



University of New Haven
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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the ChargerMUN 2023! We are excited to introduce you to our committee, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The topic under discussion is:

*****The Situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*****

This background guide serves as an introduction to the topic for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and participate in individual research.

There are two resources, available to download from the National Model United Nations (NMUN) website, to serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference, and as a reference during committee sessions:

1. [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#) - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussing the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory NMUN Conduct Expectations on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated.

We wish you all the best in the coming week and look forward to the final conference!

Sincerely,

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Committee Overview

Introduction

After the devastating effects of both of the World Wars, the international community established the United Nations (UN) as an intergovernmental organization with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, creating conditions conducive to economics and social development, and advancing universal human rights.¹ The Security Council became one of the six principal organs of the UN and was given the primary responsibility of preserving international peace and security.²

After its first meeting in London on 17 January 1946, the Council relocated to its permanent residence at the UN Headquarters in New York City.³ At that time, five permanent members and six non-permanent members were part of the Council.⁴ In 1965, the number of non-permanent members increased to ten, and discussions regarding a change in configuration took place frequently.⁵ However, as the body's structure has remained largely unchanged, debates have continued over the Security Council's efficacy and authority as a mediator on issues of international security.⁶

Traditionally the Security Council discusses issues related to peacekeeping missions and political processes, as well as the protection of human rights, disarmament, and humanitarian crises.⁷ However, with the adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by the UN General Assembly in 2015, the Security Council has begun to increasingly focus on the intersection between sustainability, peace, and security.⁸ Some important crosscutting issues the Council is currently addressing include human rights and the protection of civilians for conflict prevention and sustainable development; the impacts of climate change on international security; the prevention of conflict and methods to sustain peace.⁹

Mandate Functions, and Powers

The mandate of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security and to take action whenever peace and security are threatened.¹⁰ The Council's authority is particularly relevant concerning the UN's four primary purposes, as specified in the Charter: (The Security Council's goal is) maintaining international peace and security; developing friendly relations among nations; cooperating in solving international problems; and promoting respect for human rights.¹¹ The capabilities of the Security Council are highlighted in Chapters V-VIII.¹² Chapter V established the structure, membership, functions, and

¹ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

² UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2023.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ UN Security Council, *Voting System*, 2023.

⁵ Global Policy Forum, *Background on Security Council Reform*, 2020.

⁶ Council on Foreign Relations, *The UN Security Council*, 2018.

⁷ Council on Foreign Relations, *The UN Security Council*, 2018; Encyclopedia Britannica, *United Nations Security Council*, 2014.

⁸ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁹ Security Council Report, *Status Update Since our June 2021 Forecast*, 2023.

¹⁰ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2023.

¹¹ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

¹² *Ibid.*



powers of the Security Council.¹³ Chapters VI and VII of the Charter specifically concern the Security Council and the range of actions that can be taken when settling disputes.¹⁴ Chapter VI of the Charter by itself aims to settle disputes and further actions that can be taken regarding threats to peace, breaches of peace, and acts of aggression.¹⁵ This chapter also authorizes the Security Council to implement provisional measures aimed to de-escalate conflict situations.¹⁶ Chapter VIII of the Charter allows the Security Council to call upon other regional agencies or arrangements to enforce the appropriate operations and intervene if necessary.¹⁷

According to Article 41 in the Charter, the Council may:

- Call on members to apply economic sanctions and measures not involving the use of force;
- Call for arms embargoes; Enforce disarmament; Call upon international criminal mechanisms to become active;
- Use diplomatic tools to investigate situations that might lead to aggression (between states, non-state groups, and within state territories);
- Take military action against states or entities threatening international peace and security.¹⁸
- Decide upon the deployment of new UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) to be led by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO).¹⁹

The Security Council creates a peacekeeping operation by adopting a resolution that outlines the mandate and size of a particular mission, and UN peacekeepers are assigned to appropriate regions to address conflicts.²⁰ The Council also cooperates with several international and regional organizations as well as non-governmental organizations to implement its decisions.²¹ The Security Council often provides readouts to the Secretary-General and General Assembly and has the powers to “recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.”²²

