

CALL FOR PAPERS



**THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION FOR VICTIMS AND REFORMS
SUPPORT (CIA-VAR) AND THE NATIONAL REPARATIONS FUND FOR
VICTIMS OF CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCES AND VICTIMS OF
CRIMES AGAINST PEACE AND SECURITY OF MANKIND (FONAREV)
ARE CO-ORGANIZING AN INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON**

The international recognition of genocides perpetrated on the territory of the Democratic Republic of Congo

KINSHASA (DRC), 29-31 JULY 2025



**COMMISSION INTERINSTITUTIONNELLE
D'AIDE AUX VICTIMES ET D'APPUI AUX
REFORMES**



FONAREV
Fonds National des Réparations des Victimes de Violences Sexuelles liées au
conflit et des victimes des crimes contre la paix et la sécurité de l'humanité

IN COLLABORATION WITH



**UNIVERSITÉ DE KINSHASA
UNIKIN**



**CENTRE DE RECHERCHE EN SCIENCES HUMAINES
DE KINSHASA
CRESH**



**UNIVERSITÉ PROTESTANTE DE
LUBUMBASHI
UPL**

1. Background and problem statement

1.1. The history of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), since its inception, is marked by the recurrence of extreme violence and systematic plundering of its natural and mineral resources, its land and subsoil, which has persisted throughout the different eras of its existence. In 1908, the Congo went from a private estate of King Leopold II of Belgium to the status of a Belgian colony, particularly due to the atrocities perpetrated at the time. As stated in the Report of the Special Commission of the House of Representatives of Belgium, dating back to October 26, 2021, which was responsible for examining the Congo Free State and Belgium's colonial past in Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, its consequences and subsequent repercussions that should be reserved for it, the colonial domination was characterized by multifaceted brutality and great cruelty. Furthermore, since gaining its independence in 1960, the DRC has been ravaged by successive rebellions, acts of aggression, and repeated massacres, often linked to power struggles and economic issues related to the looting of its natural resources. These resources, essential to the country's development, are illegally diverted by networks of international and national dealers, fueling armed conflicts and exacerbating political instability to the detriment of the local population and national sovereignty.

1.2. The socio-political dynamics of armed conflicts are part of this painful history and have crystallized since the early 1990s. The DRC UN Mapping Report, which the International Court of Justice (ICJ) considered to be particularly credible, describes the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed between March 1993 and June 2003 in the territory of the DRC. This report, along with other subsequent reports by the United Nations Group of Experts on the DRC, details the atrocities that characterize the armed conflicts and the security crisis raging in the east of the country. Some of these massacres, throughout the country's history, fall under the definition of genocide. It is in this context that the concept of Genocost was developed by the Congolese civil society to denounce the looting of natural resources linked to this violence and to commemorate its victims.

1.3. Although the DRC is referred to as a country plagued by 'recurrent cycles of conflicts', however it is not considered to have experienced or to be experiencing acts of genocide, and there are few comparative publications on extreme violence that mention it. In most of the scientific publications by scholars working in or on the DRC, a sub-field can be identified under the heading 'armed conflicts' or 'eastern DRC', a geographical designation that has become a euphemistic (or ambiguous) but a consensual label for the mass killings committed in the country.

1.4. The issue of genocide committed on Congolese soil is not raised as such, or when it is, only marginally. In the social sciences and humanities, publications are as numerous as they are scattered. Work in these fields focuses mainly on armed groups, local actors, and conflict dynamics, as well as on the links between violence and land

conflicts or the mineral economy. Analyses both at the regional and international level are largely geostrategic in nature and focus mainly on the strategies of key actors such as political figures or armed groups, much less frequently on multinationals or states, while emphasizing the critical role of Congolese natural resources.

1.5. While historical research highlights the extent of colonial violence, however this is not considered for the post-colonial period. Many have also taken up the representation of this violence, and while it is clear that the research findings in this field are not being aggregated, the biggest challenges yet with the existing prolific literature on conflict and even massacres in the DRC is its failure to properly describe and specifically place the atrocities committed within the field of social sciences and humanities, and the word 'genocide' is not used.

1.6. In the Congolese context, there is a lack of systematic research in the legal field aimed at highlighting certain acts perpetrated against protected groups with the intention of destroying them in whole or in part as constitutive elements of genocide or aimed at establishing the criminal responsibilities of both the individual and the State in the prevention and repression of this crime.

