, pp2-9)

FAO analyses coping mechanisms of IDPs and other vulnerable populations in eastern DRC (Aug 03)

« Est de la RDC : Les mécanismes de survie développés par la population sinistrée suite à la guerre. Les communautés qui ne s'adaptent pas en changeant de manière de vivre quand les conditions de leur environnement changent sont vouées à la disparition. Cela s'observe clairement dans la vie courante. La crise engendrée par les guerres, en anéantissant le tissu socio-économique, a frappé toute la population, incluant même les familles qui ont pu rester chez elles. Les déplacements massifs, l'enclavement de certaines provinces et grandes villes, l'absence de revenu et donc une baisse considérable du pouvoir d'achat, ont contraint les populations à développer des stratégies de survie suivantes. » (FAO 31 Aug 03)

Strategies described in the report include developing gardens and handicraft, reducing costs allocated to health, clothing and schooling, to ask religious associations for assistance, to become a daily laborer, etc.

The report also analyses mechanisms specific to certain provinces.

Deteriorating socio-economic situation due to the war (2001-2002)

- Rise in poverty level has dramatic impact on humanitarian situation

- Little health and education and road infrastructures existing before the two wars of 1996 and 1998 are in a state of collapse
- June 2001 WHO/UNICEF study reported that majority of Congolese live on 20 cents US a day, and consume less than two thirds of the calories required to meet basic needs
- Devaluation of currency and cost of imported goods (kerosene, salt) has eroded people's purchasing power
- Agricultural production has dropped and in mineral-rich areas, farmers have abandoned agriculture to dig for coltan, gold or diamond
- Deprived of state support, with little access to income, and without meaningful external aid, the resources and resilience of Congolese households have simply run out
- Vast majority of Congo's 50 million people live on around 20 cents per person per day and eat less than two thirds of the calories a day needed to maintain health
- Majority of the population survives on informal economic activities, mainly carried out by women (Feb 2002)

"Situated on the Equator, the DRC has a wide climatic variety and immense agricultural resources. However, only ten percent of fertile land is being exploited. Due to four years of war, worsened by several natural disasters as the eruption of volcanoes, drought, etc., the agriculture sector has suffered immensely and the production has decreased as never before. The low population purchasing power and the lack of sufficient and balanced food have led to endemic malnutrition in the population.

Ever since the beginning of the war, the original trade circuits have been cut and roads and other infrastructure have further deteriorated. In addition, populations have abandoned their fields as a result of displacement or in order to look for other means of subsistence. Others turned to subsistence agriculture only.

The most affected zones, especially the Kivus, northern Katanga and Ituri, used to be the main agricultural production areas in the country. Presently, the agricultural production of these parts of the country is estimated at ten percent of the pre-war production.

In the relatively stable areas the weak purchasing power and the destruction of infrastructures turn the farmers to survival cultivation. They actually lack the most basic essential agricultural inputs (tools or seeds) to resume their activities or to increase production.

During 2002, the general acute malnutrition remained unchanged. Areas that were previously inaccessible, such as North Katanga, experienced an improvement in the rate of malnutrition. However, areas such as South Kivu and Ituri saw an increase in armed conflict lead to increased rates of acute malnutrition.

A June 2001 study by WHO and UNICEF reported that the majority of the Congolese live on 20 cents US a day, and consume less than two thirds of the calories required to meet their basic needs and remain healthy. With the continuation of the war in certain areas and the continued economic instability, many populations will remain vulnerable as they cannot meet their basic nutritional needs. Without intervention, these families will not possess the coping mechanisms needed to react and adjust to crisis. This coupled with limited access to basic social services and limited access by humanitarians to the most vulnerable place millions of Congolese in a precarious state. Overall, the coping mechanisms that enabled most of the population to survive crises are by now totally exhausted. Insecurity and bad infrastructure make it difficult to gain access to the most vulnerable population, and this holds for punctual and sustainable humanitarian interventions." (UN 19 Nov 2002, p56)

"The war has had a devastating impact on the country's 50 million people.[1] The DRC is currently ranked 152nd on the UNDP Human Development index of 174 countries: a fall of 12 places since 1992. This is

particularly shocking in a country with considerable natural resources, such as diamonds, hydro-electric power, wood, and minerals. Since the period of colonisation by King Leopold, very few Congolese citizens have ever benefited from the country's wealth. UNDP reported that the DRC's per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 1998 was US\$110, compared with US\$160 in Burundi and US\$680 in the neighbouring Republic of Congo. More than half of the five million people living in the capital city of Kinshasa are thought to live below the World Bank's poverty threshold of US\$1 per day.[2] A recent socio-economic survey in North Kivu indicated average expenditure per person per day of US\$0.41; in other places like Kayna, this figure was as low as US\$0.18.[3] The rise in poverty levels has had a dramatic impact on the humanitarian situation in the country.

The little infrastructure that existed prior to the two wars of 1996 and 1998 has crumbled. Health and education systems are in a state of collapse, continuing to rely on support from the churches, local organisations, and international agencies to provide limited services to the population. The poor state of the roads all over the country, compounded by insecurity in the east, impedes trade and makes the delivery of humanitarian assistance difficult and costly. Of the 145,000km of roads, no more than 2,500km are asphalt. Many of the remaining roads are often impassable during the rainy season. The threat of armed attack leads many business people to abandon road traffic completely. River-transport connections along the Congo River and its tributaries, once the crucial highway of the DRC, have also been severed. In many places, access is only possible by air, putting many basic necessities, including medicines, beyond people's reach. The movement of food and other supplies from rural to urban centres has completely ceased, resulting in large food deficits in towns and reduced production in the rural hinterlands.

"In eastern DRC, the war has reduced the poorest sections of the population, both displaced and host/local communities, to an extremely marginal existence. Conflict continues between the various armed groups and insecurity has worsened, particularly in rural areas. The devaluation of the currency and rise in the cost of imported goods such as kerosene and salt has eroded people's purchasing power. In isolated areas of rebel-held territories, such as Shabunda, Kindu, and East Kasai, which can only be reached by air, the cost of items such as salt, oil, soap, and even clothes has become even more prohibitive.

Agricultural production has dropped across the east of the country, meaning that some formerly surplus producing areas no longer grow enough to feed their populations. Insecurity, limited access to markets, cassava blight [4], and difficulties in making enough money from the sale of crops, all discourage people from cultivating. [...]

In mineral-rich areas such as Walikale, Punia, and Kalima, the short-term benefits of mining have also encouraged some farmers to abandon agriculture. Instead of working in their fields, they prefer to dig for coltan, gold, or diamond. This will have long-term implications for communities' access to food."

[Notes:

[1] The population at the time of the last census (1985) was 34.7 million. Current estimates range from 49 million to 59 million.

[2] Estimates of the population of Kinshasa range from 5-10 million people.

[3] Enquête Socio-Economique, Nord Kivu, Decembre 2000, ASRAMES

[4] Cassava is the staple for 70% of the Congolese population. Over the past 7 years, cassava crops across the country have suffered from viral and bacterial diseases that have totally wiped out production in some areas such as Bandundu. The war has hindered the application of measures to control the diseases and provide healthy disease-resistant varieties to farmers] (Oxfam August 2001, pp.9,24)

"International attention has focused on those areas and populations directly affected by the war but the reality is that the vast majority of Congo's 50 million people live on around 20 cents per person per day and eat less than two thirds of the calories a day needed to maintain health. Long deprived of state support, with dramatically reduced access to income, without meaningful external aid, the resources and resilience of Congolese households have simply run out." (WHO 29 June 2001)

"In the economic front, the situation throughout the country continues to deteriorate rapidly, poverty and unemployment having reached intolerable levels. The economic purchasing power of the population is extremely weak and the majority of the population survives on informal economic activities, mainly carried out by women." (UN OCHA 28 Feb 2002, pp.18-19)

Many displaced women have become the head of the household and pay an very heavy price (2001-2002)

- In Maniema, at Kalonge, at Bunyakiri, at Shabunda, in northern Shaba, more than 60% of displaced families are headed by women
- Women, who often hold the household together, are paying an extraordinary price

"The heavy displacement of populations mostly lead to dislocation of various families. Separated, women become responsible for their children future and have the obligation to guarantee the survival of the family in such a chaotic situation. According to various sources, in Maniema, at Kalonge, at Buyakiri, at Shabunda, in northern Shaba, more than 60% of displaced populations are from families of which husbands have ran away or have been enrolled in the army or in armed militia. In Maniema, they are estimated to be 80%. The monoparental system as imposed on women is a source of permanent tension. Moreover, it is to be feared that this extended conflict will have side effects in establishing a culture of violence considered as normal lifestyle of which women are actually victims. [...]

[However] Far from being uniquely silent victims of the present conflict, women have progressively granted themselves a leadership role trying to ward off the consequences of the conflict on their families and attempting by all means to reduce the side effects of the war on their communities." (OCHA 6 March 2001)

"Women, who often hold the household together, are paying an extraordinary price. This year over 42,000 will die in childbirth alone. Under-nourishment, forced and economic prostitution, overwork for pathetic recompense, untreated ill health and the psychological strain of maintaining large families are exacting a terrible toll." (WHO 29 June 2001)

"The war has exhausted the reserves of the people of eastern Congo. The burden of trying to survive and assure that others in the family survive fall heavily on women. As the socio-economic situation worsens, more women and girls are resorting to trading sex for food, shelter, or money in order to provide for themselves and their families." (HRW June 2002, p21)

Orphaned and separated children, especially young girls, are exposed to neglect and abuse (December 2000)

- Poverty, war, HIV/AIDS, displacement, family separations and the breakdown of traditional coping mechanisms have forced growing numbers of children on to the streets

"There are large number of orphaned children in the DRC due to the high incidence of HIV/AIDS. Besides the trauma of being left without parental care, these children may be exposed to neglect, exploitation and abuse. They also lack access to education and vocational skills training and suffer immense psychological stress. [...]

Children on and of the street are criminalized and have become a soft target for round ups, recruitment and abuse by society at large; the high military presence in east and west of the country makes the situation

even more acute. Issues that need to be addressed are the resettlement, care and protection of separated children, street children, child soldiers and children inappropriately placed in institutions.

Poverty, war, enlistment in the various armed forces, displacement, family separations and the breakdown of traditional coping mechanisms have forced growing numbers of children on to the streets or away from their original home environment in many foster families where they are often suffering from neglect and exploitation.

In North and South Kivu provinces, problems are concentrated in the cities and towns where a large group of vulnerable families have arrived as a result of general insecurity in the rural areas. [...] A much overlooked problem is the discrimination and abuse of women and young girls. Sexual violence against girls, adolescent pregnancies, abandoned child-mother, school drop-outs and girl sex workers are growing phenomena linked to the deterioration in work opportunities and a lack of family and community protection." (SCF 31 December 2000)

Displacement adds additional pressure on mechanisms for self-reliance of host families (1997-2001)

- Many IDPs, host communities and urban residents are affected by chronic food shortages and too high prices due to civil war
- When host community's resources are exhausted both the hosts and IDP further displace in search of food and shelter
- In Katanga, similar rate of malnutrition observed among the host communities than among the displaced (2001)

"Two consecutive wars in 1996-1997 and in 1998 prompted a large number of people to flee their home communities. In most cases, the displaced have lost their belongings and survival means, such as agricultural tools and seeds. They are being hosted by other rural communities whose capacity for agricultural production is already extremely weak due to a continued economic crisis, severe shortages of agricultural inputs and ongoing hostilities. The whole agricultural production system is, therefore, on the verge of collapse as the output dramatically diminishes and the demand for basic produce is almost doubling in the host communities. The most critical issue is the availability of agricultural inputs." (UN July 1999, p.32)

"No significant positive changes in the household food security were observed during 2000. Domestic agricultural production continued to be curtailed and levels of food imports were insufficient to cover the supply-demand gap. The size of this gap varies from region to region reaching at times levels of 35-40 %. In spite of wide spread shortages and the food market's lopsidedness, the agricultural production in many parts of the country remains considerable. The available produce, however, does not reach its traditional markets because of the prevailing military and security situation. Larger groups of IDPs and their host communities and numerous urban residents are affected by chronic food shortages and unaffordable prices." (UN November 2000, p. 26)

"Congolese people are known for their hospitality. In the African tradition, room must always be made for a guest or those in need. Hundreds of thousands of Congolese who have been displaced by the fighting in eastern DRC have benefited from this tradition. Room has been made at the table in the homes of countless thousands of host communities throughout this war-torn region. Thanks to the generosity of the Congolese and their tradition of helping each other, large camps - so often the mark of similar crises - are not seen.

But this generosity comes at great cost. A household of six can host at most one extra person before the family's food security is seriously impacted. In the Kivus, this number is frequently far exceeded. On a

recent mission to South Kivu, Refugees International interviewed displaced and host families where. The situation has reached a point in many communities where host families have exhausted their meager reserves of food and money, placing their own children at risk. When this point is reached, those displaced by fighting must move on in search of other shelter, thus repeating the process with a new host family." (RI 14 September 2000)

DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

General

62% of women in DRC marry under customary law and cannot get inheritance priority (Oct 2001)

"A national campaign to inform people of the advantages to officially registering their marriages was launched last week by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Family (Ministere des Affaires sociales et Famille) of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), in collaboration with UNICEF.

According to a statement from UNICEF in Kinshasa, a widow and her children are given inheritance priority under state law, as opposed to customary law, where other family members may make claims of the deceased assets. A woman is also entitled to greater protection against spousal abuse under state law. An estimated 62 percent of women in the DRC marry under customary law, while only 25 percent officially register their marriages with the state." (IRIN 1 Oct 2001)

PROPERTY ISSUES

General

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

With the improvement of the security situation, IDPs start going home (2002-2004)

- Humanitarian actors start to plan for return (Nov 03)
- IDPs who fled Bunia start to trickle back home (Sept 03)
- Hesitation to return home by IDPs of Bunia camp due to insecurity, destruction of houses, economic reasons, occupation of their houses, etc. (Dec 03)
- In Equateur, steady flow of return (Nov 02)
- In Katanga, people in camps cite security reasons for not returning (Jan 04)
- 80 percent of houses in Ikela (Equateur) have been destroyed during the war and have to be rebuilt now that the displaced are returning home (June 02)
- In Maniema, tens of thousands returned home (Nov 03- Janv 04)
- Returnees to Walikale, North Kivu, have great humanitarian needs (Nov 03)

Ituri

"[...] MONUC has worked closely with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance and other humanitarian actors to devise a plan for the return of internally displaced persons to their areas of origin." (UN SC 17 Nov 03)

"On 1 September [2003], the UN peacekeeping force, known as MONUC, took over control of Bunia from the French-led multinational force deployed in June to restore order. Unlike the multinational force, whose mandate was confined to Bunia, MONUC is authorised to enforce peace throughout Ituri.