Conclusion

The Security Council is one of the main bodies of the UN that ensures international peace and security, overseeing the admission of new members to the UN General Assembly, and changes to the UN Charter.²³ As the Council is the only UN body that has the ability to create legally binding decisions, it has a unique and impactful mandate to set norms and govern state actions, as all Member States are required to comply under Chapter VII of the Charter.²⁴ The adoption of the 2030 Agenda signaled the

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Charter of the United Nations, 1945 UN Security Council, Functions and Powers, 2021.*

¹⁹ UN Peacekeeping, *Forming a New Operation.*

²⁰ UN Peacekeeping, *Role of the Security Council.*

²¹ UN Security Council, *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2021.*

²² UN Security Council, *Functions and Powers, 2021.*

²³ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?, 2023.*

²⁴ *Charter of the United Nations, 1945.*



increasing need for the Security Council to also discuss the linkages between peace and security, and issues of human security and development.²⁵

I. The Situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Introduction

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is located in central Africa, and is endowed with large reserves of minerals, vast amounts of arable land, and significant hydropower potential.²⁶ Despite its wealth in resources, the World Bank considers the DRC among the five poorest countries in the world.²⁷ On the 2021 United Nations (UN) Human Development Index, the DRC ranks 175 of 189 countries, as an estimated 73% of its population lives in extreme poverty, i.e. living on less than \$1.90 USD per day.²⁸ The DRC currently faces an ongoing humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by COVID-19 and sporadic outbreaks of diseases such as Ebola, measles, and cholera.²⁹ In 2021, the UN estimated that over 19.6 million people in the DRC, half of whom were children, were in severe need of humanitarian assistance and more than 26 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity.³⁰ Despite the situation's severity, the UN humanitarian coordinator reported that in 2021 they received funding only to the level of about one quarter of total funds that would be needed.³¹

Additionally, recent escalations of hostilities within the DRC's provinces of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu contribute to insecurity in eastern Congo.³² The violence in this vast region stems from feelings of marginalization from Kinshasa, the country's capital, and grievances over the allocation of local resources such as land, representation in the central government, and the delivery of social services.³³ There have been deadly attacks on civilians, intercommunal violence, and clashes between armed groups.³⁴ The conflict in Ituri has already displaced 1.9 million people within its borders out of a total population of 5.7 million.³⁵ North and South Kivu are home to a large portion of the region's 70 armed groups who continue to fight for control over the regions' rich mineral deposits along the border with Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.³⁶ Much of the recent fighting has been caused by the March 23 Movement (M23),

²⁵ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

²⁶ Concern Worldwide. *The DRC crisis, explained*. 2021; The World Bank Group. *The World Bank in DRC*. 2022

²⁷ The World Bank Group. *The World Bank in DRC*. 2022.

²⁸ ConcernWorldwide. *The DRC crisis, explained*. 2021; United Nations Development Programme. *Human Development Insights*. 2022.

²⁹ The World Bank Group. *The World Bank in DRC*. 2022.

³⁰ Amnesty International. *Democratic Republic of the Congo*. 2022.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Tsongo. Al Jazeera. *What is the latest conflict in the DR Congo about?* 2022.

³³ Nantulya. Africa Center for Strategic Studies. *A Medley of Armed Groups Play on Congo's Crisis*. 2017.

³⁴ Tsongo. Al Jazeera. *What is the latest conflict in the DR Congo about?* 2022.

³⁵ European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. *Democratic Republic of Congo-Insecurity and displacement (DG ECHO, UNOCHA) (ECHO Daily Flash of 12 May 2022)*. 2022.

³⁶ Nantulya. Africa Center for Strategic Studies. *A Medley of Armed Groups Play on Congo's Crisis*. 2017; Chene. *Transparency International. Overview of corruption and anti-corruption efforts in the*



which the UN previously found had received the backing of DRC's foreign competitors such as Rwanda and Uganda to conduct operations in the regions; their contemporary resurgence has significant implications for regional stability.³⁷ In April 2023, the Congolese government and M23 agreed to a cease-fire after another cease-fire agreed upon in March failed, yet there is still violence targeted at displacement camps, Congolese civilians, and self-defense groups.³⁸

