



PORG Model United Nations 2017

African Union Committee: Research Paper

The Conflict in the DRC: Facing the Risks Posed by the Presence of Foreign Militant Groups

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Introduction:

Africa is often regarded as a hotbed of international terrorist groups - stretching from Al-Shabab in the Horn of Africa to Boko Haram in Nigeria. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is no exception. The issue of terrorism on the continent, and the presence of foreign 'militant' groups has long been the attention of the United Nations, with several resolutions addressing the issue having been passed in the Security Council. However, these measures have proven to be largely ineffective, with UN peacekeepers - of which there are over 9,000 - taking casualties and failing to stabilize the region.

Specifically, the United States has failed to take a leading position on this issue since the Clinton administration turned a blind eye on the Rwandan genocide in 1994 and the Somali crisis in 1993 following the downing of two helicopters over Mogadishu and the lack of popular support for US intervention. Many credit these two events as the reason for the US' current idleness in regards to the many issues in Africa. The conflict has been called, by many, as one of the world's longest and most ignored conflicts surviving to this day. Along with economic woes, the country has been racked by civil unrest with a failed Democratic state led by Joseph Kabila - who many regard as a dictator.

Key Terms:

Terrorism: the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, especially for political purposes

Militant: favouring confrontational or violent methods in support of a political or social cause.

Genocide: the deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular nation or ethnic group.

Ethnic Cleansing: the mass expulsion or killing of members of one ethnic or religious group in an area by those of another.

Zaire: The former name of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

General Overview:

History of the Conflict:

The conflict began in 1994, immediately following the genocide against Hutu's in Rwanda. Hundreds of thousands fled into the Eastern region of the Congo (then known as Zaire) and formed militant groups to defend themselves. Chaos ensued when Congolese Tutsi's located in the lands taken by the militant Rwandan refugees in the Eastern section of the country led an uprising against the groups and attempted to drive them out. This event sparked the First Congo War. In response, Rwandan and Ugandan troops marched into the Congo and quickly occupied the Eastern portion of the countries and continued to move forward, eventually overthrowing the government in Kinshasa. This led to an interim government being formed by Joseph Kabila's father in 1997, who enjoyed a brief reign as president until his assassination in 2001 by one of his bodyguards. During his term, he allowed Hutu militias to regroup in the Eastern section

Modern Times:

Over 70 militant organizations in the Congo have been in existence since the start of the Second Congo War beginning in August of 1998. The groups have cumulatively committed 395 attacks since 2012 killing 1,307 people and injuring 643 with other 1,000 having been taken hostage. This urgent situation has been largely untouched by the international community - despite UN calls for nations to take action - with the exception of foreign entities exploiting the Congo's minerals through deals with Joseph Kabila who many regard as a dictator. This has been further exacerbated by the continuous attacks on key locations crucial for the survival of the DRC's economy.