WFP said it did not know how many people were still hiding in the forests of Ituri, fearful of armed groups that have terrorised the region for months. However, some, encouraged by recent political developments and improved security, were returning to their homes, it said." (IRIN 15 Sept 03)

« Les retours des populations se poursuivent en provenance du Nord-Kivu plus précisément de la cité de Beni et des sites d'Eringeti. Les départs de Beni se font surtout en convoi, les mardis et vendredis, et les candidats au retour arrivent à Komanda (territoire d'Irumu, district de l'Ituri) après 3 jours de marche. Selon OCHA-Beni, le nombre des retours est encore inconnu, mais certaines ONGs avancent le chiffre de 4.000 personnes, avec une fréquence d'environ 30 personnes par jour. 90 % de ces déplacés retournent à Komanda et Irumu. Selon OCHA-Bunia, plus de 500 retournés ont été identifiés à Bunia en provenance du Nord-Kivu.

Les raisons qui les poussent à retourner sont : la sécurité qui revient petit à petit en Ituri ; les marchés qui ont repris dans certaines localités et la vie dure qu'ils mènent dans les camps et/ou dans les familles d'accueil. Dans le site d'Oicha, les déplacés attendent la distribution des vivres du PAM pour commencer à retourner alors que dans d'autres, ils attendent de connaître la position du Gouvernement de transition sur l'Ituri ainsi que la réhabilitation de la route Beni-Bunia. » (UN OCHA 21 Nov 03, p1)

People in Bunia IDP camp were hesitant to return home

« Enquête : pourquoi les déplacés du camp de Bunia ne veulent pas retourner chez eux ? Voici les résultats de l'enquête sur les raisons du non-retour des déplacés, réalisée par la Commission pour la Prévention et le Contrôle des Conflits :

- 28% du fait de l'insécurité ;
- 23% en raison de maisons incendiées ou détruites ;
- 15% pour des raisons économiques ;
- 13% à cause de l'occupation de leurs maisons ;
- 11% pour d'autres raisons ;
- 10% pour des causes politiques. » (OCHA 26 Dec 03, p1)

Equateur

"Humanitarian interventions increased in scale and effectiveness in stabilised areas such as Equateur, where developments over the past twelve months have shown that a combination of a steady flow of spontaneous returns on the one hand and a proactive process of assessment and introduction of new humanitarian actors on the other can help pave the way towards a transition scheme supported by more appropriate funding channels." (UN OCHA 19 Nov 2002, p37)

In Ikela, "En outre, face aux retours de personnes déplacées, des bâches (500 à 600 bâches) sont requises pour permettre aux populations de s'abriter en attendant la reconstruction des habitations (détruites à 80% pendant la guerre)." (UN OCHA 19 June 2002)

Katanga

"Le District de Tanganika situé dans la partie Nord-est de la province du Katanga est l'une des multiples zones ou parties du pays qui auront été fortement touchées par les différentes guerres qu'a vécues la République Démocratique du Congo depuis un peu plus de six ans. Il en a résulté d'importants mouvements des populations fuyant les zones des combats à la recherche des lieux plus sécurisants. Et à cet effet on a observé des déplacements des masses vers la ville de Kalemie qui aux yeux de beaucoup est apparue comme un havre de paix. Ainsi il s'est crée dans cette ville pour la seule période allant de février à Juillet 2003 quatre sites d'hébergement des déplacés des guerres auxquels il fallait apporter assistance. En effet, des familles entières se sont constituées des abris de fortune et vivent dans des conditions les plus inhumaines....]

Malgré la guerre et/ou l'insécurité à la base du départ forcé des déplacés de guerre, ceux continuent à afficher leur intention de retourner dans leur village d'origine. En effet, plus de huit déplacés sur dix souhaitent regagner leurs villages en dépit du traumatisme vécu.

Intention du retour au village (tous sites confondus)

Motifs	Pourcentages
1. Oui	88.8%
2. Non	11.2%

Il y a, à coté de la multitude, quelques retissants qui, pour diverses raisons refusent de rentrer dans leurs villages d'origine.

Cependant même ceux qui souhaiteraient rentrer, il s'agit d'une intention assortie de condition de sécurité notamment. Ainsi donc par rapport aux motifs d'empêchement, l'insécurité qui sévit au village vient en première position à en croire les informations du tableau qui suit.

Motifs d'empêchement d'un retour au village

Quatre modalités principales ont été proposées aux déplacements quant aux motifs qui les empêcheraient de rentrer dans leurs villages d'origine :

1. L'insécurité ;
2. Jamais de proposition de retour ;
3. Ignorance du motif réel ;
4. Présence ou exercice d'une activité ici sur place. » (OCHA Jan 04)

Maniema

« Plus 25.000 personnes sont récemment revenues de la brousse et se réinstallent dans la cité de Kibombo, au Maniema. Plus de 5.000 familles, soit environ 25.000 personnes, sont retournées dans leur ville origine, Kibombo, longtemps restée sous le contrôle des Mayi-Mayi qui l'ont pillée avant de partir. Selon OCHA-Kindu, ces personnes sont d'une grande vulnérabilité et dépourvues de tout. Elles ont besoin d'habits, d'ustensiles de cuisine, d'outils aratoires, de semences améliorées, et d'autres biens de base pour reprendre une vie sédentaire. » (UN OCHA 21 Nov 03, p1)

« On assiste à un mouvement de retour des déplacés dans leurs villages d'origines, selon OCHA-Kindu. D'après les organisations locales et les autorités locales de Kibombo, plusieurs familles retournées sont maintenant dans leurs villages le long de l'axe Kindu-Kasongo. Plusieurs villages étaient vides sur cet axe avant la fin de l'année écoulée. » (UN OCHA 16 Jan 04)

North Kivu

Some 10,000 of Walikale town's estimated population of 15,000 have returned since March, after having sought refuge in surrounding bush for several months. As populations continued to return, demands for food continued to increase as availability of food supplies continued to decrease. The mission found that populations were reluctant to resume agricultural activity, as armed groups helped themselves to food cultivated by others. [...]

The mission found that only one the area's of 24 health centres was found to be fully accessible. The one non-governmental organization that is operational in the area, Medecins Sans Frontiers, is working to rehabilitate the facility. The mission also found serious problems in obtaining medical supplies, given poor roads and insecurity; a very low level of vaccination coverage - less than 21 percent; and "very weak" epidemiological monitoring and reporting. Anti-polio vaccinations had not taken place in the past two years - despite the fact that the region had experienced a major outbreak of polio as recently as 1998.

The territory's education system was devastated. All schools had been seriously damaged, while many had been completely pillaged and destroyed during recent years of occupation both by various armed groups as well as by waves of IDPs and refugees. An estimated 40 percent of school-age children did not attend school at all, with girls constituting a majority of absentees. Of eight schools visited, none had a source of running water, and only two were equipped with latrines, making the risk of disease "enormous", according to the mission." (UN OCHA 24 Nov 03)

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Humanitarian access difficult in Ituri district and in the Kivus (2003)

- UN urges UPC rebels to improve humanitarian access, particularly in UPC-held areas near Bunia (Feb 2003)
- Renewed insecurity in the Kivus is hampering safe and unimpeded humanitarian access (2003)
- AAH withdraws from its humanitarian base in Shabunda for the second time in less than six months due to access problems
- Humanitarian access to Bunia becomes possible once again with the takeover by Ugandan troops in March 2003
- Access remains difficult despite withdrawal of foreign troops and the set up of transition government (Aug 03)

"45. On 2 December in Bunia, my Special Representative, together with diplomatic and humanitarian representatives, urged the UPC leadership to improve humanitarian access and ensure the protection of civilians and humanitarian staff. That action followed several deliberate incidents of looting of humanitarian supplies and harassment of humanitarian workers, including the arrest or detention of certain NGO staff and the expulsion of an officer from Bunia in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. While verbal assurances were received, the humanitarian community continues to impress upon UPC the need to deliver on that commitment, particularly by giving access to UPC-controlled areas outside Bunia.

46. The withdrawal of foreign troops significantly altered the security landscape in the Kivus and led to a situation that has become increasingly complex and fragmented. That has led to new displacements in some areas while encouraging the return of previously displaced persons to their homes in other areas. In many areas throughout North and South Kivu, Mayi-Mayi fighters have filled that power vacuum, making it difficult for the humanitarian community to negotiate safe and unimpeded access for the delivery of assistance. Throughout the region, fighting between opposing rebel forces has severely limited access to populations in dire need. The systematic looting of homes, stores and crops by forces on both sides has slowed recovery and further stifled aid activities. Fighting, when it occurs, is sporadic and unpredictable, and has devastating consequences for civilian populations that bear the brunt of the violence. In spite of those enduring obstacles, however, emergency relief efforts are continuing." (UN SC, 21 February 2003)

"While international media attention is focused on the war in Iraq, forgotten humanitarian crises continue in areas of nominal peace, like Shabunda, DRC, where Action Against Hunger continues to encounter problems of access to the population in need.

Action Against Hunger recently withdrew from Shabunda due to anticipated fighting between the warring factions. At the time of withdrawal there were approximately 100 patients in Action Against Hunger's Therapeutic Feeding Center (TFC) and nearly 600 in all AAH's TFCs in Eastern Congo. Supplies were left to continue life-saving operations for one month. Without replenishment in April, these beneficiaries, mostly children, face certain death.

"The situation is of great concern to us," said Banu Altunbas, country director for Action Against Hunger in Eastern DRC. "There is need for humanitarian intervention in nutrition, health, and food security, but there is not enough access to enable these programs to be implemented."

[...]

This is the second time, in less than six months, that Action Against Hunger has had to withdraw from their humanitarian base in Shabunda due to access issues, putting civilian populations at risk.

Action Against Hunger calls on all parties in DRC to ensure that humanitarian assistance can be provided to civilians immediately in order to avert further nutritional emergencies and possible mortality." (AAH, 2 March 2003)

"Humanitarian access to the embattled city of Bunia in Ituri District of northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is once again possible following a takeover on Thursday by the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) from the Union des patriotes congolais (UPC) rebel group, according to humanitarian sources.

"For the first time, we hope to have access to the population to provide them with humanitarian assistance following several years of interruptions due to violence committed by ethnic militia groups who have been fighting in the region," Michel Kassa, head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the DRC, told IRIN on Monday." (IRIN, 10 March 2003)

"The high degree of geographic dispersion of IDPs in this part of the country, in addition to logistical difficulties (lack of roads, heavy rains, limited air capacity), as well as insecurity and systematic denial of humanitarian access, continue to obstruct the delivery of humanitarian assistance." (UN OCHA 15 Aug 03)

Frequent attacks on relief workers hinders the delivering of assistance to the displaced (2001-2003)

- Due to misconceptions on the humanitarian community's mandate, aid workers often operate in a very unstable and insecure environment
- In April 2001, 6 ICRC workers were killed in Ituri province
- MONUC: Several attacks against MONUC in Aug-Sept 2001, killing of military observer in May 2002; break-in into MONUC office in Kisangani in June 2002 and UN staff- including MONUC- expelled from Goma by RCD-Goma authorities; assault of four MONUC staff in Dec 02
- In Oct 2001, four World Vision International staff were kidnapped on the road Beni-Bunia in the north-east of the country (North Kivu-Orientale Province)
- Ambush of MERLIN vehicle in Jan 02 on the road Kalima-Kindu in Maniema Province
- Shots fired at UN/NGO mission in Shabunda (South Kivu) in June 2002
- Tearfund national staff based in Uvira (South Kivu) was kidnapped for one day in mid-Nov 2002
- Red Cross vehicle is ambushed in January 2003 near Uvira, killing one passenger and wounding five
- Killing of MONUC staff in Ituri in June 03
- Tearfund staff killed in Aug 03

"Tearfund is immensely saddened by the news that Maheshe Chishagala Evariste, a water and sanitation supervisor for the Baraka water supply system has been killed in South Kivu, in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)." (Tear Fund 7 Aug 03)

"The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) has launched an inquiry into the killing in May of two military observers in Mongbwalu, 17 km north of embattled Bunia, eastern DRC, UN News reported on Monday." (IRIN 17 June 03)

"A Red Cross vehicle was ambushed by unidentified assailants near Uvira, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), on 17 January, leaving one of its passengers dead and five injured from bullet wounds, humanitarian sources in the region have reported.

The Land-Rover belonging to the Fizi chapter of the national Red Cross, which was clearly marked with Red Cross flags and stickers, was fired on without warning, no advance sign of hostilities, nor any attempt having been made to stop it, a humanitarian agency told IRIN on Tuesday.

The vehicle was transporting six patients from Baraka to the referral hospital in when it was attacked at midday local time near the town of Swima, some 35 km south of Uvira. One of the patients was reportedly killed, while four local Red Cross volunteers and the driver were wounded. Forced to abandon their bullet-riddled vehicle, the team managed to find another vehicle to get them to Uvira, where two of the injured remain in 'very serious' condition.

The Red Cross team was conducting an exploratory mission in the region of Baraka and Fizi in order to assess the current security situation. The Red Cross and international NGOs that had been operational in the region suspended their activities in 2002 due to ongoing insecurity.