International and Regional Framework

As a Member State of the UN and State party to several international treaties, the DRC formally agreed to uphold human rights standards of the international community and ensure the well-being of its citizens as outlined in the following.³⁹ The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) enshrines basic principles and freedoms. Most relevant to the situation in the DRC are the "right to life, liberty, and security of person," the right to take part in the government and vote in free, fair, and genuine elections, and the rights to adequate standard of living, health, food, housing, medical care, and social services.⁴⁰ In 1966, the UN General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, which further introduced legally-binding commitments to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights.⁴¹ The African continent's legally-binding framework for human rights is the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which was adopted in 1986 by the Organization of African Unity, the predecessor to the African Union (AU), and has been ratified by all AU Member States including the DRC.⁴²

Each Member State of the AU committed to prioritize inclusive social and economic development, democratic governance, and peace and security when the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want was established in 2013.⁴³ Agenda 2063 served as Africa's contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.⁴⁴ Related to the fragile governance situation in the DRC, SDG 16, "access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels," focuses on improving governance of systems that underpin the realization of the 2030 Agenda.⁴⁵

Regionally, the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region was signed by representatives of 11 countries in the region, the Chairs of the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Southern African Development

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). 2014.

³⁷ Africa Center for Strategic Studies. *Rwanda and the DRC at risk of war as new M23 rebellion emerges: an explainer*. 2022; Peyton et al. Reuters. *U.N. experts: Rwanda has intervened militarily in eastern Congo*. 2022.

³⁸ Center for Preventative Action, "Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker," Council on Foreign Relations, July 20, 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo>.

³⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UNTreaty Ratification Status for Democratic Republic of the Congo*. n.d.

⁴⁰ United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217(II))*. 1948.

⁴¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *International Bill of Human Rights*. n.d.

⁴² Kuwonu. United Nations Africa Renewal. *Africa's freedom struggles and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. 2019.

⁴³ African Union. *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*. n.d.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. *Sustainable Development Goals and Public Governance*. n.d.



Community and the United Nations Secretary-General in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2013.⁴⁶ The signatories declared their mutual concern over the persistent violence in the eastern DRC, but determined principles of engagement on national, regional, and international levels to address the root causes of the conflict.⁴⁷ Due to the history of regional involvement in the conflict in the DRC, the document took particular care to outline commitments to state sovereignty, regional cooperation for the administration of justice, and standards for the prosecution of war crimes, as well as regional oversight mechanisms to review progress in implementation of such commitments.⁴⁸ The Security Council passed resolution 2612 (2021) in which the Council requested the Secretary-General report every six months on the implementation of the commitments under this regional framework, as well as its linkages with the broader security situation in the region.⁸⁷

Role of the International System

In resolution 1925 (2010), the Security Council established the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).⁴⁹ The Council sought to adapt the mission to focus on stabilization efforts that would support new efforts at democratic governance amidst ongoing tensions, such as "protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders under imminent threat of physical violence and to support the Government of the DRC in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts."⁵⁰

In recent years, the Security Council has extended and expanded the mandate of MONUSCO.⁵¹ It is based on several strategic priorities set forth in paragraph 29 of Security Council resolution 2556 (2020), which include a) ensuring the protection of civilians, and b) supporting stabilization via governance and security reforms of state institutions.⁵² The Security Council receives periodic overviews from the UN Secretary-General on the situation in the DRC and is frequently briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of MONUSCO.⁵³ Pursuant to the Council's request in resolution 2502 (2019), the Secretary-General engaged with the government of the DRC to develop the "Joint strategy on the progressive and phased drawdown of MONUSCO".⁵⁴ The joint strategy aims to provide for a gradual, peaceful, and sustainable drawdown process to remove MONUSCO peacekeeping troops and build the capacity of the Congolese government to carry forward the mission's remaining tasks to address the root causes of conflict, develop a framework for national community-based disarmament, and conduct peaceful and democratic political governance.⁵⁵ The Security Council endorsed the mission's eventual drawdown, however, it remains concerned about the deteriorating security situation in eastern DRC, especially the protection of civilians in the face of increasing attacks against camps for internally

⁴⁶ United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. *Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region*. 2013.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Background*. 2022; United Nations Peacekeeping. *MONUSCO Fact Sheet*. n.d.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² United Nations, Security Council. *Resolution 2556 (S/RES/2556(2020))*. 2020.