1.7. From a legal and social standpoint, contributors are asked to identify events that have occurred in the DRC at any time that may constitute the crime of genocide and engage the responsibility of both individuals and States. In order to establish the existence of genocide under international law, contributors should examine whether the acts committed were carried out with the specific intent to destroy, in whole or in part, one of the specifically protected groups and whether they can be attributed to the actors concerned. The temporal and spatial context of the atrocities must be analysed in light of the constituent elements of the definition of the crime of genocide in international law (e.g. the question of the identification of the targeted group, the intention to destroy it in whole or in part, and the existence of individual acts constituting the *actus reus*). The contextual challenge in the DRC is to identify and isolate each massacre or episode of violence that meets this high threshold. Some massacres covering the period of the DRC UN Mapping Report and beyond can and should be directly identified as meeting this high threshold. Finally, the authorities who are likely to recognize genocide in the DRC in a judicial capacity must be identified.

1.8. Outside of judicial proceedings, the DRC remains isolated from the debates that animate the field of research on international crimes. In this context, contributors are invited to reflect on the marginalization of these massacres and their classification at the international level, especially since the Congolese civil society has mobilized to ensure that they are recognized, giving rise to the concept of Genocost, which was enshrined in law by the Act of 26 December 2022. The legal prospects for the development of law opened up by this neologism also deserve special attention.

1.9. With this in mind, this colloquium has been organized to include the genocidal logic implemented in the DRC and its recognition in scientific discussions. To initiate such a process, knowledge about the massacres must be mobilized in order to build an initial body of knowledge from all disciplines.

2. Objectives of the colloquium

2.1. The colloquium is structured around two main themes with sub-themes, namely social sciences and humanities on the one hand and legal approaches and discussions on the other. With a view to the international recognition of the genocide committed in the DRC, this colloquium has the following objectives:

- to engage in an in-depth reflection on the available knowledge on extreme violence committed in the DRC;
- to include the issue of genocide in legal discussions on abuses committed on Congolese territory;
- to identify the ideologies underlying genocidal logic in the DRC;
- to examine the possibility of international recognition of the genocidal nature of the crimes committed in Congo;
- to articulate international recognition with national social and political dynamics.

3. Focus areas and themes of the colloquium

3.1. The first section will focus on the concept of Genocost and invite contributors to reflect on the following topics in particular:

- The emergence of the concept of Genocost;
- The link between genocide and Genocost and prospects for the development of law.

3.2. The second focus will be devoted to analysing and harmonising work in the social sciences and humanities in the field of extreme violence, proposing the following themes, in particular:

- History, memory and social representations of extreme violence
- Economic underpinnings of war and genocidal logic
- Artistic and literary representations of violence in popular culture and contemporary art
- The role and influence of civil society in understanding and denouncing crimes committed on Congolese soil

3.3. The third axis will focus on legal discussions, through topics such as:

- Challenges in classifying acts committed in the DRC as genocide in light of the

constituent elements of the crime;

- Issues related to the obligations to prevent and punish the crime of genocide;
- Analysis and application of forms of individual and State responsibility for crimes of genocide in the Congolese context;
- Examination of decisions handed down by Congolese national courts in relation to the process of international recognition of the genocides committed in the DRC;
- Analysis of the policy of prosecuting authorities in considering the classification of acts under investigation as genocide.

4. Submission guidelines for participation in the colloquium

4.1. The colloquium will be held in Kinshasa, DRC, and online, in a hybrid format, from 29 to 31 July 2025.

4.2. The colloquium will be bilingual, in French and English. Simultaneous translation between the two languages will be provided.

4.3. Speakers who require travel assistance are requested to indicate this when submitting their proposal. Expenses will be covered for participants whose communication projects are selected.

4.4. Proposals for papers should:

- be from any field of social sciences and humanities (socio-anthropology, criminology, psychology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, political science, human geography, history, law, environment, economics, etc.);
- be the result of original research presenting information, methodologies or analyses on one of the themes specified in the call for papers.

4.5. Proposals for papers may be submitted in French or English and must include:

- the title of the paper;
- an abstract of no more than 500 words, specifying, among other things, the research questions, working hypotheses and methodology used in the paper;
- plus a brief biography (4-5 lines) of the author, indicating their status, institutional affiliation, and contact details (email and telephone number).

4.6. Proposals for papers must be sent by 31 May 2025 at the latest to the following address: colloquegenociderdc-2025@fonarev.cd with simultaneous copy to the address fabius.dianzola@fonarev.cd.

- Those selected will be notified by 15 June 2025 at the latest;
- They undertake to send the text of their paper for publication in the conference proceedings by 30 January 2026 at the latest.

5. Evaluation process

5.1. After anonymization, proposals for papers will be assessed by three (3) reviewers designated for this purpose by the Scientific Committee.