In April 2001, six International Committee of the Red Cross personnel were ambushed and killed on the road from Fataki to Djugu in the Ituri District of northeastern DRC." (IRIN, 21 January 2003)

"In most tense areas of DRC, like in previous years, the following, almost insurmountable constraints were faced by humanitarian actors: a) Impossibility to reach and deliver relief to civilians in areas where de facto established authorities (RCD-Goma, UPC, RCD-ML) do not actually control the terrain and therefore consider any civilian located in those areas as potential accomplices to hostile forces; b) Due to misconceptions on the humanitarian community's mandate, aid workers often operate in a very unstable and insecure environment." (UN OCHA 19 Nov 2002, p36)

"Humanitarian affairs officers have witnessed an increase in recent months in the harassment of relief workers and the looting of their assets. Humanitarian staff in Bunia and Dungu experienced threats of physical violence and looting, which in Bunia resulted in the loss of nearly 14 tons of food destined for vulnerable populations. Several humanitarian teams were evacuated, most notably from Shabunda and Nyankunde. In many areas where there is widespread insecurity, health conditions are reported to have deteriorated alarmingly, and there is evidence of very high malnutrition rates among the population. Access to war-affected areas remains critical for humanitarian partners." (UN SC 18 Oct 02, para.61)

"Four members of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) were ambushed and assaulted on Saturday by a group of 30 unidentified armed people 15 km south of Kanyabayonga, in North Kivu." (IRIN 9 Dec 02)

"Au courant de la semaine [mi-novembre 2002] un personnel national de l'ONG Tearfund, basé à Uvira, a été pris en otage par les Mayi Mayi et libéré le lendemain. L'ONG Tearfund a suspendu ses activités en attendant que des explications soient apportées sur cet incident." (OCHA 24 Nov 02)

"A UN humanitarian assessment mission sent to Baraka on the shores of Lake Tanganyika in South Kivu Province in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was on Saturday surrounded by unidentified armed forces and ordered to leave the area immediately, Hamadoun Toure, spokesman for the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC), told IRIN." (IRIN 5 Aug 2002)

"A rebel movement in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) [RCD-Goma] has apologized for the forcible entry, on Monday, by its officers into UN premises at the inland port of Kisangani and their assault on two civilian security guards at the facility, a UN official has said." (IRIN 19 June 2002)

"On 2 June, RCD Goma authorities expelled the UN Security Officer and the MONUC political adviser from Goma. This decision is affecting the security of UN Agencies and NGOs' staff members. This is of particular concern given the security situation in North Kivu Province." (WFP 14 June 2002)

"Une mission, composée d'ACF-USA, MSF-H, et UNICEF, a essuyé des tirs à l'artillerie lourde dès son atterrissage à Shabunda. La mission a pu quitter la ville. Pour rappel, les batailles entre les Mayi-Mayi et le RCD continuent à Shabunda et ses environs depuis la prise de cette ville à la mi-avril par les Mayi-Mayi, provoquant une suspension de l'assistance humanitaire." (UN OCHA 19 June 2002)

"A military observer with the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was killed in Monday and his colleague badly wounded when their vehicle hit a landmine at Ikela in Province Orientale." (IRIN 14 May 2002)

"[...] suite à l'embuscade tendue au véhicule de Merlin, le 25 janvier sur la route Kalima-Kindu, cette ONG vient de décider de suspendre tout mouvement en dehors de la ville de Kindu" (UN OCHA 15 Feb 2002)

"On 16 August, a MONUC helicopter was hit by 14 bullets, fired by unidentified armed men as it flew between Uvira and Kalemie. It was able to land safely. Later, on 3 September, a MONUC patrol was held up and robbed at Mouchouchi (6 km along the Bukavu-Walungu road) by unidentified armed men. On 27 September, a locally recruited MONUC staff member in Goma was found dead in circumstances that suggested armed robbery." (UN SC 16 Oct 2001)

"Quatre agents de l'ONG World Vision International ont été victimes d'un enlèvement dans leur véhicule le 15 octobre à Livia (40 km sur la route Beni-Bunia). Avant d'être relâchés, ils ont été dépouillés de leurs effets personnels." (UN OCHA 22 Oct 2001)

On April 26 2001, 6 ICRC workers were killed. "The humanitarian community in Ituri province in northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is gradually resuming activities that had been suspended since 27 April following the murder of six staff members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), a humanitarian source based in Bunia confirmed to IRIN on Wednesday." (IRIN-CEA 27 June 2001)

Many IDPs remained inaccessible in 2002

- More freedom of movement in the West since March 2001 announcement by government of free movement of persons and goods
- Improved access to certain isolated areas in eastern DRC thank to deployment of UN Mission and ceasefire (2001-2002)
- In eastern DRC, great insecurity limited activities of humanitarian agencies and led to an increased recourse to air interventions
- In 2002, security situation remained unpredictable due to clashes between various armed forces, looting, ambushes and kidnappings of humanitarian staff in eastern DRC
- UN estimated in Nov 2002 that access to 900,000 IDPs in Ituri and in South Kivu was impossible
- Impossible to deliver assistance to other areas than those where authorities have actual control (Nov 02)
- RCD authorities in Bukavu refused delivery of assistance in areas under militia groups' control

"Less than 50% of the estimated displaced population are accessible to the humanitarian actors and this limitation was underlined by all actors. In the conflict zones, in particular in Eastern DRC, serious security problems limit the presence of humanitarian actors and therefore constrain access to the vulnerable populations. Very often access requires negotiations with several different fighting groups within a given area and with the rapidly evolving situation, must be frequently reassessed." (Internal Displacement Unit Oct 02, p.3)

"There have some positive developments in DRC since the [UN Security] Council's last visit to the Great Lakes in May 2001. The ceasefire has held along the former "frontline." Humanitarian agencies have gained access to hitherto inaccessible areas such as Kabinda, Boende, Ikela, and Pweto in western DRC, and have been able to provide much needed assistance to the most vulnerable people." (Oxfam 25 April 2002)

"The security situation remained unpredictable in South Kivu as cases of looting and ambushes, and clashes between RCD and May May militiamen were commonly reported. In Katanga, confrontations between May May militia men and Forces Armées Congolaises (FAC) reportedly continued to create insecurity in the area of Malemba-Nkulu. The city of Kindu, in Maniema, has been surrounded by May May fighters for several weeks, preventing any food distributions in the city, except by air. Also in Maniema, RPF (Rwanda Patriotic Forces) and RCD soldiers (Congolese Rally for Democracy) looted a Catholic parish at Kapende, and two priests were kidnapped." (WFP 21 June 2002)

"Access to at least 900,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains 'impossible', according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Of this total, some 500,000 IDPs are in the Ituri District, fleeing ongoing fighting between the Lendu and Hema communities.[...]

Meanwhile, another 400,000 IDPs are scattered throughout South Kivu Province, many as a result of recent fighting between Congolese Mayi-Mayi militias and the Rwandan-backed Rassemblement pour la démocratie rebel movement, in the wake of a large-scale withdrawal of Rwandan forces as agreed under the 30 July peace accord signed in the South African administrative capital, Pretoria.

Negotiations are said to be 'ongoing' by humanitarian organizations with authorities of Mayi-Mayi factions and RCD-Goma, for access to the patchwork of areas under their respective control." (IRIN 6 Nov 2002)

"[...] all humanitarian attempts to reach the vulnerable populations is depending on the local authorities in place. There is an objective impossibility to gain access to and to deliver assistance in other areas than those where the established authorities have actual control, and have opened space for humanitarian actors to enter and assist the civilian population in order to regain stability." (UN 19 Nov 2002, p38 & 43)

"The RCD authorities in Bukavu have refused the delivery of relief assistance to the most vulnerable populations in Shabunda, Mwanga, Bunyakiri, Baraka and Fizi, areas under militia groups' control." (WFP 7 Nov 2002)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National Response

International coordination mechanisms

UN mechanisms for coordination (1999-2003)

- UN opens Humanitarian Information Centre in Goma (Jan 2003), to help improve coordinated response to humanitarian emergencies
- Weekly UN Country Management Team Disaster Management Team meetings
- In May 2002 multi-donor mission recommended the restructuring of humanitarian coordination mechanisms
- Creation of thematic group on humanitarian assistance to IDPs and affected populations (OCHA)
- Strengthening of OCHA presence in eastern DRC

"As the coordinating body for the UN system, OCHA continued in its role as coordinator and information provider in a principled and unified approach to national and international NGO partners, donors, government and all other actors.

Internally, OCHA fully implemented restructuring of its offices, and opened new field offices in the east, which strengthened coordination, and provided more regular monitoring on access and information on the humanitarian situation in the provinces." (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p11)

"The United Nations has opened a Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) in the city of Goma in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) announced on Tuesday.

Located within OCHA's offices, the purpose of the centre is to create a space for the exchange of vital information among humanitarian actors operating in eastern DRC in order to better coordinate aid to and advocacy for vulnerable populations.

OCHA said that one problem encountered when coordinating the response to any humanitarian emergency was the lack of timely, accurate and relevant information. In order to overcome this problem, OCHA has in recent years opened these centres in areas of complex humanitarian emergencies.

Items now available at the Goma centre include the database, 'Who Does What Where', as well as a contact list of humanitarian agencies, maps, reports, books, brochures, and even mailboxes for correspondence among organizations.

In the near future, OCHA-Goma hopes to provide up-to-date maps of humanitarian activities and statistics; a photocopier; and an Internet connection for two to three computers." (IRIN, 28 January 2003)

"Coordination structures functioned in 2001 according to a two-pronged mechanism decided by the IASC: merging of Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Coordinator functions and centralized coordination functions in Kinshasa around the UN country team, while at the provincial level, particularly in rebel-held

areas, coordination has been entirely delegated to local representatives of UN operational agencies (UNICEF in Northern Kivu and Province Orientale, WFP in Southern Kivu). OCHA was asked to support these provincial humanitarian coordinators.

Specific Actions included:

- The UN system, MONUC, ICRC and NGOs, regularly discussed the global strategy and common approach to the crisis in the DRC

- Emergency Humanitarian Interventions have been instrumental in responding to the most immediate needs.

- The "peace boat" operation between government and FLC held areas has been a major success in starting the process of overcoming the divisions between the government and rebel-held regions of the country. This initiative has started to open up lines of economic trade, enhanced inter-communal contacts and ameliorated the humanitarian situation.

[...]

Thematic groups have been created in order to re-launch durable solutions: HI/AIDS (WHO), nutrition (WFP), humanitarian assistance to IDPs and affected populations (OCHA), human rights (OHCHR), logistics (WFP), population, women and development (UNFPA), struggle against poverty (UNDP)." (UN OCHA 26 November 2001)

"In view of the drastic changes that occurred in the political and humanitarian scopes in the DRC over the past years, the existing humanitarian co-ordination mechanisms were deemed no longer suitable for the purposes for which they were established. Hence the multi-donor mission which visited DRC in May 2002 recommended their restructuring, both at the strategic and operational levels, in order to enhance and improve the humanitarian response capacity of the UN system and the NGO community to adequately address the new needs and challenges. Moreover, the expected consequences of the successive political developments on the humanitarian situation made the restructuring inevitable in view of the challenges to be met in terms of the delivery of humanitarian assistance." (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p36)

Coordination between UN peacekeeping mission (MONUC) and other UN agencies in DRC is criticised (2003)

- Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue issues report criticising lack of coordination between MONUC and other UN agencies in DRC during the period from the Lusaka Agreement of 1999 to September 2002
- MONUC is described as weak, with a non-integrated mission structure
- MONUC describes the report as 'outdated'

"A new report from The Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue criticises the international response to the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), particularly what it perceives as a lack of coordination between the UN peacekeeping mission (MONUC) and other UN agencies in the country.

The paper, entitled 'Politics and Humanitarianism: Coherence in crisis?' includes a case study of the DRC, covering the period from the Lusaka Agreement of 1999 to September 2002.

'Most striking in this case study is the enormous gulf between the scale of the tragedy and the response on every front from the international community' the report states. 'The response, whether political, military or humanitarian, has been minimal.'

It further states that the consequence of a weak MONUC and non-integrated mission structure was that there was neither a negative nor positive effect on humanitarian space of association with MONUC.

Responding, Nancee Oku Bright, Chief of the Humanitarian Affairs Section of MONUC, called the report 'outdated'.

'Unfortunately, the report is outdated as far as MONUC's recent interaction with the humanitarian community and support to humanitarian action is concerned,' she said.

'Since my arrival in August 2002, we have substantially increased our support to humanitarian action, including monthly deliveries of humanitarian goods for UN and NGO counterparts; a commitment to allow humanitarian counterparts to utilise our logistical resources (planes/boats) as long as it does not interfere with the operations of the mission; increased participation in areas where few humanitarian actors are; back-stopping and supporting OCHA [the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs] where [we] can; pressuring for access where we are asked by OCHA or others to do so; and increased participation in joint assessment missions and making MONUC resources available to support such missions,' she added." (IRIN, 25 February 2003)

[Click here](http://www.hdcentre.org/Resources/Documents/Politics%20and%20Humanitarianism.pdf) for the full report, which also includes case studies for Afghanistan and Sierra Leone]
<http://www.hdcentre.org/Resources/Documents/Politics%20and%20Humanitarianism.pdf>

Principles of Engagement for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance in the DRC (November 1998)

- Principles elaborated at a meeting of the humanitarian community in Nairobi on 23 November 1998
- Principles based on the ICRC's Code of Conduct
- Principles endorsed by the Government and main rebel group

"Shortly after the advent of the Congolese crisis, the humanitarian community developed 'Principles of Engagement for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance in the DRC' [...] as a basis for humanitarian interventions in the DRC. The document reflects basic international norms and practices governing humanitarian action, and was endorsed by UN agencies, various NGOs and donors, notably ECHO and the US.

During a mission of the Deputy to the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs to the DRC in January 1999, the 'Principles of Engagement' were accepted by the DRC government and the RCD in Goma.

The document laid the groundwork for the resumption of UN humanitarian activities in the eastern provinces and emphasised the non-political character of humanitarian action. (UN November 1999, p.65)

Text of the principles:

"Introduction

The worsening humanitarian situation in the democratic Republic of Congo, in particular in the Eastern part of the country, together with increased security risks both to personnel and assets of humanitarian agencies, made it necessary to seek consensus on a common approach to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, based on the application of a set of agreed principles. This set of principles aims at increasing the efficiency and the pertinence of the delivered aid and maximising the humanitarian space for the relief community.

The set of principles is addressed to the international Humanitarian community as well as to the political and military authorities. General overarching principles are defined under 1) while some general protocols, mainly on accessibility, security and types of interventions, monitoring and evaluation are mentioned under 2)

1) Overarching Principles

The present document, together with the 'Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief', which most assistance in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Its guiding principle is... 'The right to receive humanitarian assistance and to offer it is a fundamental humanitarian principle, which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations, is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid, it is no a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such'... (Reference: Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in disaster relief, 7/9/98, p.2)

Impartiality:

Aid will be delivered without discrimination as to ethnicity, religious beliefs or political opinion. Humanitarian assistance should be provided solely on the basis of needs.

Neutrality-Apolitical nature of humanitarian aid:

Aid agencies will be neutral in providing humanitarian assistance and must stress the apolitical nature of humanitarian assistance. The action of aid agencies will not imply recognition of or confer legitimacy of the authority in control of the area in which humanitarian assistance is provided.

Independence:

The assistance provided will be depended solely on needs, giving priority to the most urgent and stressing situations, and will not be influenced by political, economic or military considerations.