⁵³ Security Council Report. *What's In Blue: Democratic Republic of the Congo: Briefing and Consultations*. 2022.

⁵⁴ United Nations Secretary-General. *Joint strategy on the progressive and phased draw down of MONUSCO, October 2020 (S/2020/1041)*. 2020.

⁵⁵ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. *Mission draw downs: Financing a sustainable peace*. 2020; United Nations Secretary-General. *Joint strategy on the progressive and phased drawdown of MONUSCO, October 2020 (S/2020/1041)*. 2020.



displaced persons (IDPs) and the use of improvised explosive devices.⁵⁶ In resolution 2666, the Security Council voted to extend MONUSCO's mandate for one year until December 20, 2023.⁵⁷

In addition to peacekeeping efforts, the Security Council employs a regime of economic sanctions to address the situation in the DRC.⁵⁸ In 2004, the Security Council passed resolution 1533 and 1553, which inter alia imposed an arms embargo against all foreign and Congolese armed groups and militias operating in North and South Kivu and Ituri, and set up a Committee on the matter.⁵⁹ The sanctions regime has been amended and expanded since 2004 to include travel bans for individuals designated by the Committee having violated the arms embargo or recruiting children in armed conflict, among others, as well as an asset freeze for perpetrators of serious violations of international law.⁶⁰ In June 2022, the Security Council adopted resolution 2641 to renew sanctions measures related to the arms embargo, travel ban, and asset freeze requiring all Member States to refrain from providing weapons to non-governmental entities operating in the DRC, among other things.⁶¹

The DRC made its formal accession into the East African Community (EAC) on 8 March 2022.⁶² The EAC held a series of mini-summits to discuss peace and security in the region, and adopted a two-track approach (political and military) to respond to the security situation in the eastern DRC and implement the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region.⁶³ The African Union additionally supported two sessions of the Heads of State Conclave on the DRC, most recently on 21 April 2022 in Nairobi, Kenya.⁶⁴ The meeting of regional leaders resulted in deploying a regional force to restore peace and stability in the DRC as part of the efforts of finding a sustainable solution for peace in the Great Lakes region as a whole.⁶⁵

The wider UN system's efforts in the DRC focus on sustainable development and humanitarian assistance to address the underlying causes of conflict that exacerbate insecurity.⁶⁶ The UN Country Team consists of a partnership between 21 UN programs, funds, and specialized agencies working together to provide inter alia shelter, health, education, and food security assistance.⁶⁷ Several NGOs provide essential services for peace building and human security, such as the Eastern Congo Initiative which advocates for effective foreign policy and connects community-based organizations with public-private partnerships to strengthen local approaches to ethical and sustainable farming and market practices to build the grounds for resilient peace.⁶⁸ The Catholic Church is a major actor in civic

⁵⁶ Security Council Report. *June 2022 Monthly Forecast - Democratic Republic of the Congo*. 2022.

⁵⁷ July 2023 Monthly Forecast," Security Council Report, December 20, 2022, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/>.

⁵⁸ United Nations, Security Council. *Security Council Committee established pursuant to Resolution 1533(2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. n.d.

⁵⁹ United Nations, Security Council. *Resolution 1533 (2004) (S/RES/1533)*. 2004.

⁶⁰ United Nations, Security Council. *Security Council Committee established pursuant to Resolution 1533(2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. n.d.

⁶¹ United Nations, Security Council. *Resolution 2641 (2022) (S/RES/2641)*. 2022.

⁶² Holland. Reuters. *East African Community agrees on regional force to try to end Congo unrest*. 2022.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ African Union. *AUG Chair person welcomes decision of East African Leaders to deploy a regional force to restore stability in the DRC*. 2022.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ United Nations, Sustainable Development Group. *UN in Action: Democratic Republic of the Congo*. 2022.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Eastern Congo Initiative. *2020-2021 Annual Report*. 2021.



engagement, having posted over 40,000 observers to monitor the 2019 presidential elections.⁶⁹ The Church was able to gain access to remote and conflict-affected areas and promote peace during the long-delayed elections, in large part due to the community trust by citizen-devotees from both the ruling party and opposition.⁷⁰

