

Forum: The United Nations Security Council - UNSC

Topic: Resolving the Situation in the Democratic Republic of The Congo (DR Congo)

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### Description of the problem:

Currently the DR Congo is facing a difficult and complex humanitarian Crisis. Innocent inhabitants are heavily afflicted by looting, abduction, slavery, impressment of child soldiers and especially mass rapes in whole villages. Consequently, the victims of all these crimes suffer deep depressions.

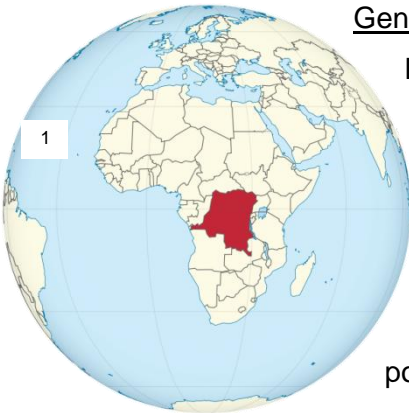
Basically, the fight between rebels and government is about Congo's resources. The country abounds in natural resources. Since the Belgium colonial rule came to an end in WWII Congo's eastern neighbor countries, Rwanda and Uganda have been interested in the DR Congo's resources, like diamonds, copper, tin, coltan and cassiterite. Both of them confirmed backing rebels, like the M23 to insulate Congo (and take advantage of its instable situation).

Furthermore, DR Congo's government does not have a chance to improve the situation. Being one of the poorest countries on earth, Congo is unable to take actions against its neighbor countries. In addition it cannot prevent the rebels' horrific encroachments, because the political situation is critical. A lot of political rebels are still trying to topple the government.

The UN and other aid agencies have established emergency shelters and hospital wards. So far, Congo is the UN blue helmets largest operation.

However critics think the whole conflict belongs into the category of new wars. They also mean a new war strategy, because a lot of factors of waging war have changed. In the situation of so called new wars, it is not countries that fight - it is civilians or war lords. In the past the parties wanted to capture territory - now they want resources. And, most importantly, they want innocent people to suffer by using brutal methods like mass rapes and generally breaking the human rights in order to put pressure on the government. All of these aspects apply to the situation in the DR Congo.

Background information:



General:

DR Congo is one of the biggest Countries in Central Africa. It is surrounded by the Central African Republic, Southern Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, and the Republic of Congo. Both Congolese states belong to the poorest countries on earth. DR Congo is ranked on position 186 in the Human Development Index in 2012, which is the second to last position. The population figure is estimated at 75 million.

The country's capital is Kinshasa located in the west bordering on the Republic of Congo. Its total area covers about 2,345,409km<sup>2</sup>. Joseph Kabila and Augustin Matata Ponyo are currently DR Congo's President and prime Minister.



Historical background:

After the end of the Belgian colonial rule in the 1940 the uncertain governmental situation was accompanied by conflicts. Patrice Lumumba was elected premier and Joseph Kasavubu was elected president. Both of them had completely different interests. Lumumba was centralist and Kasavubu was federalist. But both of them fought against municipalities and riots. The administration failed and economically the country was in a deep crisis, 55% of the employees were not even paid.

So somehow Congo needed intergovernmental supply. Belgium expected that Congo wanted their help, so they sent troops in order to stabilize the whole situation. After several riots the leaders Kasavubu and Lumumba dismissed the Belgian commander in chief. Then they adjusted a new staff, Joseph Mobutu, who was involved in US-Intelligence Service actions.

Later on, due to a dimension of Belgians escaping from replacement of Belgians in the body of officers by African people, D.R. Congo faced the total breakdown in civil administration.

The 30th of July 1960 was declared the independence day of Congo. The first city that became independent was Katanga Province. But, declaring it independent did not reflect the people's will - it was Belgium that took these measures. They thought Katanga Province to be the best place to control all trade of natural resources.

That is why the leaders Kasavubu and Lumumba requested the UNO to support Congo in the, so called "War against Belgium". The UNO declined, but they sent blue helmet soldiers in the area of conflict. On the background of the Cold War the USA, as a member of the UNO, worried about the Soviet Union's role in this conflict.

And indeed, the Congolese army, which conceded a lack of discipline, assaulted massacres against the civil population. Therefore Lumumba called the Soviet Union for assistance. That act enforces the entire alienation of the USA on communism and the Soviet Union. On that account the former President of the United States of America, Eisenhower, ordered the CIA to kill Lumumba, but it failed.

Since the two rulers Lumumba and Kasavubu tried to remove each other from office, two parties were formed. On the one hand Kasavubu's supporters, on the other hand the, so called Lumumbists.

The latter controlled half of Congo including north Katanga Province. They also tried to control parts of the army. Subsequently the army committed mutiny and the African minister Harold d'Aspremont Lynden confirmed to start killing the operation of Lumumba.

