

## Helpdesk Research Report: New Literature on Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Date: 08.11.2010

**Query:** Identify new literature on the conflict in DRC since mid-2007 (including academic literature, policy analysis and reports), summarising key documents and providing an overview of key issues and emerging trends related to drivers of conflict.

**Enquirer:** DFID DRC

### Contents

1. Overview
2. General Literature
3. Security Issues
4. Political Issues
5. Economic Issues
6. Social Issues
7. Table Summarising New Literature
8. Additional Information

### 1. Overview

This report provides an overview of some of the recent academic, policy and practitioner literature on conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It focuses on literature produced since mid-2007, when the DFID Strategic Conflict Assessment was published. It is also limited to an assessment of the English language literature. The report highlights a number of key issues and emerging trends relating to each of the four main categories of conflict-related issues (security, political, economic, social).

There have been a number of important trends in the literature. First, the period since 2007 has seen the emergence of high quality, in-depth scholarly analysis of the recent conflict, which has provided a better understanding of the dynamics of violence as well as peace and peacebuilding (Auteserre comments). Second, there has been a greater focus in the literature on the micro-level dynamics of conflict (Auteserre 2009, Turner 2009, Marriage 2010). Third, there has been a more sustained focus on the regional dimensions of conflict (Lemarchand 2009, Reyntjens 2010). Fourth, an emerging body of literature has been critical of existing donor peacebuilding and statebuilding interventions. The main criticisms include a neglect of local conflicts (Marriage 2007, Turner 2009, Auteserre 2010), a failure to understand the dynamics of local conflict (Baaz & Stern 2008, Marriage 2010) and a failure to examine the role of warlords and their international supporters (Beswick 2010).

The following sections outline some of the key issues and trends related to drivers of conflict in each of the four main categories:

#### Security Issues

Foreign armed groups (especially the Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda or FDLR and the Lord's Resistance Army or LRA) continue to pose serious threats to the populations of the Kivus, Katanga and Equateur (UNSC 2010, Hemmer 2010, HRW 2010). The political integration of these groups has

been slow (UNSC 2010). There is also evidence that Congolese national armed forces have been responsible for killings and abuses of civilians (HRW 2009). One characteristic of the recent literature has been a focus on understanding the dynamics of local security and violence, for example through the detailed examination of the motivations of soldiers (Baaz and Stern 2008) or the dynamics of local security (Marriage 2010).

There is a lack of consensus in the literature over the success of the military operations against the FDLR and other rebel groups operating in Eastern Congo. The UNSC report (2010) argues that Kimia II and Amani Leo (two recent military offensives against rebel groups in Eastern DRC, initiated in 2009 and 2010 respectively) have disrupted FDLR communications and made it more difficult for FDLR leaders to control economic activities. A recent ICG (2009) report found that the joint Congo-Rwanda military efforts have had poor results, and states that Kimia II has failed to disrupt the FDLR or control retaliation against civilians.

There is agreement in the recent literature that the DDR programmes led by the UN Mission in Congo (MONUC) have been ineffective (Marriage 2007, Rouw and Willems 2010, ICG 2009). This has been attributed by some to a failure to understand Congolese politics or the dynamics of local security (Marriage 2007, Rouw and Willems 2010). Accounts of SSR and police reform programmes have been similarly downbeat (Boschoff et al 2010).

Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) constitutes a key area of focus for the recent literature on the Congo. In-depth qualitative studies have generated better knowledge about why soldiers rape, which is attributed to a variety of factors including widespread use of alcohol and drugs, hostile civil-military relations, norms of militarized masculinity and a culture of impunity (Kelly 2010, Baaz and Stern 2010).