Human Rights:

The promotion of human rights is an essential part of humanitarian assistance and may range from passive monitoring of respect for human rights to pro-active human rights advocacy. These activities will be guided by International Human Law and by the mandates given by International Instruments to various humanitarian organisations such as UNHCHR, UNHCR, and ICRC.

Participation:

Beneficiaries, local partners and local structures should be involved, wherever possible, in the need assessment, provision and monitoring of humanitarian emergency assistance, so as to provide sustainability in the long term.

Coordination:

Participating agencies commit themselves to enhanced co-ordination and mutual support using the existing co-ordination mechanisms.

Transparency:

Humanitarian programmes and aid agencies operating in the country must be totally transparent in all their workings and dealings with relevant authorities. Transparency should be achieved through the regular flow of information to the relevant authorities and vice versa. This principle should be applied without prejudice to the security of the beneficiaries.

Accountability:

Implementing partners hold themselves accountable to both those they seek to assist and those from whom they accept resources.

2) Protocol

Freedom of access:

Parties to the conflict should ensure unimpeded access for assessment, delivery and monitoring of humanitarian aid to potential beneficiaries. The assistance to affected areas should be provided in the most efficient manner and by the most accessible routes.

Security:

The relevant authorities are responsible for creating conditions conducive to the implementing of humanitarian activities. This must cover the security of local and international staff as well as all assets. The restitution of requisitioned assets is an essential indication of the goodwill of the authorities. Agencies look to the local authorities to take responsibilities for ensuring the return of assets wherever possible. The security of the civil population in conflict zones is the responsibility of the relevant authorities.

Escorts:

Armed escorts should only be used as a last resort for the delivery of humanitarian assistance in areas of serious insecurity. The co-ordinating body should evaluate the need for an armed escort on a case by case basis.

Joint assessments and types of intervention:

Where possible basic humanitarian needs and beneficiaries will be identified through joint assessment missions, which would also define the necessary package of assistance to mitigate and prevent life threatening situations. Interventions will involve local communities, wherever possible, and be designed to strengthen existing local capacities.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian assistance will be jointly undertaken by aid agencies and local partners, in cooperation with donors. Mechanisms will be put in place to monitor compliance with the principles of engagement. * (OCHA 25 January 1999)

International political response

Deployment of UN mission, MONUC, to help implement Lusaka agreement and monitor security conditions (1999-2003)

- MONUC Phase I deployed in support of the Lusaka Peace Accords in Nov 1999
- Under Phase II, approved by UNSC in 2001, MONUC's mandate include monitoring, maintaining liaison, working with parties, facilitating, cooperating, supervising and verifying
- On June 14, 2002, UN SC adopted Resolution 1417, which extended the mandate of MONUC for another year
- MONUC is the most complex logistical mission ever undertaken by the United Nations (March 02)
- In Dec 2002, the UNSC decided to expand MONUC to a total of 8,700 military personnel and to extend its presence eastwards
- More MONUC troops arrived in the eastern Ituri district as Ugandan troops began their withdrawal in April 2003
- In July 2003, an arms embargo was imposed in Ituri and the Kivus, which MONUC had to monitor

- In July and August 2003, a French-led European force, deployed in support of MONUC, quelled violence in the town of Bunia
- On September 1 2003, the French turned the mission over to MONUC that is operating with a Chapter VII mandate
- MONUC says it may need 6 months to cover Ituri in its totality

"In November 1999, MONUC's Phase I, called the Joint Military Commission (JMC), was deployed to the DRC in support of the Lusaka Peace Accords. In 2001, the Security Council approved Phase II, which authorized 5,537 UN Peacekeeping personnel, but MONUC has not yet achieved that strength. The current MONUC military strength is 4,309. That number includes 455 military observers, 3,803 troops and 51 civilian police. Now the Security Council is debating whether to go forward with Phase III, an 8,000 strong peacekeeping force with a mandate to voluntarily disarm foreign militias. The Security Council has not yet voted on this increase.

MONUC's current mandate in Phase II lists a potpourri of tasks including monitoring, maintaining liaison, working with parties, facilitating, cooperating, supervising and verifying. It also includes a sentence that is at the heart of the misunderstandings and frustrations. 'Acting under chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council also decided that MONUC may take the necessary action, in the areas of deployment of its infantry battalions and as it deems it within its capabilities, to protect United Nations and co-located JMC (Joint Military Commission) personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel, and protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.'

While it would appear that MONUC thus has the mandate to protect civilian personnel, in fact, the matter is open to interpretation. [...]

In his June report to the Security Council, Secretary-General Kofi Annan wrote that even though the Security Council mandated MONUC to protect civilians under imminent threat, "...MONUC troops currently deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are not equipped, trained or configured to intervene rapidly to assist those in need of such protection."

Many MONUC personnel share the Congolese frustration with their ambiguous mandate and lack of capacity. RI asked a senior MONUC official about MONUC's response to the recent attacks on civilians in Ituri, a region likely to see more violence now that Ugandan troops have withdrawn. The reply was, "Look, people shouldn't throw stones at MONUC if they haven't given us the mandate and the people to do the job. Where's the P-5? Where are the Western troops?"

Further, in fairness to MONUC, it was deployed to monitor the implementation of a ceasefire that has never really existed for most Congolese in war-torn eastern Congo.[...] Its total strength of about 3,800 troops, most of whom are in non-combat units, must cover an area of 2.3 million square kilometers. By comparison, the UNAMSIL mission in Sierra Leone, a country with only 71,740 square kilometers (about 1/32 the size of the DRC), has a troop strength of 17,500.

With the withdrawal of 20,000 soldiers of the Rwandan army, and as the 2,000 remaining soldiers of the Ugandan army withdraw from Ituri region, local rebel forces and militias have increased their hostile actions to gain power and territory, causing the situation in the Congo to deteriorate. MONUC's mandate and strength must be increased to prevent further massacres and population displacements." (RI 14 Nov 2002)

On 5 December 2002, "The strength of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is to be expanded to a total of 8,700 military personnel and have its presence extended eastwards.

The UN reported on Wednesday that the Security Council had unanimously adopted a resolution agreeing to a "new concept" of operations for MONUC which included a shift of emphasis eastwards, and a significant strengthening of its military capacity through the creation of a "forward force" of two robust task forces based in Kindu and Kisangani.

The mission would provide security at sites allocated for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process, assist in the destruction of impounded weapons and munitions, and continue to monitor the withdrawal of foreign troops from the DRC. In addition, riverine units would be used to support the reopening of the Congo river to commercial traffic, the UN said." (IRIN 5 Dec 2002, "MONUC reinforced")

To view the UN SC Resolution 1445 of 4 Dec 2002 expanding authorized troop level in DR Congo to 8,700, please see [External link]

The UN Security Council, Resolution 1417 extended MONUC's mandate until June 2003 (See below, UN SC 14 June 2002)

"The United Nations operation in the Congo was the most complex logistical mission ever undertaken by the United Nations, the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) was told this morning as it concluded its consideration of the financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)." (UN GA 12 March 2002)

"The arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council, in Resolution 1493 (July 2003) on the Ituri district and the Kivu province is welcome, but its effectiveness is limited by the lack of capacity and support for MONUC to monitor compliance. MONUC observers are frequently denied access to military installations, airports and other facilities. Their task is made more problematic by the numerous air, lake and land crossings available to arms traffickers. Nor can the embargo address the problem of widespread availability of weapons already in the country." (AI 27 Nov 03)

"The current UN mission in the DRC, MONUC, has recently been strengthened, following massacres in the 4Ituri region in mid-2003 that UN peacekeepers were helpless to prevent. In July and August, a French-led European force, deployed in support of MONUC, quelled violence in the town of Bunia, although it did little to address continuing violence in the countryside. On September 1, the French turned the mission over to a new UN force that is operating with a strengthened mandate, allowing the use of force as the UN commander sees fit in order to enforce the peace and assure the safety of Congolese civilians." (RI 18 Sept 03)

"United Nations peacekeepers sent to stem ethnic bloodshed in the Congo's northeastern Ituri region will take up to six months to fully deploy, their commander in the region said on Wednesday.[...]

Under the new mandate, the U.N. troops can deploy outside the multinational force's zone of operation, beyond Bunia to other towns in the Ituri region and use firepower to quell the militias who still roam the region killing, looting and raping." (Reuters 3 Sept 03)

"On 28 July, the Council adopted resolution 1493, extending the mandate of the United Nations Mission there until 30 July 2004, raising its authorized military strength to 10,800, and instituting a 12-month arms embargo over areas in the eastern part of the country. For the first time since the United Nations Mission was established in November 1999, the Council put it in the context of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and authorized "all necessary means" to fulfil its mandate in the eastern part of the country – the Ituri district and in North and South Kivu – where armed conflict continues." (UNSC 26 Aug 03)

For UN SC Resolution 1493 extending the MONUC mission until 30 July 04, please see link below (UN SC 28 July 2003).

The home page of MONUC contains links to recent UN documents on DRC

International Criminal Court investigates crimes in Ituri (July 2003)

"The Office of the Prosecutor has selected the situation in Ituri, Democratic Republic of Congo, as the most urgent situation to be followed. The Prosecutor himself and selected staff are analysing the information available and will request additional information on the occurrence of crimes and assess the ability of the State to deal with them.[...]"

The report on the latest of four Security Council missions to the Democratic Republic of Congo, issued on 16 June 2003, described the occurrence of gross violations of human rights in the eastern part of the country, including murder, mass rape, large-scale displacement of civilians, the use of child soldiers and even, reportedly, cases of ritual cannibalism. These crimes could constitute genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, and could thus, fall within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court." (ICC 16 July 03)

See also: AFP 23 Sept 03 Exploitation of natural resources fuels crimes in DR Congo: ICC Prosecutor [Link below]
and
Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), September 2003, DRC: Indications of genocide in Ituri exist, rights envoy says [Link below]

Policy and recommendations

Numerous organisations call for strengthened MONUC force in wake of renewed violence in Bunia (2003)

- Following withdrawal of Ugandan troops from Bunia in May 2003, fierce fighting breaks out between Hema and Lendu/ Ngiti militias for control of the town
- MONUC comes under mounting criticism from both humanitarian organisations and civilians for its apparently ineffective handling of the situation
- HRW calls on the Security Council to provide MONUC with more troops and equipment so that it can properly fulfil its mandate (that includes a limited degree of civilian protection)
- Oxfam urges the UN to deploy a rapid reaction force to enforce peace in Bunia
- UN SG asks the Security Council to consider 'effective measures' to prevent the situation from deteriorating with further loss of civilians lives
- Ugandan president criticises MONUC for practising 'dangerous tourism'
- South African president expected to urge UN to give MONUC troops greater powers to intervene to protect civilians
- International Crisis Group (ICG) called the Security Council to revise MONUC's mandate and to demilitarize Bunia

"The United Nations Observer Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) must urgently protect civilians threatened by renewed violence in the war-torn region of Ituri in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Human Rights Watch said today.

Following yesterday's withdrawal of Ugandan troops from the provincial capital of Bunia, Hema militias began fighting Lendu and Ngiti militias for control of the town. Thousands of combatants armed with

firearms, spears, axes and machetes streamed into the town as panicked civilians fled or sought refuge in one of the sites where MONUC troops have been posted. Witnesses in Bunia reported fighting in two suburbs and near the airport. Telephone conversations with persons in the area were interrupted by bursts of gunfire.

'The Security Council has given MONUC a mandate to 'protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence,' said Alison Des Forges, senior adviser to the Africa Division of Human Rights Watch. 'But to do that, it must have enough troops and equipment.' [...]

'People in Ituri can't wait months for help to come,' said Des Forges. 'They're looking to the U.N. and to the rest of us for protection now.'" (HRW 8 May 2003)

"The British aid organisation Oxfam has called on the UN to deploy rapid reaction troops to enforce peace in Bunia, northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which has been rocked by violence between rival Hema and Lendu militias since the withdrawal of Ugandan troops which were controlling the town.

'The UN Security Council must act on recommendations made to them by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Council must find troops and resources for a rapid reaction peace enforcement force for Bunia', Nicola Reindorp, the head of Oxfam's New York office, said on Saturday.

[...]

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Saturday expressed alarm at the deteriorating situation and said that the headquarters of the UN Mission to the DRC, MONUC, had been attacked on Friday by militias despite the fact that it was sheltering thousands of civilians.

'I am therefore asking the Security Council to consider effective measures to prevent the situation from deteriorating with further loss of civilians lives', Annan said.

[...]

The Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni on Sunday said that Congolese fleeing from Ituri were welcome in Uganda. 'It would be unacceptable for us to close our borders before them and leave them to be massacred', he told a press conference in Kampala.

Museveni called for the deployment of an African Union force to the region. 'The situation in Ituri requires an African force with a proper mandate which should include monitoring a ceasefire if there is any, defending itself, defending civilians', he said. Museveni criticised the MONUC mission in Bunia, saying that the MONUC troops were practising 'dangerous tourism'.

South African newspapers also reported on Sunday that South African president and African Union chairman Thabo Mbeki would urge Annan to give MONUC troops greater powers to intervene to protect civilians." (IRIN, 12 May 2003)

International Crisis Groups (ICG) Recommendations to the Security Council:

"9. Be prepared to review the resources of the IEMF and to authorise their appropriate reinforcement should they prove inadequate for any of the above tasks, including the prospect of having to make good on a threat to disarm forcibly fighters who refuse to disarm voluntarily.

10. Authorise a revised and more robust mandate for MONUC in order to support the pacification of Ituri (North-Eastern Congo), including the following:

a. complete and sustained demilitarisation of Bunia in order to continue support for the Ituri Interim Administration in its negotiation for the cantonment and DR of all militias;

b. planning for deployment of peacekeepers, respectively in Aru, Mongwalu and Irumu, to support humanitarian access to IDPs and the work of the IIA for the same negotiations in the rural areas as in Bunia, such planning to include determination of how many troops would be necessary in each location, and what would be required for adequate logistical support and, in the event of serious difficulties, for their protection; and

c. deployment of MILOBS teams, supported as necessary by armed peacekeepers, at border posts, strategic routes, airstrips and other lakeside points of entry in order to deter, monitor, and report on small arms flows and to make such seizures as they can in order at least to contain the problem." (ICG 13 June 03)

UN Security Council is urged to help end human rights violations, culture of impunity in DRC (2003)

- USG for Peacekeeping Operations and UNHCHR brief the Security Council on the situation in DRC (Feb 2003)
- UNHCHR, Sergio Vieira de Mello, highlights shocking human rights violations and lack of humanitarian access in areas of DRC, calling on the Security Council to urge belligerents and their foreign supporters to end this situation
- UNHCHR also highlights importance of creating effective judicial and national human rights protection systems in DRC

"In their dialogue with Security Council members regarding the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo this afternoon, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Sergio Vieira de Mello, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, underlined the need to put an end to the human rights violations and the culture of impunity in that country.