On the 18th of January 1961 Lumumba was killed brutally by Belgian soldiers. His supporters lost a lot of area whereas Kasavubu gained control over nearly the entire Congo. Since the USA and Belgium were still interested in the resources of Congo, they left the independent province Katanga, and then by the end of the UN's blue helmet operation in 1964, Kasavubu was forced to build a new government. During this process, Congo's Lumumbists again protested. Insurgences were common. They wanted to expel every Belgian and American from Congo, which led Congo further into a civil war.

However, even during this critical conflict the governors still arranged free democratic elections.

Once again Kasavubu disagreed, so the chief of staff Mobutu became president, and from then on Congo faced a brutal and corrupt dictatorship.

Dictatorship:



The civil war ended.

Mobutu stopped any political opponents even before they had a chance to appear before the public. DR Congo was renamed Zaire. Mobutu declared the military as the official power base.

The interesting point is that the inhabitants were relieved as they experienced a more peaceful episode. Then Mobutu arranged for Congo to become a country guided by one leader without any opposition or political opponents. He founded the "Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution". Congo was now a one-party country.

Since Belgium was no longer important for the Congolese government, Mobutu and therefore the USA had full control of the natural resources.

However because of the abundance, corruption and robbery were now common amongst many high ranked officers. This led to a serious economic crisis of Congo.

After the Cold War had ended in 1989 the USA and France exerted pressure on dictator Mobutu. After several internal riots, he then ended the totalitarianism and a national assembly came about.

Unfortunately this led to ethnic conflicts between the 200 new built parties.

At that time the regime only controlled the capital and the surrounding regions. Rebel groups were founded in the eastern parts of the country, enriched by refugees of the genocide in Rwanda in July 1994.

A rebellion was formed. Supported by Uganda and Rwanda its ruler Laurent-Désiré Kabila overpowered Mobutu and appointed himself President.



Nevertheless Rwanda and Uganda were not interested in stabilizing Zaire's situation, they wanted to break down Kabila's government. That caused the Congolese war. Kabila was supported by Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Shad and Sudan.

On the 10th of July 1999 the parties involved signed an armistice. But it failed and therefore the DR Congo was split.

The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) was founded by the Security Council on the 24th of 2000. Blue Helmets were sent into the areas - Uganda and Rwanda detailed their troops. Kabila was assassinated on 16th January 2001. His son became President.

In December 2002 government and rebels signed a peace agreement. In addition they built a new government. Reconstruction and development was a long-term problem. Infrastructure broke down completely, the administration of the eastern sector collapsed and the natural resource sector in the east of Congo was looted by Ugandans, Rwandans and Burundi.

Due to a lack of medical supply and malnourishment 3.9 million people of the population died between 1998 and 2004 (International Rescue Committee). The United Nations estimated that each day about 1000 people became victims of violent activities.

For example the South Kivu region counted over 10000 women raped within two years.

Coming back to governance, in 2006 there had been the first free elections. It was speculated that those would probably set up new problems causing military conflicts. Therefore the UN observed and protected the upcoming elections in order help Congo stabilize a democracy. Joseph Kabila won against his opponent Jean-Pierre Bemba. In 2007 his government came into office.

#### The Third Congolese War:

One rebel group active during all this was the "National Congress for the Defence of the People" (CNDP). This time was also called "Third Congolese War".

The "Third Congolese War" took place in "North-Kivu" region of the country. The rebel group "Tutsi", founded by CNDP, and fought against armed forces of the government.

However, in 2009 both parties signed a ceasefire contract. In 2012 former members of CNDP founded the M23 because they accused the government to infract the treaty. For that reason fights between the M23 and DR Congo's government have been going on ever since. Having had their origin in North Kivu the rebels then captured the Goma region. Within 2013

they controlled parts of DR Congo's east and administrated it as their own state.

Ever since, the situation in the eastern regions is critical. The M23 wants to put pressure onto the government by looting, raping and murdering. Uganda and Rwanda supposedly give financial aid to the rebels. The DR Congo has no overland access to its eastern neighbors, due to the barricade of armed soldiers of the M23. Now, the UN is backing the army against the horrific crimes by the M23, but it can be assumed that the Congolese soldiers are just as guilty of similar campaigns.

### **The rebel groups:**

#### **FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda)**

The FDLR is a Rwandan Hutus rebel group fighting in North-Kivu. Some of them fought in the civil war in Rwanda before. The UN as well as Congo's army is fighting against them. The only achievement in the progress of abating the FDLR was that the amount of its members declines.

#### **M23 (March 23 Movement)**

It was founded by CNDP in 2012. At the moment it is the most active and dangerous rebel group in the North-Kivu region. It has captured the capital Goma of North-Kivu and is now controlling parts of the eastern area of the DR Congo. Followers are trying to intimidate the UN Peacekeepers and the Congolese soldiers (FARDC) by crimes against the civilian population.