### **Political Issues**

Key concerns in the national arena are the fragile state of the regime and democratic consolidation in the DRC (ICG 2010, UNSC 2010). Decentralisation is an important theme, but there has been little detailed analysis (one exception to this is Kaiser (2008)). The recent literature has sought to understand the surprising resilience of the state, in spite of the series of crises that have affected it. A number of in-depth studies have sought to understand this resilience, highlighting the complex hybrid forms of governance that have emerged through trans-border trade and negotiations around state service delivery (Raeymaekers 2007, Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2008, Trefon 2009). One recent study on conflict in Congo highlights the centrality of state reconstruction to development and stabilisation (Reyntjens 2010).

### **Economic Issues**

Two key issues dominate the literature on the economic drivers of conflict. The first is the role of China, and in particular the potential consequences of the recent agreements relating to public infrastructure and a joint venture to extract mineral resources. There is considerable debate regarding the consequences and whether or not Chinese intervention will be a good thing for Congolese governance and development (Marysse and Geenan 2009, Matti 2010). A second key issue is the regulation and management of mineral resources and trade (Sunman and Bates 2009, Global Witness 2009, 2010). Armed groups such as the FDLR have become major players in the mining industry in Eastern DRC, often working in collaboration with the FADRC (Global Witness 2009). Research has also focused on understanding the negotiated forms of political control that exist at the local level, emphasising how these are closely bound up with economic exploitation (Garrett et al 2009).

### **Social Issues**

There is a large amount of new literature on the local-level social impacts of war. Several studies have assessed the issue of forced displacement (Oxfam 2010, HRW 2010). Another area of focus has been on the heavy civilian costs associated with the recent military operations in the Kivus (Oxfam 2009). Turner's (2007) book emphasises the importance of local processes of identity construction in understanding conflict in Eastern DRC.

## 2. General Literature

### Overview of the current situation

**United Nations Security Council, 2010, 'Letter dated 21 May 2010 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo addressed to the President of the Security Council', S/2010/252**

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2010.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SNAA-85V5KL-full\\_report.pdf/\\$File/full\\_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2010.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SNAA-85V5KL-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)

This report provides an overview of the current political situation. It highlights a number of key developments:

- Political initiatives involving the DRC and other regional actors are continuing through regional forums such as the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.
- Preparations for the 2011 national elections are running behind schedule, leading to concern that they will be delayed.
- There are concerns about the potential impact of a proposed reduction in MONUC troop levels.
- There has been growing tension in Katanga, Equateur and the Kivus over allegations of corruption in provincial assemblies. An armed group raided the capital of Equateur Province.
- Foreign armed groups, especially the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), the Ralliement pour l'unité et la démocratie (RUD), and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), continue to pose serious threats to the security of the populations of the Kivus, Maniema and Orientale Province. Joint operations involving Forces Armée de la DRC (FARDC) and MONUC against these groups are ongoing.
- In 2009, a total of 1,564 FDLR combatants joined the DDR programme.
- There has been slow progress in implementing political integration agreements. Three former armed groups (CNDP, PARECO and the Mouvement d'union pour le développement national) have begun a process of transformation into political parties. The integration of CNDP into FARDC is still incomplete.
- There were around 600,000 displaced persons in North Kivu in February 2010. In South Kivu, 730,000 people remained internally displaced at the end of 2009.
- Military operations against the FDLR (Kimia II and Amani Leo) have disrupted FDLR communications and made it more difficult for FDLR leaders to maintain control over economic activities, particularly mining.
- An LRA presence continues to be reported in Orientale Province. Around 100 LRA combatants are thought to be active in the DRC, while around 350 more combatants move between DRC, CAR and Sudan.