Mr. Guéhenno noted that there had been heavy fighting in the Ituri region, despite the signing on 16 to 17 December in Pretoria of the All-Inclusive Agreement. In December, the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC) and its ally, the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-National (RCD-N), had stepped up offensive operations in the direction of Beni against the forces of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération (RCD-K/ML). Some forces of the Union des patriotes congolais (UPC) reportedly had participated, as well. Thousands of people had been displaced.

The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) had been able to broker a truce on 30 December, providing for withdrawal and disengagement, as well as access for humanitarian relief. Withdrawal had been completed on 3 February, he said. However, the UPC had taken over Komanda, had recruited child soldiers and had acquired military equipment. He emphasized that the situation in the north-east was of growing concern. The MONUC had been working hard to defuse tensions and recommended peace-building mechanisms. The situation in Ituri might prove to be a new flashpoint between Uganda and Rwanda.

Regarding MONUC's future role in the area of human rights, he recognized the leading role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. If there was no end to the present culture of impunity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, progress sought on the political front might be hard to achieve. The Council might consider a host of actions to ensure that more attention was paid to human rights concerns in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he said.

Mr. Vieira de Mello, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, stressed an imperative need to continue to monitor closely the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and report on it, saying that the Pretoria peace process should be based on solid human rights grounds.

He said that all the parties to the conflict continued to commit grave violations of human rights. The situation was exacerbated by the impunity enjoyed by those committing those violations, including government officials. Most shocking violations of human rights included some 220 extrajudicial executions, 122 cases of forced disappearances, 95 cases of rape, and 32 cases of torture. Witnesses also described such atrocities as mutilations followed by cannibalism. The warring parties were not allowing humanitarian workers to the areas under their control, which made it difficult to provide assistance to the population displaced by the conflict.

Regarding a future course of action, he said that the Council might wish to demand again that the belligerents and their foreign supporters put an immediate end to human rights violations and the culture of impunity. Those responsible for such crimes should be immediately arrested and brought to justice, including those who continued to exercise military command functions.

It was also important to create effective judicial and national human rights protection systems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he said. Consideration should be given to the establishment of an international commission of inquiry to look into all serious human rights violations committed by all sides. He also expected that the Commission on Human Rights would continue to closely monitor the situation through its Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo." (UN SC, 13 February 2003)

Refugees International testifies to US Congress on the situation in DRC (2003)

- RI briefs US Congress on recent mission to DRC, where one focus was internal displacement caused by continuing insecurity
- RI highlights 'continuous and ongoing horror' in DRC, and calls on US to make vigorous efforts to find solutions to the catastrophe

"On April 3, 2003, Congressman Edward Royce chaired a hearing on 'Democratic Republic of Congo: Key to the Crisis in the Great Lakes Region.' RI Advocate Anne Edgerton was asked to present written testimony for the hearing. The following is a copy of her statement:

I want to thank the Chairman of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Congressman Edward Royce, and the Ranking Member, Congressman Donald M. Payne, for providing the opportunity for Refugees International (RI) to submit written testimony on the current humanitarian crisis unfolding in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). I returned from Ituri district and North Kivu Province in northeastern DRC at the end of February, completing my eighth humanitarian assessment mission for RI in the Great Lakes region of Africa, an area I have worked in, studied and written about since January 1995. My focus on this most recent mission was on the following issues: internal displacement caused by continuing insecurity; humanitarian access to displaced populations; the extent to which foreign countries are involved in the Congo; and the current status of children employed, armed, and used by the various fighting forces.

[...]

"In fiscal year 2002, the UN received 46% of the requested \$202 million for humanitarian assistance intended to respond to the needs of an estimated 2.1 million internally displaced people. This year's appeal for \$268 million, launched in November 2002, looks to fare far worse, while the estimate of internally displaced people now may eclipse 2.7 million.

The stark reality is that more people have died in the Congo in the last week due to violence, malnutrition, and disease than have died in the war in Iraq to date. The horror in the Congo is continuous and on-going. RI applauds the initiative of the Committee to hold this hearing and hopes that it will result in more vigorous efforts by the United States to find solutions to the Congo catastrophe." (RI, 7 April 2003)

The Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict urges the UN SC to work to end abuses against Congolese children (June 03)

"This report is a call to all parties to conflict in DRC to immediately halt abuses against children and uphold all international obligations to protect children's security and rights. It is also a call to the international community, particularly the UN Security Council, to work vigorously to ensure the end of abuses against Congolese children and adolescents. This includes abuses committed by all parties to conflict and international personnel stationed in DRC. To this end, the UN Security Council must press for special attention to the security and rights of children in peace negotiations, an end to impunity for crimes against children and support for programs and policies to protect and improve the lives of Congolese children, even as the conflict continues." (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict 16 June 03)

Donor Response

UN inter-agency consolidated appeal for DRC 2003 calls for US\$ 270 million (January 2003)

- UN's 2-pronged humanitarian strategy for 2003 includes widening humanitarian space in most affected areas of DRC and strengthening reintegration dynamics
- In first ten months of 2002, humanitarian assistance to DRC channelled through the CAP amounted to just under US\$ 80 million

By the end of April 2003, about 15 percent of the 2003 CAP was funded. Up-to-date summaries of CAP requirements and contributions can be accessed on the financial tracking system of the UN OCHA ReliefWeb [external link]

"Flexibility and responsiveness are therefore key to a two-pronged humanitarian strategy for the year 2003 in the DRC. A first axis will aim at widening the humanitarian space in most affected areas of the DRC. Advocating for reaching the hidden target groups, pursuing humanitarian assistance to reachable vulnerable groups will be daily tasks, coupled with fostering rapid intervention and information sharing coordination capacities. A second axis will revolve around strengthening reintegration dynamics. Deciding when to return home or to resettle remains a sovereign choice, however weakened individuals and families can be. The purpose of this year's strategy will be to accompany them in this choice, using common grounds with the R segment of the DDR whenever needed.

Responsiveness will equally translate into strengthened humanitarian information and coordination structures in areas most affected by the effects of, and potential for more, armed violence. At central level, this will, in turn, feed strategic mechanisms for a humanitarian coordination whose position will be at the confluence of emergency responses, reintegration dynamics and early recovery.

Humanitarian assistance to the DRC channelled through the Consolidated Appeal (CA) in the ten first months of 2002 amounted to US\$ 79,118,000. The year 2003 will be characterised, for the first time in a decade, by a flow of fund contributions for peace-keeping and economic rehabilitation purposes. It is essential that the needs of the voiceless and of those most exposed to armed violence be also addressed

through a robust humanitarian response. The CAP 2003 for the Democratic Republic of Congo will seek approximately US\$ 270 million." (UN, 16 January 2003, p1)

Donors increase support to DRC following establishment of transition government (2003)

- Belgium, the US government, and the World Bank all announced increased humanitarian assistance to DRC

"Belgium is to double aid to its former colony, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), to help build public services and allow democratic institutions to take root, [...]." (AFP 6 Oct 03)

"The US government will increase humanitarian aid to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the US ambassador to UN agencies [...] has said here following a visit to eastern and northeastern DRC." (AFP 1 Oct 03)

"The World Bank announced on Friday US \$214 million in "emergency economic and social reunification support" for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Approved on Thursday by the bank's board of directors, the facility comprises a grant of \$164 million and a \$50-million loan. The loan is repayable in 40 years but the Congo has until 2013 before it begins the process.

"This project will help the government overcome the critical, short-term obstacles to economic and social reunification and extend the period for carrying out key economic reforms throughout the country," the bank stated.

It added: "The project will complement actions currently underway to address urgent needs, alleviate the suffering of Congolese people, and generate quick 'peace dividends' which could contribute to the stabilisation of the country, by financing rehabilitation activities in those parts of the country where no major economic assistance program is put into practice yet."

It said the project's activities were aimed at laying the ground for an extension of the Emergency Multi-Sector Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Programme to all parts of the country." (IRIN 15 Sept 03)

"The World Bank said on Thursday that donors had pledged at least \$3.9 billion to the war-battered Democratic Republic of Congo for the period of 2004 till 2006, in addition to existing aid." (Reuters 19 Dec 03)

"The European Commission has approved a €4 million humanitarian aid package to support food and nutrition programmes for vulnerable groups affected by the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The funds will contribute to the World Food Programme Emergency Operation launched in June in response to the deterioration of the situation in Eastern Congo. This decision is managed by the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office, which comes under the supervision of Commissioner Poul Nielson." (ECHO 14 Aug 03)

US Government humanitarian assistance to DRC benefits IDPs, among others (2003)

- As of April 2003, USAID/OFDA had provided more than US\$ 10.4 million in emergency assistance to DRC during FY 2003
- USAID/OFDA's projects target geographic areas with the highest mortality and malnutrition rates

- In FY 2003 (as of April) USAID/FFP provided approximately US\$ 20 million in food assistance to WFP

"On November 5, 2001, U.S. Ambassador Aubrey Hooks re-declared a disaster for the ongoing complex emergency in the DRC as a result of the continued fighting since August 1998.

USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$10.4 million in emergency assistance to the DRC during FY 2003. USAID/OFDA provides emergency assistance in the food security and nutrition sectors, contributes to emergency market infrastructure rehabilitation, and supports agricultural programs for war-affected, vulnerable, and internally displaced persons.

USAID/OFDA's projects target the geographic areas with the highest mortality and malnutrition rates, and encourage implementing NGOs to expand into new areas as security permits. USAID/OFDA supports programs that provide emergency assistance to the most vulnerable, and integrate components for building local capacity in order to promote the development of people's sustainable livelihoods.

USAID/OFDA supports two Emergency Disaster Response Coordinators (EDRCs) in the DRC to monitor the humanitarian situation throughout the country and make programmatic recommendations to USAID/OFDA in Washington.

USAID's Office of Food For Peace (USAID/FFP) has provided 21,770 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance to WFP in FY 2003, valued at approximately \$20 million.

USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) is providing \$4.6 million in FY 2003 for programs in the DRC. USAID/OTI has developed a national, multi-faceted program to support the transition to peace in the DRC. USAID/OTI supports MONUC's Radio Okapi (through Fondation Hirondelle and Search for Common Ground) in order to increase availability and access to balanced information on humanitarian assistance, the peace process, and demobilization and reintegration. Through a sub-grants program with CARE, USAID/OTI provides assistance to local and national groups, and encourages support of the Lusaka Peace Accords and the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

To date in FY 2003, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) has provided \$3.65 million to assist refugees in the DRC." (USAID, 16 April 2003)

ECHO is DRC's largest donor of humanitarian aid (2003)

- ECHO approved a Euro 35 million package for DRC in 2003 (Jan 2003)
- ECHO funds will partly be used to treat some 60,000 acutely malnourished children and to provide their families with food, seeds and tools
- ECHO will continue to support the Congolese public health system through the provision of drugs, training and supervision
- Since 1998, ECHO has allocated just under Euro 120 million to DRC, making it the country's largest donor of humanitarian aid

"The European Commission has approved a €35 million package to help meet humanitarian needs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2003. These funds will be channelled through partner organisations working in the field by the Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO, which comes under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson. 'ECHO always aims to provide humanitarian assistance on an equitable, needs-driven basis. The DRC programme has been one of our biggest in recent years because the needs there are so great', said Mr Nielson. '2003 will be no exception. However, this year ECHO will

be able to focus more on front-line humanitarian priorities such as health and food, as longer term donors complete their take-over of substantial health, food security and rehabilitation programmes'.

Despite recent progress on the political and military front, the DRC is still plagued by instability and faces a great number of challenges. Humanitarian needs are as great as ever, and Congolese continue to die in large numbers, with mortality rates approaching five times the sub-Saharan norm in some front-line areas. However only a small proportion of this 'excess mortality' is directly attributable to acts of violence. The main killers are not bullets and machetes, but malaria and malnutrition, owing to the breakdown of food production and basic health services.

ECHO funds will be used to treat some 60,000 acutely malnourished children, while addressing the causes of malnutrition by providing their families with food, seeds and tools. About 115,000 families with malnourished or otherwise vulnerable children will be assisted in this way.

ECHO will continue to support the Congolese public health system through the provision of drugs, training and supervision. Specific action will also be taken on mother and child healthcare, reproductive health, malaria, emergency obstetrics and secure blood transfusion. The fees charged by the health system will be greatly reduced, because even the token amounts involved have been shown to deter the poorest people from seeking medical help. Taking into account a likely increase in demand due to lower fees, ECHO aims to assist some 4.5 million people in 55 health districts in 2003.

Over the past five years ECHO has allocated just under €120 million to DRC, making it the country's largest donor of humanitarian aid." (ECHO, 28 January 2003)

UK supports efforts of ICRC to help IDPs (2003)

- Britain donated US\$ 4 million to ICRC in DRC in support of their efforts to help IDPs (Mar 2003)
- Britain's total assistance to DRC from April 2002 to end March 2003 was US\$ 27 million

"Britain has donated US \$4 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in support of their efforts to help internally displaced persons (IDPs), according to an official from the British embassy in the DRC.

Paul Godefroy, the head of cooperation at the embassy in the DRC capital, Kinshasa, told IRIN on Tuesday that the contribution was part of Britain's annual assistance to the DRC, totalling \$27 million for the period 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003.

'The \$4 million is only a portion of the assistance provided by our government in an effort to support the peace process in the DRC and to help the people of eastern DRC, as well as those affected by war in other regions of the country,' he said. He added that the grant was specifically in support of the ICRC's efforts to assist IDPs.

He said the bulk of Britain's \$27 million in humanitarian assistance had been credited to the ICRC, UN agencies, and NGOs such as Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) and Caritas. The \$4 million was in response to an emergency appeal made by the ICRC in December 2002. 'Great Britain wants to show its solidarity with the Congolese people during this difficult period,' Godefroy said.

In December 2002, the emergency aid fund of the UK Department for International Development had granted the DRC some \$1.16 million towards the cost of medical assistance being provided by MSF in the northern DRC provinces of Equateur and Orientale.