Ensuring the Protection of Civilians

The DRC has the largest displaced population in Africa, which included 3.44 million children in 2020.⁷¹ In May 2022, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) increased their estimated total number of IDPs from 5.5 million in 2020 to nearly 6 million people.⁷² OCHA estimates that over 355,000 Congolese have fled their homes since the beginning of 2022 alone, blaming ongoing violence and conflict for almost all of the displacement.⁷³

Recent clashes between the armed forces of the DRC and armed groups in the conflict-affected areas of North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces present significant danger to civilians.⁷⁴ In May 2021, President Felix Tshisekedi declared a "state of siege" following the insecurity in eastern Congo provinces of North and South Kivu and Ituri, and appointed military governors to monitor the rule of law.⁷⁵ Between May and June 2022, hostilities between M23 and DRC's armed forces led to at least 23 civilians killed and 16 injured.⁷⁶ To support the protection of civilians, MONUSCO is upgrading early warning and response mechanisms such as the Mission's community alert network system, which received an average of 330 alerts between March and June 2022.⁷⁷

The UN Secretary-General reported 126 incidents affecting humanitarian access since the beginning of 2022, including killing or abducting aid workers, as well as recurrent criminal activities and administrative constraints by armed groups.⁷⁸ The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet and UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide Alice Nderitu expressed additional concern over reports from North Kivu province that M23 were looting and ransacking official buildings and private businesses, restricting freedom of movement of civilians.⁷⁹ The UN has documented several cases of escalating hate speech and incitement to discrimination, especially against Kinyarwanda speakers, after the DRC

⁶⁹ British Broadcasting Corporation. *DR Congo election: Church finds clear winner*. 2019.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ International Rescue Committee. *Legacy of violence: Democratic Republic of Congo*. 2022.

⁷² European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. *Democratic Republic of Congo - Insecurity and displacement (DGECHO, UNOCHA)(ECHO Daily Flash of 12 May 2022)*. 2022.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UN Human Rights Chief and Special Adviser on Prevention of Genocide disturbed by increase in violence and hate speech in eastern DRC*. 2022.

⁷⁵ Tsongo. Al Jazeera. *What is the latest conflict in the DR Congo about?* 2022.

⁷⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UN Human Rights Chief and Special Adviser on Prevention of Genocide disturbed by increase in violence and hate speech in eastern DRC*. 2022.

⁷⁷ United Nations, Security Council. *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2022/503)*. 2022.

⁷⁸ United Nations, Security Council. *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2022/503)*. 2022.

⁷⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UN Human Rights Chief and Special Adviser on Prevention of Genocide disturbed by increase in violence and hate speech in eastern DRC*. 2022.



government accused Rwanda of supporting M23 operating in eastern DRC.⁸⁰ The potential for regional spillover conflict and rise in hate speech pose a significant threat, as such rhetoric exacerbates mistrust among communities and could quell peace building efforts promoting social cohesion.⁸¹

Strengthening of State Institutions

The challenges of strengthening democracy and building strong governance institutions in the DRC are tied to its 20th century history of authoritarian rule and the years of regional war, on top of economic and political decline throughout the early 2000s, which left the DRC without significant state infrastructure to provide for the welfare of its people.⁸² The IRC estimates that over 20% of the population struggle and warns of a possible famine.⁸³ The UN has contributed significant resources towards the approximately 20 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in the DRC, however, the DRC currently struggles from an increasingly severe health crisis on top of weak human security infrastructure.⁸⁴ Insufficient governmental systems that provide social protection to their citizens is a main reason why around 27 million Congolese people are food insecure, according to OCHA.⁸⁵ MONUSCO's efforts have traditionally focused on maintaining security through military means, however, in recent years there has been a significant shift towards using peace building tools to build the DRC government's capacity to reform public services and improve governance structures to better tend to the human security needs (health, food, shelter) of its people.⁸⁶