### Histories of the Conflict

**Reyntjens, F., 2010, 'The Great African War: Congo and Regional Geopolitics: 1996-2006', Cambridge University Press. (See attached file: Reyntjens conclusion).**

This book argues that the roots of conflict in Congo lie in the advanced decay of the Congolese state at the end of Mobutu's 32-year reign and in the ethnic conflict in neighbouring Burundi and Rwanda. In particular, it stresses the significant role played by Rwanda across a number of phases of conflict in DRC. The concluding chapter highlights the erosion of the state after the implosion of the Mobutu regime as a key factor in the continuing violence in the East. In a context where there has been rapid informal/criminal regional integration 'exchanges across largely theoretical borders facilitated links with the global economy and meant that states could be largely ignored' (p.283). It argues that 'reconstructing a polity, which can perform minimal state functions is an essential condition for both national development and regional stability' (p.284). The cost of this state reconstruction will be immense and the process will take many years. This reconstruction involves three components: the state must regain control over its territories; it

must recover its funding capacity; and it must establish legal security and a code of law. The book also argues that international tolerance of aggressive and criminal behaviour will only encourage the perpetrators and that international commitment to 'regional approaches' has been largely rhetorical to date. International actors must not ignore Rwanda's hegemonic claims in Eastern DRC if regional stability is a serious goal.

**Lemarchand, R., 2009, 'The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa', University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.** (Partial preview available at Google Books <http://bit.ly/aKUwax>).

This book emphasises the regional dimensions of the conflict in DRC, arguing that violence in DRC must be understood alongside an analysis of conflict in Rwanda and Burundi. It assesses the multiple crises that have engulfed DRC in a series of wide-ranging chapters. It questions the idea that elections can serve as a panacea to solve the country's problems. The concluding chapter raises the prospect of 'within-state faultline conflicts' acting as a catalyst for inter-state war and in particular of violence in the Kivus overwhelming the Congolese national security forces. It suggests that at the moment it seems unlikely that Joseph Kabila will distance himself from the patrimonial modes of government associated with his father. It argues that the army is likely to remain the Achilles heel of the regime.

**Turner, T., 2009, 'The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality', London and New York, NY: Zed Books** (Preview available from Google Books: <http://bit.ly/ccRwil>).

This book focuses on conflicts taking place between 1996 and 2003, emphasising themes that have been neglected in the existing literature – the construction of race and identity in eastern Congo and local politics in the Kivus. It stresses the importance of ideology and culture, and criticises the rational-choice model that structures much of the academic analysis of Congo. It emphasises that political actors in DRC make choices within a cultural, political and economic context and the importance of disaggregating state actors into their constituent sub-state actors, 'each of which has its own worldview and...modus operandi' (p.14).

### **International Peacebuilding**

**Auteserre, S., 2009, 'The Trouble With Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Statebuilding', Cambridge University Press, Cambridge** (Preview available from Google Books: <http://bit.ly/cX88nt>).

This book assesses why violence has continued in the Congo. Based on over 300 field interviews conducted over one and a half years, Auteserre argues that it has continued to proliferate in the East in part because of international actors' failure to address the local issues that drive conflict. She argues that instead international peacebuilders have focused on national and international level dynamics, ignoring local roots of conflict such as land disputes and local insecurity. Local conflicts have been neglected because the dominant discourses in international peacebuilding do not allow for a consideration of these conflicts. The book recommends that effective peacebuilding must address conflict at all levels.

### **Provincial Studies**

**Spittaels, S., and Hilgert, F., 2010, 'Mapping Conflict Motives: Province Orientale (DRC), March 2010, International Peace Information Service (IPIS), Antwerp** <http://www.ipisresearch.be/natural-resources.php>

This short study provides an overview of the motivations of key conflict actors across different parts of the Orientale Province. It focuses in particular on the situation of the LRA in the Province and efforts to eliminate them.

**Spittaels, S., and Hilgert, F., 2008, 'Mapping Conflict Motives: Katanga', May-September 2008, IPIS**  
<http://www.ipisresearch.be/natural-resources.php>

This short study provides an overview of the motivations of key conflict actors across different parts of the Katanga Province.

**Spittaels, S., and Hilgert, F., 2008a, 'Mapping Conflict Motives: Eastern DRC, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008, IPIS**  
<http://www.ipisresearch.be/natural-resources.php>

This short study provides an overview of the motivations of key conflict actors across different parts of Eastern DRC. Key actors analysed include the CNDP, the FDLR, the FADRC and the Mai Mai.