Also in December, a sum of \$800,000 was donated to the international NGO Population Services International towards a programme to fight the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, which involved the distribution of 21 million condoms for men and 50,000 for women." (IRIN, 5 March 2003)

Donors pledged to provide more funding to DRC with renewal of peace negotiations (2001-2002)

- A donor information meeting in Paris in July 2001 expressed support for a US\$156 million program presented by the government of DRC
- In December 2001, following up to the July meeting, the World Bank organized consultation on demobilization and reintegration program (Dec 2001)
- In Aug 2002, the World Bank approved US\$454 for health sector, food security and others
- Little funds disbursed despite pledges

"During his recent visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Kenzo Oshima, called for the international donor community to increase its assistance in the coming months so that relief agencies could expand their capacity on the ground and increase the resources available to tackle the country's "massive humanitarian deficit". Mr. Oshima said that with the disengagement of combatant forces and the deployment of MONUC observers in frontline areas, access to vulnerable populations was improving and some civilians, such as those in Kabinda, a former frontline town, were already feeling the effects of the peace process. Mr. Oshima identified the need for special programmes to address the specific problems of child soldiers, violence against women, issues related to displaced women and children and psychosocial problems among war-affected populations. The Under-Secretary-General also said that, whenever conditions allowed, there would be a need to develop resettlement programmes for internally displaced persons and refugees to support the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process." (UN SC 8 June 2001, para.62)

"A Donor Information Meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was held in Paris on July 3, 2001. This meeting was aimed at taking stock of recent developments, and at discussing ways by which the international community could support the nascent recovery process.

At that meeting donor representatives observed that the Government had put in place a credible reform program, supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They agreed on the need to quickly address the country's debt overhang (estimated at about US\$12.9 billion), to organize an orderly demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, to develop effective mechanisms for donor coordination and implementation of assistance, to enhance transparency, in particular in the mining sector, and to support a series of urgent activities. Donors also agreed on the need to ensure that foreign assistance is equitably distributed across the country and to take a regional approach in addressing some issues.

The delegates noted that a number of donor programs worth about US\$280 million were currently underway in the country and projects amounting to some US\$240 million were planned for the coming months. The planned projects would cover a large part of those contained in a US\$156 million request by the government.

At the end of this meeting, donors asked the Bank to organize a follow-up meeting, before the end of 2001." (WB 12 Dec 2001)

In Dec 2001, "The World Bank concluded consultations with UN and donor partners on a planned Greater Great Lakes Regional Demobilization and Reintegration Program and Multi-Donor Trust Fund. The purpose of the meeting was to consult with partners in the international community on opportunities to support the consolidation of peace and stability in the region through a comprehensive framework for

disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and to lay the basis for generating the resources required for its implementation. The meeting was chaired by Emmanuel Mbi, World Bank Country Director, South Central Africa and Great Lakes Department. Representatives from 12 countries and 10 international organizations attended the meeting** including General Muntaga-Diallo, Force Commander, MONUC (United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The meeting was prepared in close collaboration with UNDP. [...]

** Participants included representatives from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, United States, African Development Bank, the European Commission, GCA, ILO, IMF, UN-OCHA, UNDP, UNDPKO, MONUC, and the World Bank." (WB 19 Dec 2001)

"Last Tuesday the World Bank approved US\$454 million in grants and credits to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to help it finance part of its emergency reconstruction and rehabilitation effort.[...]

The Multisector Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program offered by the World Bank will assist the DRC in improving agricultural production and enhancing food security, restoring critical infrastructure and essential social services, and strengthening the capacity of the government to formulate and implement its development programs. A US\$44 million grant is being allocated specifically to the health sector, to assist the government in its efforts to combat and treat HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases, as well as provide health care services targeted to specific groups, such as mothers, children, orphans and victims of war." (WB 12 Aug 2002)

To access the World Bank webpage for DRC [External link]

"Despite the CAP being an impressive attempt to diversify funding beyond traditional humanitarian work in order to reflect the specific context of chronic under-development, donors have not followed suit. Almost all funds so far available are just for WFP and UNHCR, covering only traditional humanitarian work.

The challenge for donors is twofold. First, to match rhetoric with reality, and provide assistance commensurate with the level of need. The volcano response generally met essential minimum standards. However, this is in sharp contrast to the level of assistance being given to the population as a whole. Second, there is a need to go beyond acute and ongoing humanitarian needs to fund longer-term reconstruction projects, enabling and encouraging IDPs to return to their homes. The rebuilding of communication networks and infrastructure, such as roads and telecommunications, is a key part of reconstruction." (Oxfam 25 April 2002)

Selected UN activities

UN inter-agency consolidated appeal for DRC 2004 calls for US\$ 187 million (Nov 2003)

- 2003 appeal requested \$270 million

"To respond to this ongoing crisis, the 2004 strategy is founded on a rights-based approach. The goal is to alleviate and prevent human suffering. This will be achieved by saving lives and safeguarding livelihoods, by reducing vulnerabilities in affected communities and by maximising coordination mechanisms to facilitate the transition period between relief and development. This strategy will draw on all legal

instruments and will ensure all stakeholders fulfil their respective roles in ensuring protection and assistance to populations in need. The right to provide unimpeded humanitarian assistance must also be respected, and advocacy and action to improve access will be key priorities.[...]

The Consolidated Appeal (CA) 2004 for the Democratic Republic of Congo will seek to raise **US\$ 187,094,868** in order to channel humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable." (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p1)

"The year 2003 will be characterized, for the first time in a decade, by a flow of fund contributions for peace-keeping and economic rehabilitation purposes. It is essential that the needs of the voiceless and of those most exposed to armed violence be also addressed through a robust humanitarian response. The CAP 2003 for the Democratic Republic of Congo will seek approximately **US\$ 270 million.**" (UN, 16 January 2003, p1)

Inter-agency mission assesses IDP situation nationwide (January 2003)

- Inter-agency assessment mission to DRC in January 2003 aims to devise strategic plans to overcome IDP problem country-wide
- Agencies/ institutions with humanitarian or recovery/ reintegration mandates were invited to participate
- UN IDP Unit conducted preliminary missions to DRC in October and December 2002

"An inter-agency mission will begin a two-week tour on Monday to assess the situation of internally-displaced persons (IDPs) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with a view to devising strategic plans to overcome the country-wide problem, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The country has an estimated 2.4 million IDPs according to the 2003 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal. OCHA said on Thursday that the recent withdrawal and demobilisation of foreign troops in the DRC had led to significant changes on the ground: certain areas previously inaccessible were now reachable for humanitarian organisations, and that might encourage the return of IDPs. Conversely, increased insecurity in other areas due to renewed fighting between Congolese armed groups was hampering the delivery of humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations and resulting in further displacement and increased protection problems.

Agencies and institutions with either a humanitarian or recovery/reintegration mandates have been invited to participate. They include the UN Development Programme, the UN Children's Fund, and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Others are the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Habitat, the UN Mission in the DRC, the World Food Programme, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, the UN World Health Organisation, the International Organisation for Migration and the Red Cross Movement, as well as representatives from the NGO community and donors.

The UN IDP Unit conducted two preliminary missions - 7-10 October 2002 in Kinshasa and 1-7 December 2002 in Kinshasa and eastern DRC - to explore the conditions and scope for an inter-agency mission on internal displacement in the country." (IRIN, 24 January 2003)

[Click here to see the mission report by the OCHA IDP Unit](#)

WFP airlifts food to IDPs in eastern DRC (2003)

- WFP begins emergency operation to airlift food to some 6,750 IDPs in Kindu, Maniema province, in February 2002
- Air transport is the only viable means of delivering food to IDPs in Kindu due to widespread destruction of infrastructure
- In early 2003 WFP also airlifted food to more than 107,000 IDPs in Bunia
- WFP currently targets around 1.5 million IDPs throughout DRC
- Emergency food operation to 483,000 in Northern and Eastern DRC started in June 03

"The UN World Food Programme (WFP) has begun an emergency operation to airlift food to some 6,750 people in Kindu, the capital of Maniema Province, in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the agency announced on Friday.

During the operation, funded by the US government, WFP is planning to deliver more than 200 mt of food aid. This is the first time that WFP is intervening to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kindu, where precarious food security is a source of great concern to humanitarian organisations.

WFP said that near incessant fighting in eastern DRC had destroyed much of the region's infrastructure, rendering large areas completely inaccessible. Air transport, though costly, is the only viable means of delivering food to the displaced.

WFP reported that malnutrition rates were very high in the region, because the population - mostly peasant farmers - had been unable to access their fields for about three years. The agency added that following the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from the region, people in Maniema Province had been emerging from their hiding places in the forest and converging on Kindu, only to find that there was no food for them there.

WFP said that its implementing partner in Kindu, the British NGO Merlin, also planned to airlift 179.4 mt of food to cover the needs for three months of more than 5,000 malnourished children and malnourished pregnant and lactating mothers at therapeutic and supplementary feeding centres the organisation planned to open.

The Kindu special airlift is WFP's second such operation since the beginning of 2003 to deliver food to IDPs in the eastern DRC. An initial, month-long, special operation to airlift 892 mt of food to IDPs in the northeastern city of Bunia ended on 12 February. During the Bunia special operation, more than 107,000 IDPs, most of whom were women and children, received WFP emergency food assistance comprising maize flour, pulses, beans and vegetable oil.

WFP said it was currently targeting around 1.5 million IDPs throughout the DRC, whose living conditions and nutritional status were extremely insecure. A further special airlift operation to deliver about 102 mt of food to Kasongo and the surrounding area in southeastern DRC is also being planned.

However, WFP cautioned, there were still significant numbers of people within the country whom WFP had been unable to reach because of prevailing insecurity. The agency said it would be appealing for further resources to assist these people once they had been reached and identified." (IRIN, 21 February 2003)

"In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, FAO said that harvesting of the 2003 second-season food crops was underway in eastern and northeastern regions. However, favourable growing conditions notwithstanding, production was expected to be sharply reduced following the escalation of the civil war in these areas, mainly in Ituri District. In mid-June, FAO and the UN World Food Programme jointly approved an emergency operation to assist 483,000 of the most affected people in the northern and eastern parts of the country, including the internally displaced, returnees from neighbouring countries and other

vulnerable groups. The operation, to last six months starting mid-June, would provide 32,236 mt of cereals and 9,934 mt of beans." (IRIN 29 Aug 03)

"Some 20,000 people who have sought refuge in Bunia, the main town of the troubled Ituri District of northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), have started to receive some 400 mt of food aid from the UN World Food Programme (WFP), the agency announced on Wednesday.

However, WFP warned that with displaced people continuing to arrive in Bunia daily, attracted by its relative security, supplies would become strained.[...]

Prevailing insecurity in Ituri has meant that humanitarian access to Bunia is possible only by air. Two aircraft from the EU-led force are, therefore, delivering food daily to Bunia from Entebbe in neighbouring Uganda." (IRIN 21 Aug 03)

IDP camps in Ituri receive assistance by international and local NGOs (2003)

- **Coordination of assistance to IDPs by OCHA**

"The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) began handing over to a French NGO on Saturday the coordination and supervision of a camp hosting 11,240 internally displaced people in Bunia town, Ituri District, northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The OCHA camp manager, Seraphim Kazadi, told IRIN that by Thursday the NGO, Atlas, would have fully taken over the camp's administration. OCHA would from then serve only in an advisory capacity.

He said OCHA began its coordination effort at the Bunia airport campsite for the displaced persons in June. The majority of the camp's occupants gathered inside the airport in May to escape the inter-militia fighting that followed the withdrawal of the Ugandan army on 6 May. The displaced persons were moved to their present camp when the UN Mission in the country, known as MONUC, provided security.

Kazadi said most of the displaced were women and children. Initially, he said, up to 200 people came into the camp each day but that the flow had since decreased substantially.

"For instance, a total of 54 people came into the camp last week, making it an average of less than ten people a day," he said.

OCHA, in conjunction with other UN agencies and NGOs has been providing to the camp a variety of aid items such as kitchen utensils, food, and blankets; as well as health, water and sanitation services.

He said that OCHA initially encountered difficulties coordinating activities at the camp because of inadequate plastic sheeting for tents, with families having to share one tent.

"However, 70 percent of these difficulties have been overcome, the congestion has reduced to about seven families in one tent and we are trying to have one family per tent," he said.

Kazadi said the camp was divided into six neighbourhoods – lettered A through F – where there are recreational activities such as football and children's games. All communities were represented in the camp, he said, and even the traditionally rival Hema and Lendu IDPs were living together.

The airport camp is the only such IDP facility OCHA has recognised, because of its multiethnic composition. Another camp in the town, hosting some 1,200 people, is run by a local NGO. Kazadi said OCHA did not recognise this facility because it contained only one ethnic group, the Hema, who had refused to move to the airport site.

The displaced are still in the camps, fearing attack if they return to their homes. They said although the French-led international multinational force that was deployed in June to secure Bunia had managed to stop militias from entering the town with firearms, many of these fighters had come to their homes at night and threatened violence." (IRIN 1 Sept 03)

"According to the World Vision Programme Manager for the Beni area, World Vision was asked to take a lead in the food and non-food items distribution in the camp.

The organization is also looking to intervene in the water and sanitation activities, and health activities including nutrition. An interim analysis of the ongoing nutritional survey by World Vision already shows that most of the children below five years are malnourished after walking long distances without food.

MERLIN, MSF and The First Emergency Assistance are some of the agencies working to save lives of the displaced people who have walked long distances through the vast equatorial forests to the camp. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is coordinating the inter-agency technical team activities." (World Vision 27 May 03)

Emergency Education programs for displaced children (January 2003)

- UNICEF focuses on educational activities for displaced and war-affected children
- UNESCO, with its partners, developed a programme aiming to respond to immediate needs of children obliged to drop out of school

"Both UNICEF and UNESCO have developed a philosophy on emergency education (in the context of the rehabilitation of the education structure as a whole, which is a long-term process, but each targets different groups.

UNICEF focuses on educational activities for displaced and war affected children, mainly in the most affected areas of the country (Kivus, Orientale, Northern Katanga, Equateur, Maniema and the Kasai). This programme was developed under the UNICEF Education Regular Programme's Plan of Action to ensure a complementarity between UNICEF regular and emergency education programmes in DRC in the DRC.

UNESCO developed a programme within the context of the global 'Education For All' appeal with several major partners including UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO and the World Bank. Their aim is to respond to the immediate needs of children who have been obliged to drop out of school over the past period, especially disabled children, ex-child soldiers and orphan street children." (UN, 16 January 2003, pp44-45)

Office of the Special Representative of Children in Armed Conflicts organized workshops to enhance child protection in DRC (June 2002)

"The Office of the Special Representative undertook three follow-up visits to the DRC. From 10-23 January 2002 the Office held meetings with faith-based organizations and youth groups in Kinshasa, Kisangani, Goma and Bukavu. The second visit from 26 March to 4 May 2002 was devoted to the organization of workshops, in Kisangani and Bukavu to mobilize local actors to raise awareness of international norms and standards for the protection of children, in collaboration with MONUC, UNICEF and local NGOs.