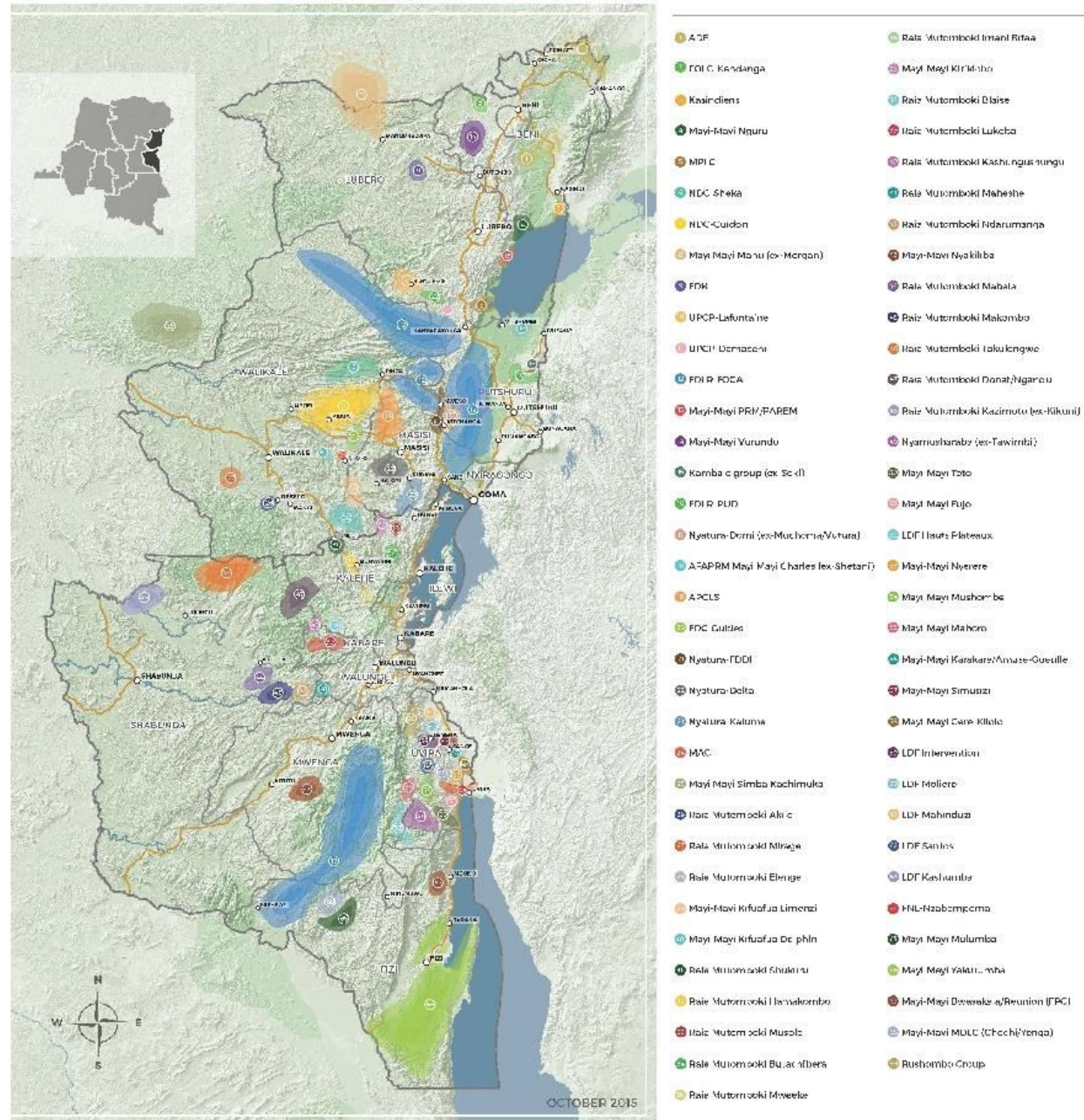
Regional Situation:

The DRC is one of Africa's largest countries bordering **Angola, Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania** and **Zambia** the most important of these countries being **Rwanda**.

The Western sections of the country including the Kasai provinces, Bandundu, Bas Congo, Equateur, and part of Maniema are relatively stable compared to the militant-held Eastern sections of Kivu, the Northern portion of Katanga, and the far-Eastern portion of Orientale.

Major Parties Involved

List of 66 of the ~70 armed groups in the Eastern region including territory held:



Rwanda:

From the beginning of the conflict in 2003, Rwanda has been a key player in the region - supporting various militant groups such as the 'Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda' (FDLR) - a Hutu group which has control over several smaller militia's as shown on the map. The group most likely operates with 1,000-2,500 fighters under their direct control making it several times larger than the other regional groups.

Uganda:

Uganda has allegedly been supporting militant groups in the Congo such as the FLDR and CNDP.

A group known as Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) are known as a terrorist organization by the Ugandan government but operate within the borders of the Congo.

Burundi:

The political instability of Burundi, one of the 3 great lakes nations, mustn't be overlooked. Pierre Nkurunziza's actions have led many refugees to flee into the Congo, also, reportedly forming militant groups to attempt and depose the Ugandan government.

Timeline of Key Events and Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue:

1960 - Independence

1965 - Mobutu Seko takes control of Zaire.

1997 - Rebels successfully coup Mobutu. Laurent Kabila takes power.

1997 - 2003 - First and Second Congo wars

2003 - 2016 - Militant groups remain, causing disruption in the region.

2006 - First free elections. Joseph Kabila takes power.

2015 - Elections fail to be held, leaving Joseph Kabila in power. Protests ensue.

Official UN Resolutions:

Resolutions

Resolution 2389 (2017)

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2389.pdf

Resolution 2360 (2017)

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2360.pdf

Resolution 2348 (2017)

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2348.pdf

Statements:

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_prst_2017_1.pdf

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For more information visit: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>

Appendix:

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