### **3. Security Issues**

#### **DDR**

**Marriage, Z., 2007, 'Flip-flop rebel, dollar soldier: demobilisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo', Conflict, Security & Development, vol. 7, no. 2, pp.281-309**

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/routledg/ccsd/2007/00000007/00000002/art00003>

This paper assesses demobilisation programmes in Congo. It argues that demobilisation programmes have failed to address fighters' motivations. In order for these to be properly understood, those designing DDR programmes need to comprehend several social, economic and political processes that are ongoing in Congo: the informalisation of politics and the economy, the exercise of power through violence, and the multiple crises in which people are living. DDR programmes have failed because they have not provided sustainable incentives to fighters or addressed underlying insecurity.

**Rouw, H. and Willems, R., 2010, 'Connecting Community Security and DDR: Experiences from Eastern DRC'; Peace, Security and Development Network**

[http://www.operationspaix.net/IMG/pdf/PSDN\\_ConnectingCommunitySecurityAndDDR\\_ExperiencesFromEasternDRC\\_2010-04-06\\_.pdf](http://www.operationspaix.net/IMG/pdf/PSDN_ConnectingCommunitySecurityAndDDR_ExperiencesFromEasternDRC_2010-04-06_.pdf)

Based on field research in Eastern DRC, this report assesses recent DDR efforts, highlighting the mismatch between the aims of donor programmes and local perceptions. It describes how diverging benefits and limited criteria for enrolment for ex-combatants lead to frustration and possibly re-mobilization. The lack of follow-up after demobilisation is seen as a significant issue for continuing insecurity. International donor organisations are criticised for broken promises of assistance and development and for lack of local knowledge and field presence. The inability of Congolese security forces to provide effective security creates a security gap, which makes disarmament more difficult. The report highlights particular problems with the reintegration phase, which include the stigmatisation of ex-combatants. It argues that such problems can be reduced through better collaboration between local and international actors.

The report makes a number of recommendations:

- DDR programmers should not be afraid of having local actors take the initiative and to play a more facilitative role; to include all relevant actors and to actively engage them; to find creative solutions within the context in conjunction with local actors; and to see capacity development as a two-way approach.
- International actors should take funding for reintegration more seriously; to be clear about the envisioned approach to reintegration and its promised benefits; to provide diplomatic pressure on the countries involved in DRC's regional insecurity; and to help protect the borders of DRC with its eastern neighbours.

- Local initiatives and organisations involved in DDR programmes are advised to work inclusively with all relevant actors; to establish networks with relevant organisations and to share knowledge and insights; to work on downward accountability; and to reduce misinformation and stigmatization at the local level' (p. ii).

### **Security Sector Reform**

**Boshoff, H., Hendrickson, D., More, S., Virculoulon, T., 2010, 'Supporting SSR in the DRC: Between A Rock and A Hard Place: An Analysis of the Donor Approach to Supporting SSR in the DRC', Clingendael - Netherlands Institute of International Relations, The Hague.**  
[http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2010/20100400\\_cru\\_paper\\_smore.pdf](http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2010/20100400_cru_paper_smore.pdf)

Despite considerable levels of international investment in SSR, progress has been limited. The report identifies several challenges associated with SSR in the Congo, which include the absence of a robust institutional framework in which to anchor the process and the dysfunctional character of the DRC's security and justice apparatus. There are competing domestic and international views of the sector – while donors are concerned with creating an accountable, rights-responsive security sector, the DRC Government is interested in creating an effective fighting force. The government feels that an external SSR agenda is being imposed on them and this feeling, combined with limited financial resources, casts serious doubts on the sustainability of reform efforts. Donor assistance remains fragmented and short-term in focus. Most donor support has been limited to justice, police and defence. The report concludes with the following key recommendations:

- It is important to complement training and other assistance with support that will tackle the culture of impunity.
- Moving beyond the predominantly bilateral approach, donor activities need to be more systematically informed by accountability, coherence, justice and national ownership within a framework of common action.
- International partners need to find ways of making SSR in the DRC a more nationally-led process. They should start by taking seriously the justice, police and defence reform plans tabled by the Congolese, working to bridge differences in views and approach rather than simply selecting those elements which fit with their priorities.
- Donors should avoid overloading the government reform agenda and should stick to strategic SSR priorities.

