

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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## OHCHR – UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

### Press briefing notes on DRC attacks

At least 117 people were killed in Ituri province, in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), between 10 and 13 June, according to a preliminary investigation carried out by the UN Joint Human Rights Office\* in the country.

After a series of attacks on multiple villages in the territories of Djugu and Mahagi were reported to the UN Joint Human Rights Office, a preliminary fact-finding mission was deployed to the area on 13 June, and after they had ascertained that several massacres had indeed taken place, a more robust investigative team was deployed to the area from 19 to 25 June.

The investigative team confirmed that at least 94 people had been killed in Djugu territory and 23 in Mahagi territory, including an as yet undetermined number of women and children. Some of the victims were beheaded. Homes and warehouses were burned down after being looted. The ferocity and scorched-earth nature of the attacks suggests the assailants intended to prevent survivors from being able to return to their villages.

Most of the victims belonged to the Hemacommunity, and the rest to the Alur group. The attackers are reported to be unidentified individuals from the Lendu community.

Over the past six months, there have been reports of other attacks that have caused dozens of deaths.

The motives of the perpetrators of these latest attacks are unclear. Originally, they were reported as retaliation for the earlier deaths of four Lendu people. However, the team’s analysis of the context suggests this explanation was a pretext. The information gathered so far seems to indicate that despite the attackers reportedly belong to one community, and the victims to others, there appear to be additional political and economic motives underlying the assaults. The Hema and Lendu have a history of extreme inter-communal violence in the Ituri region.

We call on the authorities to carry out a prompt, thorough, impartial, independent and transparent investigation and to bring the perpetrators and the instigators of these crimes to justice. Efficient action by law enforcement and judicial authorities -- applying international norms and standards -- could reduce the risk of retaliation from the affected communities and break the cycle of violence.

We also urge the Government to investigate the inability of the Armed Forces to prevent or stop the massacres and to take the necessary measures to protect the population in the area. This includes ensuring that the Lendu community is not collectively punished for the actions of certain individuals or groups. All actions by the defence and security forces in response to the attacks must comply with international human rights norms and standards.

The repeated attacks have provoked an exodus towards different towns, as well as to IDP camps that are now hosting some 78,000 people.

\* The UN Joint Human Rights Office, established in February 2008, is the Human Rights Division of the UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in the DRC.

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**ecoi.net summary:**

According to preliminary investigation, at least 117 people killed in Ituri province between 10 and 13 June 2019 in what appears to have been intercommunal violence



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Congo, Democratic Republic

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