The third mission from 13-21 June 2002 laid the ground for planning and preparation of a follow up workshop, in the near future, to promote the strengthening of the capacity for monitoring, advocacy and networking on children affected by armed conflict in eastern DRC. The Office also organized a review meeting with CPAs and UNICEF Child Protection staff in Kinshasa to discuss collaboration between CPAs, UNICEF and the Office of the Special Representative, including the monitoring and reporting roles of CPAs. Meetings also took place with the Government office for demobilization and reintegration (BUNADER), UNICEF, ICRC and NGOs in Kinshasa to review lessons learned from the demobilization experience of the Government and RCD-Goma.

The Office consulted with the Special Adviser of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, UNICEF, OCHA, and UNHCR in Nairobi regarding cooperation and modalities for a Great Lakes Conference on the cross-border effects of the sub-regional conflict on children. A meeting was held with a representative of the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources in the DRC to help the panel gather evidence of cases of child exploitation in the extraction of natural resources." (Office of the Special Representative of Children in Armed Conflicts June 2002)

UNICEF, International and local NGOs in the area of Child Protection (2002-2003)

- UN agencies, the DRC government and NGOs have established centers for street children
- Within the light of the DDR process, first objective is support to demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of child soldiers
- International NGOs such as Save the Children, and local NGOs also attempt to address the overall crisis of child protection in the eastern Congo
- Local NGOs try to prevent displacement of children but lack funding for activities

"Within the light of the DDR process, the first objective is the support to the demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of child soldiers. Both the Government and some rebel groups have signed a Plan of Action with UNICEF in order to respect the DDR of child soldiers. UNICEF will also continue to support BUNADER (the Government's National Commission on Demobilisation and Reintegration) and the RDC-Goma's Interdepartmental Commission for DDR to coordinate and supervise the demobilisation of child soldiers in the areas they control and the subsequent family and community reintegration of these children.

To address the issue of the street children and traumatised children, special attention will go to the reunion programmes for street children, demobilised and unaccompanied minors with their families and communities, the reinforcement of basic social structures such as PHC and formal/non-formal education activities targeting these categories of children, and the reinforcement of national capacities to treat psycho-social problems of traumatised children.

UNHCR, in addition to its regular protection work, carries out pursues peace education programmes in refugee settlements and primary and secondary schools throughout DRC to ease ethnic tensions which tend to raise in increasingly heterogeneous populations. Together with its implementing partners, it will organise various camps to complement school education and strengthen the role of girls in their communities." (UN, 16 January 2003, p44)

"UNICEF, international NGOs such as Save the Children, and local NGOs attempt to address the overall crisis of child protection in the eastern Congo. The problem is vast, however, and homeless children, constantly on the move outside of institutional settings, are inherently difficult to reach. *R/* was in touch with a network of Congolese NGOs and community-based organizations that are trying to establish centers to get children off the streets and provide them with basic education and vocational training. They also attempt to prevent homelessness and displacement by instilling parents with a greater sense of responsibility towards their children. These groups are effective on a small scale, but they are terribly under-funded. *R/* visited one center where 50 or 60 children ate their afternoon snack in the rain in ankle-deep mud for lack of plastic sheeting to cover the cramped dining area." (RI 6 Feb 2002)

Emergency Humanitarian Interventions (EHI) and Quick Impact Projects benefit IDPs (2003)

- EHI is a UN inter-agency rapid response structure
- EHI concept is meant to operate as first aid mechanism aiming at saving lives and restoring family and communal livelihood

"While designed to enhance the UN's emergency preparedness capacity, the EHI [Emergency Humanitarian Interventions] concept is meant to operate as first aid mechanism aiming at saving lives and restoring family and communal livelihood. The scope of interventions under EHI will be limited to emergency food, distribution of seeds, tools, medical assistance, emergency water projects and control of epidemics.
[...]

EHI will be managed by the Office of the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator in conjunction with the UN Country Management Team. All donor contributions for EHI are proposed to be channelled through OCHA and earmarked for a specific activity [...]" (UN November 1999, pp. 19, 57)

« In 2003 Emergency Humanitarian Interventions (EHI) were conducted to the sum of US\$ 400,000 supporting more than 25 emergency humanitarian actions and numerous interdisciplinary assessment missions in attempts to consolidate access. » (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p11)

President Kabila asks UNHCR to assist the internally displaced (2001-2002)

"Congolese President Josphe Kabila on Thursday met UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ruud Lubbers in Geneva [...]. Kabila sought help for the return home of Congolese refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). He told the High Commissioner that he was "anxious" to see the return of Congolese refugees from the Great Lakes region.

He noted that his country was now in the process of reconstruction, which would enable refugees and IDPs to return to their homes. [...] He asked UNHCR to assist IDPs in his country, estimated to number around 1.8 million, which was more than the number of refugees. The IDPs were in accessible areas but lacked basic assistance, he said." (IRIN 30 March 2001)

In March 2002, the Global IDP Project was told by a UNHCR staff that UNHCR does not assist IDPs due to lack of funding and capacity, because peace has not been consolidated and because UNHCR is not better placed than other agencies in the field.

Humanitarian agencies complete first round of training on IDP principles (2003)

"The Norwegian Refugee Council and the IDP unit of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have complete the first round of training workshops on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the agencies reported.

In their October update, the agencies said that since April 2003, they had conducted nine two- to three-day workshops in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

"The workshops constituted the first phase of a long-term programme designed to identify and promote durable solutions for the country's IDPs [internally displaced persons] by raising awareness of the Guiding Principles - the key international framework for assisting and protecting IDPs - among the government, local authorities, non-governmental organisations, aid workers and internally displaced persons themselves," the agencies reported.

They said their joint training programme had been developed following two UN inter-agency missions to the country in 2002 and early 2003, which had identified a lack of knowledge and training on IDP issues." (IRIN 21 Oct 03)

Selected activities of the Red Cross Movement

ICRC provides assistance, including family reunification, for IDPs in DRC (2003)

- ICRC assists civilian victims of war in DRC to firstly improve their living conditions, and then to help them become self-sufficient
- Assistance includes family reunification, non-food assistance, provision of clean drinking water, food and seed distribution

"On 29 and 30 January the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) carried out a major operation to reunite separated family members.

A total of 140 children between one and 17 years of age were flown from Goma to Kinshasa on board a Boeing 737 specially chartered by the ICRC for the occasion. All the children were reunited with their families, from whom they had been separated for several months - or several years in some cases - owing to the conflict. The purpose of the operation was to remedy one of the many tragic consequences of armed conflict: the dispersal of members of the same family.

The ICRC is working in close cooperation with volunteers of the Red Cross Society of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to find the families of unaccompanied children throughout the country. The subsequent reunification operations are carried out both in the areas controlled by the government and in those held by the armed opposition.

Last year the ICRC reunited more than 400 children with their parents in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a country devastated by several years of war." (ICRC, 30 January 2003)

"Following various assessments made in 2002, the ICRC conducted a large-scale operation to assist the most vulnerable displaced and resident families in Djolu, in Equateur province, between 20 January and 7 February.

Three thousand families each received a kit containing cooking utensils, a hoe, a bucket, salt, sugar, soap, clothing and blankets.

The distribution of these kits, which ought to have taken place in the last quarter of 2002, had been held up by various logistical problems posed by the isolation of the region. As part of the operation, a plane had to bring in some of the relief supplies from Mbandaka, where they had been placed in temporary storage, at a rate of three flights a day for two weeks.

In addition, four springs in the Bolombo, Lindja I and Lindja II districts of Djolu are being tapped so as to supply the city's 15,000 inhabitants with drinking water.

The ICRC is assisting civilian victims of the four-year conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo so as to improve their living conditions, in the first place, and then help them to become self-sufficient." (ICRC, 13 February 2003)

"On 14 February, the ICRC finished distributing food and high-quality seed to 10,000 families in Kindu. These people had been short of food because of fighting in the eastern part of the country.

Kindu is currently home to between 140,000 and 190,000 people, some residents and some displaced by the fighting. Recent clashes in Maniema province had led to the creation of a security cordon around Kindu, isolating the town from farming land and hampering both food deliveries and trade.

As the food situation was worsening, particularly for children, the ICRC decided to distribute food and seed to 6,000 families in Mikelenge and Kasuku and 4,000 in Alunguli.

Each household received 13 kg of improved groundnut, maize and bean seed, together with a hoe. They will now be able to work the fields that lie within the security cordon. The ICRC also supplied these families with food (15 kg of rice and beans), so they would not have to eat the seed.

In just five days, the ICRC flew in 300 tonnes of aid, making 21 trips with a leased Hercules C 130 and two more with its own DC3. Close cooperation with Kindu Red Cross personnel was an important factor in the success of the operation." (ICRC, 17 February 2003)

Response by Non Governmental Organisations

MSF provides medical assistance to IDPs in eastern DRC – although access is limited (2003)

- At the end of 2002, MSF opened dispensaries for IDPs north of Beni town; originally catering to 25,000 people, numbers had increased to 60,000 within a month
- MSF health posts near Beni are well beyond capacity
- On-going fighting is preventing MSF medical teams accessing large parts of the population
- MSF monitored the health situation of 100,000 IDPs in Bunia (July 03)

"As fighting continues to ravage the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), about 35,000 people fled from heavy artillery shootings around their home town of Makeke, on the border between North-Kivu and Ituri, to the town of Beni on December 31st. MSF has been present in the Beni area since early December and has already seen tens of thousands displaced people arriving, seeking refuge from war.

In early December, MSF opened dispensaries for displaced people north of the town of Beni in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The dispensaries originally catered to 25,000 people, including war displaced who have not had access to health care in years. Today, the dispensaries cater to 60,000 people, who daily flee the extreme levels of violence and fighting in Ituri province.

Since December, MSF teams have seen over 7,500 patients for medical consultations in six villages on the Beni-Mambassa axis. The health posts MSF has reopened over this period are now far beyond full capacity, and MSF is setting up hospital tents. In less than a month, MSF teams have treated 33 children suffering from acute malnutrition, and 13 rape victims. In Mangina, where measles broke out, MSF is vaccinating all patients during consultations as the displaced population has not been vaccinated in years.

The on-going fighting and violence in the region prevent MSF medical teams access to a large part of the population.

"We see only part of the displaced population," said Philippe Hamel, MSF Head of Mission. "There may be many more. We fear that in total there might be over 155,000 displaced people in the area between Butembo, Beni, Mambasa and Komanda alone".

MSF wants to rapidly expand its emergency relief operations in the area." (MSF, 4 January 2003)

"In Bunia, MSF is currently carrying out 15 to 20 surgical interventions a day, mainly for injuries from gunshots or machete wounds, and up to 120 medical consultations. Monitoring of the 100,000 displaced people living in two camps in Bunia is ongoing, with measures being put in place to contain a possible cholera outbreak. No access to the thousands who fled to forest areas around Bunia, and who are cut off from food supplies and health care, is possible at this time." (MSF 9 Jul 03)

Medair and partners vaccinate more than 108,000 children against measles (January 2003)

- In January 2003, Medair and partners vaccinated more than 108,000 children in Bunia against measles
- Success of the operation, as well as improved access to humanitarian NGOs in certain areas around Bunia, was expected to result in 20,000 more children being vaccinated in February 2003

"Du 23 au 30 janvier 2003 sans interruption, une campagne de vaccination contre la rougeole pour les enfants de 6 mois à 15 ans s'est déroulée à Bunia, au nord-est de la RD Congo. Plus de 108 000 enfants ont été vaccinés dans 233 sites, lors d'une opération qui a mobilisé environ 900 personnes : médecins, infirmiers, mobilisateurs, chauffeurs, logisticiens... Malgré l'instabilité de la région et l'insécurité dans la ville de Bunia, cette opération d'une ampleur sans précédent, du nom de 'vaccination pour la vie', s'est achevée sans difficulté majeure, à la grande satisfaction des organisateurs.

Léonard Badibanga, représentant de l'OMS à Bunia, nous confiait ravi il y a quelques jours : 'Nous avons dépassé notre objectif d'atteindre 100 000 enfants. L'engagement de l'équipe Medair a été essentiel à la réussite de cette campagne, fruit du partenariat réussi entre l'OMS, l'UNICEF et Medair'.

Les 300 cas de rougeole répertoriés en janvier qui ont causé le décès de 16 enfants, ont convaincu les plus sceptiques de l'urgence de la campagne. Ainsi, fin décembre, la mise en place de la gratuité des soins contre la rougeole, la formation des infirmiers et l'approvisionnement en kits de traitement par l'équipe médicale de Medair ont contribué à limiter au maximum les pertes en vies humaines. Sans cette campagne, les conséquences auraient pu être désastreuses.

Une action d'une telle envergure a nécessité la mobilisation du personnel de santé, des familles et des enfants des écoles. Le personnel local de Medair a été très encouragé par le résultat positif de 107% de couverture et souhaite recommencer.

Vu le succès de cette opération et compte tenu de l'ouverture de certaines régions autour de Bunia aux ONG humanitaires, la vaccination de 20 000 enfants supplémentaires est prévue au cours du mois de février, si la sécurité le permet. Le nombre de personnes déplacées et vulnérables à l'extérieur de Bunia étant élevé, cette action à impact immédiat doit être réalisée sur des sites accessibles et où des cas de rougeole sont signalés. C'est désormais le prochain objectif de l'équipe Medair." (Medair, 7 February 2003)

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) provides assistance to IDPs from Lomami River Valley, central DRC (2003)

- CRS has worked in DRC since independence from Belgium in 1960 - in the fields of emergency relief, food security, community health and peace and reconciliation
- As the only international NGO working in the area, CRS assisted thousands of IDPs in Lomami River Valley with non-food items and medical care (2003)
- CRS and local partner Caritas Congo organised a convoy of 700 returning IDPs and humanitarian aid from the capital, Kinshasa, to Bena-Dibele (April 2003)

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) today announced plans to assist more than 30,000 people displaced by fighting in the Lomami River Valley in central Democratic Republic of the Congo. The area has been cut off from the capital, Kinshasa, since the war began in 1998.

'Many people fled with only the clothes on their backs,' said Kevin Hartigan, CRS' Regional Director for Central Africa. 'We are working to get relief supplies to those who have been displaced. At the same time, we're also looking to the longer term effect of this situation and are providing tools, seeds and other staples people will need to begin their lives again.'