### **International peacebuilding**

**Vlassenroot, K and Raeymaekers, T., 2009, 'Kivu's Intractable Security Conundrum', African Affairs, May 29, 2009, pp 1-10.**  
<http://afraf.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2009/05/29/afraf.adp039.full.pdf+html>

This article argues that DRC has still not emerged from its 'security deadlock' since the election of Joseph Kabila in 2006. It argues that 'the current strategy of peacebuilding in DRC leads to the amplification rather than the containment of armed violence' (p.1). The authors follow Tull and Mehler's argument that the West's preference for negotiated settlements has created perverse incentives, which encourage armed groups to resort to violence. The article argues that this peacemaking model is driven by a 'series of incorrect assumptions about the nature of the Congolese state as failed and collapsed' (p.1) and that 'by continuously underplaying informal forms of governance in the eastern borderlands, the international community is missing a crucial chance to trigger a fundamental political transformation in this central African country' (p.1). The international community also 'underestimates the extent to which international intervention is used as a strategy of extraversion by state and non-state actors alike' (p.1).

**Marriage, Z., 2010, 'Congo Co: aid and security', *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp.353-377.** <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a922573116~db=all~jumptype=rss>

This article critiques current donor approaches to Congo, arguing that they have privileged the concerns of western countries, which has led to the neglect and aggravation of local security concerns. The article argues that most international aid is committed to the health sector, but that interventions are characterised by surveillance rather than prevention or treatment and grant international actors strategic influence over the political economy of the country.

**International Crisis Group, 2009, 'A Comprehensive Strategy to Disarm the FDLR', Africa Report N°1519 Jul 2009, ICG, Nairobi/Brussels**

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/151-congo-a-comprehensive-strategy-to-disarm-the-fdlr.aspx>

This report assesses the joint Congo-Rwanda military efforts against Rwandan Hutu rebels, the most prominent amongst whom were the FDLR. It argues that the results of these efforts have been poor and recommends that the 6,000 or so combatants remaining in Eastern DRC must be disarmed if the region is to be stabilised. The report recommends a new comprehensive strategy to achieve this, which involves national, regional and international actors, 'with a clear division of labour and better coordination, so as to take advantage of the recent improvement of relations between the Congo and Rwanda, put an end to the enormous civilian suffering and restore state authority in the Congo's eastern provinces' (p.i). This includes civilian protection by responsible Congolese security forces and MONUC, and a reformed DDR programme.

The report finds that the MONUC-led DDR programme has been relatively ineffective, with only around 500 FDLR combatants surrendering in the first three months of 2009. It also finds that the Kimia II offensive has failed to disrupt the FDLR or retaliation against civilians and recommends that it be suspended.

### **Local Security Dynamics**

**Baaz, M., and Stern, M., 2008, 'Making sense of violence: voices of soldiers in the Congo (DRC)', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 57-86.**

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=1685640&jid=MOA&volumeId=46&issueId=01&aid=1685632>

This article argues that existing accounts of violence in DRC have ignored the voices of combatants and soldiers. Based on interviews with members of the FADRC, this article finds that soldiers made sense of the prevalence of violence in a number of ways, 'none of which reflect any expression of "natural" violent tendencies, hatred or vengefulness for the enemy' (p. 57). The soldiers' accounts illustrate that most joined the armed forces because of poverty or to get an education. Most soldiers saw an office job as their ultimate goal and many were frustrated at the lack of training opportunities. Soldiers understood that they should behave in a disciplined manner, but also recognised that they often did not because of lack of support provided by the armed forces and because of their own or their family's poverty. The prevalence of rape was explained by the suffering of soldiers and the lack of an effective punishment system.