The DRC is preparing for another general election expected in 2023.⁸⁷ The Security Council recently received a report from the Secretary-General on the political situation in the country, mentioning that revisions of the electoral law and appointment of members of the constitutional court took place without the input and participation of the opposition party and civil society.⁸⁸ Former President Joseph Kabila publicized his position that "he considers it impossible to organize the election in the current context" and threatened intervention if additional reform does not take place in advance of the elections.⁸⁹ Through its strategic priority to strengthen state institutions and support governance reform, MONUSCO is attempting to play a role in easing these political tensions and create the grounds for democratic elections.⁹⁰ However, the ability to conduct such initiatives is under significant risk due to not only the resurgence of armed groups, but also public discontent over MONUSCO's prolonged presence.⁹¹ Tensions recently

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Human Rights Watch. *DR Congo: Chronology*. 2009; Costa. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Op-Ed: United Nations Convention against Corruption*. 2005; International Rescue Committee. *Legacy of violence: Democratic Republic of Congo*. 2022.

⁸³ International Rescue Committee. *Legacy of violence: Democratic Republic of Congo*. 2022.

⁸⁴ European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. *Democratic Republic of Congo-Insecurity and displacement (DG ECHO, UNOCHA)(ECHO Daily Flash of 12 May 2022)*. 2022.

⁸⁵ International Rescue Committee. *Legacy of violence: Democratic Republic of Congo*. 2022.

⁸⁶ Bachmann et al. The Royal Institute of International Affairs. *Concrete approaches to peace: infrastructure as peacebuilding*. 2018.

⁸⁷ Security Council Report. *What's In Blue: Democratic Republic of the Congo: Briefing and Consultations*. 2022.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Afrique. The Africa Report. *DRC: Joseph Kabila's plans for the 2023 presidential election*. 2022.

⁹⁰ United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Background*. 2022.

⁹¹ Radio France Internationale. *DRC expels MONUSCO spokesman over deadly anti-UN protests in eastern Kivu provinces*. 2022.



escalated to mass anti-UN protests in eastern Congo in July and August 2022, resulting in the death of at least 36 people and, in turn, the expulsion of MONUSCO spokesperson by the government of DRC.⁹²

Conclusion

The history of the DRC, related atrocities and international interventions directly laid the foundations for conflict and trauma.⁹³ Colonial policies drew rifts between communities that sewed generations of distrust and intercommunal conflict, and administrative policies that were rooted in extraction of resources rather than providing for the public good still inhibit sustainable development today.⁹⁴ Embezzlement, nepotism, and financial mismanagement from decades of authoritarian regimes set the stage for fragility within the country's governance structures, under developed physical infrastructure, poor economic and social conditions, and eventually widespread disease and famine throughout the DRC.⁹⁵ The situation in the DRC reaches beyond the conflict in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces - the fragile conditions contribute gravely to threats toward safety and wellbeing for all persons, including the nearly 6 million IDPs.⁹⁶ The humanitarian crisis and increased danger for aid workers and UN personnel is thwarting the humanitarian response plan of the UN Country Team and MONUSCO that aims to stabilize the DRC and provide grounds for peace, prosperity, and sustainable development.⁹⁷ In forthcoming actions, the UN Security Council will need to contend with regional economic and security interests, prioritize humanitarian concerns amidst uncertainties in the security situation, as well as keep the international community seized of the matter.⁹⁸

Further Research

As delegates conduct further research and consider how to address this topic, they should consider: what actions must the Security Council and UN partners take to assure both peace and security as well as conditions for social and economic development in the DRC, in line with the SDGs? Which actions can be taken by the Security Council to support the protection of civilians, and to ensure all people's basic needs are met, including refugees and IDPs? What processes should be put into place to ensure post-conflict resilience in the DRC following the eventual withdrawal of MONUSCO forces? How can the Security Council provide additional support for vulnerable persons in conflict-affected areas (especially women and children)? What can be done to prevent regional conflict in light of the developing situation with the M23 armed group and its potential support by neighboring countries of the DRC?

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⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Rannard et al. British Broadcasting Corporation. *Leopold II: Belgium 'wakes up' to its bloody colonial past*. 2020.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Human Rights Watch. *DR Congo: Chronology*. 2009.

⁹⁶ Tsongo. Al Jazeera. *What is the latest conflict in the DR Congo about?* 2022.

⁹⁷ United Nations, Security Council. *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2022/503)*. 2022.

⁹⁸ Security Council Report. *What's In Blue: Democratic Republic of the Congo: Briefing and Consultations*. 2022.



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