CRS and local partners from the Diocese of Tshumbe will distribute cooking utensils, clothing, agricultural tools and seed, fishing lines and hooks, mosquito nets and soap to those affected. Additionally, displaced families will receive medical consultations and basic medicines. CRS is the only international nongovernmental organization working in the area.

Since last April, sporadic fighting between the Mai Mai and the Rwandan-backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma has created instability in the area. As attacks have continued and increased in intensity, villagers have been caught in the middle, with both groups accusing them of collaborating with the other. Those who have been displaced report looted and burned villages, destroyed crops and a host of human rights abuses, including rape, torture and targeted executions.

Now in its fifth year, the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been called 'Africa's first World War.' At least seven African countries and three rebel groups have been involved, and more than 50 million innocent lives have been disrupted and jeopardized.

CRS has worked in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since its independence from Belgium in 1960. Program areas include emergency relief, food security, community health and peace and reconciliation work." (CRS, 7 March 2003)

"Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and local partner Caritas Congo today announced the departure of a convoy carrying 700 returning displaced persons and humanitarian aid from the capital, Kinshasa, to rebel-controlled Bena-Dibele, some 1300 kilometers upriver. This action marks the first significant attempt to reunite families separated by the civil war's frontline.

"Most of the passengers are women and children who have been displaced in Kinshasa and apart from their families since 1998," said Kevin Hartigan, CRS' Regional Director for Central Africa. "The convoy gives us a chance to help people return home and to deliver some much needed humanitarian aid to the area."

Funded by CRS and several Caritas and other international partners, the convoy is carrying hundreds of tons of humanitarian aid, including school supplies and building rehabilitation materials. Additionally, the convoy is bringing assistance—in the form of kitchen sets, clothing, farming tools and fishing equipment—for 20,000 persons recently displaced by fighting in the Lomami River Valley.

The initiative was conceived by the Bishop of Tshumbe, Nicolas Djomo, who negotiated authorization with the government in Kinshasa and the leadership of the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD), which controls the area surrounding Bena-Dibele. The convoy is being managed by Caritas Congo with technical assistance from CRS.

Upon arrival in Bena-Dibele, passengers will be taken to points near their villages of origin and met by family members. Food and other necessities will be provided to the returnees to help ease the transition and decrease the burden on their families." (CRS, 4 April 2003)

NGOs have established 100 nutrition centers to reduce malnutrition in eastern DRC (Nov 02)

"Malnutrition in eastern DRC, an area with enormous agricultural potential, was a new phenomenon, except for parts of South Kivu where the density of the population was significant and the soil not very fertile, said Spijkers [FAO's Representative in the DRC].

To overcome the problem, NGOs have established at least 100 nutrition centres, which are supported by the World Food Programme and the UN Children's Fund with donations of food and therapeutic milk. For over a year, FAO has been collaborating with 11 NGOs in the region, including Save the Children-UK, Medecins Sans Frontières, Action contre le faim, Solidarités, and Caritas, supplying 90 nutrition centres with seeds and hoes. An FAO agronomist also does demonstrations for families accompanying their children to the centres on how to grow the food." (IRIN 6 Nov 02)

Radio Okapi launched an information campaign of DDRRR in partnership with MONUC (Oct 02)

"Public information deployment and activities have reinforced the visibility of MONUC in all sectors of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Radio Okapi broadcasts news programmes in five languages from Kinshasa to eight locations: Kisangani, Goma, Kalemie, Kananga, Mbandaka, Gbadolite, Kindu and, as

from 6 October, Bukavu. These eight regional FM stations have also commenced locally produced programming. Three short wave transmitters have been installed in Kinshasa and will be fully operational by the end of October, covering the entire country and the region. Radio Okapi has started an information campaign on disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration with specific programmes in French, Swahili and Kinyarwanda targeting both the armed groups and the Congolese population. United Nations agencies have also increased their contributions to Radio Okapi programming." (UN SC 18 Oct 02, para.40)

Local human rights group monitor human rights abuses, offer counseling and assistance (Dec 2002)

- Local human rights organizations have shown great courage
- Often, human rights workers have been detained or killed

"The paradox of civil society in the Congo is that these groups often have almost no money and work in incredibly dangerous conditions, but they find ways to do what they have to," says Learned Dees, head of the National Endowment for Democracy's Africa program, which funds more than two dozen Congolese NGOs. "The civil society here is one of the most advanced in Africa." Often the most difficult job is finding the victims. While every side of this war is guilty of horrible crimes, the rebel Rally for Congolese Democracy-Goma [RCD], which controls most of the area's major cities, is becoming more sensitive about accusations that its unpaid soldiers are guilty of rape, pillage, and murder.

Human rights activists have been beaten, detained, and killed, and families of the victims terrorized into silence. Even funerals for those killed by the RCD have been banned, leaving many to mourn their dead in secrecy." (CSM 4 Dec 2002)

SCF: Improving health care and food security of displaced women and children (2002-2003)

- SCF-UK has offices in Kishasa, as well as in Goma, Bukavu, Bunia and Kalemie cities in the east
- In eastern DRC SCF-UK seeks to encourage the return of displaced families to their villages of origin

"Save the Children UK (SC UK) began working in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) formerly known as Zaire, in August 1994, running a family-tracing programme for Rwandan refugees in camps around Bukavu. Having completed this work, SC UK shut down its operations in July 1996. Later that year, when civil war broke out in Zaire, SC UK was invited back as the lead NGO in the repatriation of Rwandan refugee children. In addition to family tracing in South Kivu SC UK also ran a therapeutic feeding programme for severely malnourished displaced and refugee children.

SC UK maintains field offices in Goma, Bukavu, Bunia and Kalemie cities in the east of the country. These areas are controlled by rebels, making work difficult in terms of security and logistics. SC UK has helped to negotiate access for humanitarian agencies in these areas, and works to build close co-operation and co-ordination amongst international NGOs, and between NGOs and the local authorities.

SC UK opened a country office in Kinshasa in January 1998, where it runs a multi-sector urban programme which aims to prevent children moving onto the street. SC UK is currently exploring possibilities for further programmes in western DRC.[...]

In the war affected areas in East DRC SC UK seeks to encourage the return of displaced families to their villages of origin. Despite security having been restored to some areas, the loss of basic means of

production and destruction of social infrastructure have been major factors preventing displaced families from returning. Over the course of the year SC UK, with support from ECHO provided 13,867 vulnerable households with seeds, tools, household kits and some food aid. In addition, eighteen primary schools were rehabilitated; 7,174 pupils provided with school supplies and 51 kilometres of roads were rehabilitated. " (SCF-UK June 2002)

"In the absence of formal structures to ensure the protection of vulnerable children, Save the Children has supported the establishment of informal child protection networks. These help ensure that demobilised child soldiers and others who have been reunited with families are protected by their communities from further risk. In the past year Save the Children has been focusing on strengthening these networks through various means, among them community discussion groups.[...]

Child soldiers

Save the Children's advocacy work in the DRC has focused on preventing the recruitment of child soldiers and raising awareness amongst military authorities of children's rights, including their right to protection. Since 1999 Save the Children has also supported the successful demobilisation and community reintegration of over one thousand former child soldiers, mainly in North and South Kivu provinces.

Children separated or expelled from families

In North and South Kivu provinces Save the Children has continued its programme of identification, documentation, tracing and reintegration of separated children. In the first three months of 2003 the organisation launched an additional emergency IDTR programme in response to the sharp rise in the number of displaced people in the Beni-Mambasa area due to the abrupt escalation of conflict. Between January and March 2003 over 650 children were identified.[...]

Health care

[...]

In 2003 Save the Children's activities included supporting local health zones in coping with an outbreak of diarrhoeal disease in January. This was done mainly through the distribution of oral rehydration salts. In addition, Save the Children supported the health zones with the rehabilitation of supplementary and therapeutic feeding centres and the supply of essential medicines and equipment. Training programmes for health workers on issues such as prevention of cholera and malaria are ongoing. [...]

Rehabilitation

In the east of the country, household economy assessments (HEA) undertaken in Bwito and Masisi in North Kivu, led Save the Children to reorient its programme to these areas. In line with the findings, Save the Children distributed kitchen sets and hoes to 12,453 households in 2003. The findings of the assessments also influenced activities of other partners including the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Save the Children supported the treatment of 1,864 cases of severe malnutrition in four centres in North Kivu between January and March 2003. In addition, 6,411 moderately malnourished children received food through Save the Children's supplementary feeding centres. Save the Children also trained Ministry of Health staff as well as non-government organisation (NGO) partners in the treatment of malnutrition.

In response to the most recent fighting in Ituri and North Kivu provinces, Save the Children is distributing non-food items including shelter materials, household utensils, soap and blankets to 25,000 displaced people." (SCF 20 Aug 03)

World Vision runs several programs benefiting the displaced in the East (2002)

"The Beni Programme of World Vision Eastern DRC with interventions in health and nutrition and water and sanitation has registered 33,071 IDPs from 7,798 families. "The number is higher. Some people were not around during registration," says Richard Mugambi- acting Project Manager. He was surrounded by a swam of displaced people demanding to be registered as he emerged from a church service in Beni on Sunday, November 3." (WV 6 Nov 02)

"The International NGO World Vision and two UN agencies have begun evaluating a joint food-aid delivery to 44,000 war displaced now living in Ankoro, in the territory of Manono, in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported on Friday.

OCHA and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) - partners with World Vision in this relief effort - visited Ankoro on Thursday, where 8,000 malnourished children under five years old are among the internally displaced persons, who have been without aid for three years.

Over a three-month period, World Vision will distribute 556 mt of maize, soya, oil, sugar and salt to the displaced. After this period, World Vision and WFP will determine if more aid is still needed." (IRIN 11 Oct 02)

References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of Jan 2004)

- Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation
- Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)
- Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages
- Training on the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

OCHA IDP Unit undertook mission in December 2002 to assess training needs on the Guiding Principles
Date: October 2002
Documents: IDP Unit Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo, 7-10 October 2002 [Link below]

UN Inter-agency mission focuses on IDPs and emphasises the training needs on the Guiding Principles within the humanitarian community and authorities
Date: February 2003
Documents: Inter-agency mission on internal displacement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 26 January – 8 February, 2003 [Link below]

Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages

The GP are available in Swahili (DRC)
Document: GP in Swahili [Internet] http://www.idpproject.org/training/guiding_principles/Guiding_principles_Swahili_DRC.pdf

Training on the Guiding Principles

NRC and OCHA IDP Unit have undertaken a training program on the Guiding Principles for authorities, UN agencies, international and local NGOs, and IDPs. See list of sources for NRC document containing conclusions and recommendations.
Date: March 2003
Documents: Zeender, G., NRC, Advocating for IDP Protection in the Democratic Republic of Congo, April-September 2003. [Link below]
IDP Unit and NRC, Workshop on Internal Displacement and the Guiding Principles, Kinshasa, 26-28 May 2003 [Link below]
For other NRC workshop reports, please see [Internet]

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACF	Action Against Hunger (Action contre la faim)
ACT	Action by Churches Together (ACT)
ADFL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire)
ADF	Alliance of Democratic Forces
ADL	Local Defense Unit
ANR	National Information Agency
APC	Popular Congolese Army (Armée Populaire Congolaise)
BOAD	Ecumenical Office for Support to Development
Coltan	Colombium Tantalum
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DDRR	disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration operations
DPKO	UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DMIAP	Détection Militaire des Activités Anti-Patriotiques
DRC (RDC)	Democratic Republic of the Congo (République Démocratique du Congo)
ECC	Congolese Church of the Christ (Eglise Congolaise du Christ)
ECHO	European Union Humanitarian Office
EHI	Emergency Humanitarian Intervention
ex-FAR	Former Rwandan Armed Forces (Ex- Forces Armées Rwandaises)
FAC	Congolese Armed Forces (Forces Armées Congolaises)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAZ	Zairian Armed Forces (Forces Armées Zairoises)
FDD	Forces for the Defense of Democracy (Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie)
FLC	Front for the Liberation of Congo (Front pour la libération du Congo)
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMC	International Medical Corps
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
JMC	Joint Military Commission
MLC	Movement for the Liberation of the Congo
MONUC	United Nations Observer Mission in the DRC (Mission d'Observation des Nations Unies au Congo)
MSF-H	Médecins Sans Frontières - Holland
NGO (ONG)	Non Governmental Organization (Organisation non gouvernementale)
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PALIPEHUTU	Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu)
PPU	Presidential Protection Unit
PRRO	Protracted Relief Recovery Operation
RCD-Goma	Congolese Rally for Democracy – Goma (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie)
RCD-ML	Congolese Rally for Democracy-Movement of Liberation (Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération)

RCD-N	Congolese Rally for Democracy-Movement of Liberation-National (Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération-National)
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCF-UK	Save the Children Fund- United Kingdom
TCHA	Technical Committee on Humanitarian Assistance
UAGs	Uncontrolled-armed groups
UN	United Nations
UNDP (PNUD)	United Nations Development Program (Programme des Nations Unies de Développement)
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHO	United Nations Humanitarian Office
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPDF	Uganda People's Defense Forces
USCR	U.S. Committee for Refugees
WFP (PAM)	World Food Program (Programme Alimentaire Mondial)
WHO (OMS)	World Health Organization (Organisation Mondiale de la Santé)
WV (WVI)	World Vision (World Vision International)

LIST OF SOURCES USED

(alphabetical order)

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<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/f303799b16d2074285256830007fb33f/c914ee996c-cbd60549256cf0004d3c5?OpenDocument> , accessed 8 May 2003

Action Against Hunger - USA (AAH-USA), August 2000, A Mosaic of Misery: the Humanitarian Situation In The Territories Of Uvira And Fizi South Kivu, Democratic Republic Of Congo

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: <http://web.archive.org/web/20010902201114/www.aah-usa.org/Kivu.htm> , accessed 16 July 2002

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Internet : http://www.act-intl.org/appeals/appeals_2001/AFDC11Rev1.pdf , accessed 3 October 2001

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: <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/f303799b16d2074285256830007fb33f/5e224df683c1840449256dde0017b91c?OpenDocument> , accessed 22 January 2004

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 16 July 2002, Belgium grants DR Congo 960,000 dollars for food security

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: <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/2320a0966f3ee56249256bf9000f93d0?OpenDocument> , accessed 7 August 2002

Agence France-Presse (AFP), 19 December 2001, DR Congo government begins demobilising child soldiers