5.2. The choice of reviewers and the allocation of paper proposals will reflect their specific expertise related to the proposed topics.

5.3. The Scientific Committee will ultimately determine which proposals are accepted and will notify the applicants accordingly.

6. Scientific Committee

1. Coordination

- Mr. Ivon Mingashang, professor of international law at the Law Faculty of the University of Kinshasa (DRC) and member of the United Nations International Law Commission (ILC).
- Mr. Serge Makaya Kiela, Professor of International Criminal Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Mr. Jean-Marie Kayembe, Rector of the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Mr. Emmanuel-Janvier Luzolo Bambi Lessa, Professor of Criminal Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Mr. Olivier Corten, Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law of the Université libre de Bruxelles (Belgium)
- Mr. Pierre Klein, Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law of the Université libre de Bruxelles (Belgium)
- Mr. Jean-Paul Segihobe Bigira, Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa (DRC)

2. Members

- Mr. Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem, Professor of History at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Ms. Brusil Miranda Metou, Professor of International Law at the University of Yaoundé (Cameroon)
- Mr. Sylvain Lumu Mbaya, Professor and Head of the Department of Public International Law and International Relations at the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Mr. Philippe Currat, Attorney at the Geneva Bar (Switzerland)
- Mr. André Lobo Kwete, Professor of Economic Criminal Law at the Protestant University of Congo (DRC) and the National Pedagogical University (DRC);
- Mrs Sara Liwerant, Deputy Director of the School of Criminology at the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Mr Raphaël Van Steenberghe, professor of international law at the faculty of law of the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium)
- Mr. Samy Samutondi, professor of law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa and President of the High Court of Kinshasa/Matete (DRC)

- Mr. Ézéchiél Amani Cirimwami, professor of international law at the law faculty of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium)
- Mr. Balingene Kahombo, professor of international law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Goma (DRC)
- Mr. Junior Mumbala Abelungu, professor of public international law and dean of the Faculty of Law of the Protestant University of Lubumbashi (DRC)
- Ms Cathérine Maia, professor of international law at the Lusófona University (Portugal) and Visiting Professor at Sciences Po Paris, the Catholic Universities of Lyon and Lille (France), and Swiss UMEF (Switzerland)
- Mr. Benjamin Traoré, Professor of Law at the Faculty of Governance, Economics, and Social Sciences of Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (Morocco)
- Mr. Harrison Mbori, Postdoctoral Fellow, Luxembourg Centre for European Law, Adjunct Lecturer, Kabarak University Law School (Kenya)
- Mr. Onur Uraz, Assistant Professor of Public International Law at Hacettepe University Law School (Turkey), Chair of the Resolutions Committee of the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS)
- Mr. Bienvenu Wane Bameme, Professor of Criminal Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Mr. Trésor Muhindo Makunya, Associate Professor at the University of Goma (DRC), Visiting Professor at the Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria (RSA), and Barrister at the Bar of the North Kivu (DRC).
- Mr. Jean Onaotsho Kawende, Full Professor at the University of Information and Communication Sciences and President of the Academy of Practical Philosophy
- Mr. Placide Mumbembe, Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Memorial Politics at the University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Ms. Raphaëlle Nollez-Goldbach, Director of Law and Public Administration at the École Normale Supérieure, and Research Fellow at the CNRS/Paris (France)
- Mr. Eyrik Bjorge, Professor of Law, Columbia Law School, University of Bristol Law School (UK)
- Mr. Joseph Kazadi Mpiana, Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Lubumbashi (DRC)
- Mr. Eugène Bakama, Professor of International Criminal Law at the National Pedagogical University (DRC)

3. Technical Secretariat

- Mr. Jean-Paul Mwanza Kambongo, PhD candidate at the University of Kinshasa, Faculty of Law (DRC)
- Mr. Edgard Ntumba Tshipamba, PhD candidate in Law, University of Kinshasa (DRC);
- Mr. Didier Mfumu Manunga, PhD candidate in Law, University of Kinshasa (DRC).
- Mr. Ilunga Kandakanda, Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Law, University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Ms. Bérénice Kabulo Mukanda, Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Law, University of Kinshasa (DRC)

- Ms. Rabbie Dimbu Mavua, Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Law, University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Mr. Josué Wembi, Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Law, University of Kinshasa (DRC)
- Ms. Helsa Ntumba, Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Law, University of Kinshasa (DRC)

7. **Contacts :**

- *E-mail* : colloquegenociderdc-2025@fonarev.cd with simultaneous copy to the address fabius.dianzola@fonarev.cd.
- *Telephone*: : +243 81 420 75 51
+243 81 296 34 15
+243 81 784 00 75

Organizing Committee