### **What has the UN done so far?**

The UN has sent about 20000 blue helmet soldiers into the Goma region, the center of the conflict. Currently this is the largest operation of the United Nations.

The UN built refugee camps and emergency accommodation for all relevant people.

As said before, the mission started in 1999 by creating the Resolution 1279 in the United Nations Security Council. Its name was MUNOC until 2010, now it's called MUNOSCO.

In 2000 the blue helmet soldiers, about 5500, observed the ceasefire and helped the people by improving local supply. Since militias in Ituri province committed a massacre against the civil population in 2003, the UN set up an arms embargo at eastern borders and enlarged to

10800 blue helmets. Then in 2004 allegedly there had been sexual abuse of minors by parts of the MUNOC. In 2005 the UN were given permission to attack villages with rebel bases.

After a few years the rebel group M23 occupied the city of Goma in 2012. So the region became even more dangerous. That was the reason for the UN and some NGO's to order back some soldiers or workers into the Rwandan state in 2013.

Furthermore the UN reduced the number of soldiers to 3096 who are used as an offensive against the rebels in the eastern DR Congo.

MUNOSCO/MUNOC is always criticized for its members as they are made up of soldiers from too many countries without democracy and the troops' equipment is comparatively in comparatively poor condition.

In addition the foundation had to meet with criticism, because the soldiers did not intervene in a mass rape in the city of Luvungi.

### **Timeline:**

- 1940: End of the Belgian Colonel Rule, Kasavubu and Lumumba became heads of state
- 1960: Independence of Katanga
- 1961: Mobutu became President backed by USA
- 1961 - 1997: dictatorship by Mobutu; corruption of officers, deals with resources, financial crisis
- 1994: Rwandan civil war -> lots of immigrants in Eastern Congo
- 1997: rebels overthrow Mobutu; Kabila became President
- 1998 - 2003: rebellion against Kabila -> Kabila backed by African States against Rwanda and Uganda: First Congo war with more than 5 million victims
- 1999: MUNOC foundation Resolution 1279, ceasefire agreement
- 2003-2012: fights against rebels, UN and FARDC
- 2010: MUNOC is now called MUNOSCO
- 2012: M23 founded, occupying Goma, North-Kivu
- 2013: UN offensive against rebels

**Important resolutions:**

- year 1999 MUNOC: RESOLUTION 1297
- year 2012 MUNOSCO: RESOLUTION 2067
- year 2013 MUNOSCO: RESOLUTION 2098

**In order to prepare for the position of your country you should consider the following:**

- What is your country's position on the whole issue
- Think about, what your country can do in order to improve the situation in the DR Congo and further how to help the inhabitants in rehabilitation
- How can the UN fix the problem of the accused mistakes of their soldiers
- How to establish a new sustainable government in order to prevent upcoming riots, massacres, etc.
- Think about your partners and opponents in the Security Council. So, whom to cooperate with or not
- Think about how to ensure that this problem will not spread into other African countries

**Helpful links:**

- <http://www.digitalcongo.net/default.aspx>
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/democraticrepublicofcongo/>
- <http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R40108.pdf>
- <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46597&Cr=DRC&Cr1=#.Up5H3sTuKSo>
- <http://www.trust.org/spotlight/congo-dr-conflict/>
- <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/11/dr-congo-aborts-peace-deal-with-m23-rebels-20131111191022625103.html>
- <http://www.betterworldcampaign.org/un-peacekeeping/missions/democratic-republic-of-congo.html>
- <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44876>



**Sources of pictures and graphics:**

<sup>1</sup> [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Democratic\\_Republic\\_of\\_the\\_Congo\\_on\\_the\\_globe\\_\(Africa\\_centered\).svg](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_on_the_globe_(Africa_centered).svg)

<sup>2</sup> <http://media.web.britannica.com/eb-media/08/62308-004-DDE1DE79.jpg>

<sup>3</sup> <http://congolol.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/mobutu2.jpg>

<sup>4</sup> [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DRC\\_group\\_3part.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DRC_group_3part.jpg)

**Sources:**

- <http://www.aljazeera.com/category/country/democratic-republic-of-congo>

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Organization\\_Stabilization\\_Mission\\_in\\_the\\_Democratic\\_Republic\\_of\\_the\\_Congo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Organization_Stabilization_Mission_in_the_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo)

- [http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/current\\_conflict.php?id\\_state=178](http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/current_conflict.php?id_state=178)

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_the\\_Democratic\\_Republic\\_of\\_the\\_Congo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo)

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M23\\_\(militia\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M23_(militia))

- <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37376&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo#.Up5K5sTuKSo>

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Congress\\_for\\_the\\_Defence\\_of\\_the\\_People](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Congress_for_the_Defence_of_the_People)

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kivu\\_conflict](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kivu_conflict)

- <http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C519659DB40673/#.Up5KrsTuKSo>

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic\\_Republic\\_of\\_the\\_Congo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo)

- <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/monusco/>

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Yours sincerely,

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