**HRW, 2009, 'Eastern DR Congo: Surge in Army Atrocities - UN Peacekeeping Force Knowingly Supports Abusive Military Operations', November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009.**

<http://www.hrw.org/es/news/2009/11/02/eastern-dr-congo-surge-army-atrocities>

This short article by Human Rights Watch highlights killings of civilians and widespread rape committed by Congolese armed forces during the UN-backed military operations. A fact-finding mission in one remote part of North Kivu recorded at least 270 incidents where Congolese soldiers had deliberately killed civilians. Earlier in 2009, Human Rights Watch published detailed information on war crimes committed by

Congolese army soldiers involved in operation Kimia II. The article argues that MONUC should develop a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, making protection of civilians a priority.

### **Sexual and Gender-based Violence**

**Kelly, J., 2010, 'Rape in War: Motives of Militia in DRC', United States Institute for Peace, Special Report.** <http://www.usip.org/publications/rape-in-war-motives-militia-in-drc>

This report argues that a full understanding of the roots of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in conflict can only be gained by examining the experiences and motivations of perpetrators. It investigates the motives of the Mai Mai militia. It highlights soldiers' complex and contradictory relationship with civilians: on the one hand they see themselves as protectors of civilians, and on the other hand, they see civilians as a resource that can be exploited for money, food, and other needs. Sexual violence against women by other armed groups is seen by the Mai Mai as a motivation to fight, yet some also justify sexual violence perpetrated by members of their own group. Some commanders support rape by treating women as a spoil of war.

The most effective interventions to address SGBV are those that are tailored to the motivations and decision-making structures of each armed group. Another effective strategy may be to use high levels of concern about HIV/AIDS as an opportunity to discourage combatants from engaging in sexual violence. The Congolese government should use the integration of Mai Mai into the army as an opportunity to retrain troops, with a focus on sensitising soldiers about human rights and the need to protect civilians.

**Baaz, M., and Stern, M., 2010, 'The Complexity of Violence: A critical analysis of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)', Sida Working Paper on Gender Based Violence.** [http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/vaw\\_thecomplexityofviolence\\_nordicafrica-sida\\_2010.pdf](http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/vaw_thecomplexityofviolence_nordicafrica-sida_2010.pdf)

Based on interviews with army personnel and a review of other reports based on survivor testimonies, this report identifies and critically reflects upon various factors that may contribute to sexual violence in the DRC. The factors examined include:

- **Rape as a weapon of war:** The report notes that this kind of account underplays the fact that sexual violence has been prevalent when there have been low levels of conflict. Some soldiers' testimonies suggest that sexual violence has not been used as an explicit military strategy.
- **Widespread use of alcohol and drugs:** Soldiers often attributed high levels of sexual violence to this.
- **Hostile civilian-military relations:** There is a long history of poor civilian-military relations – communities are often highly suspicious of security forces. Military personnel typically have low status.
- **Lack of timely and adequate salaries:** Poverty amongst armed forces is a major driver of sexual violence. The normalisation of extra-legal incomes is another important factor.
- **Impunity:** The failure to punish military personnel guilty of rape is another key factor. Since there have begun to be some convictions, soldiers appear to have become more cautious about engaging in sexual violence.
- **Norms of militarized masculinity:** The Congolese military celebrates particular ideals of macho heterosexual masculinity.

The report highlights the problematic singular focus on sexual violence in DRC in media and in policy reports, which leads to the unhelpful conclusion that this violence is abnormal and neglects the relationship between sexual violence and other forms of violence. Furthermore, providing resources for victims of rape risks turning allegations of rape into a survival strategy. The report makes the following recommendations:

- Sexual violence must be treated as part of – not as separate from – other violence committed by state security forces.
- A comprehensive approach to SSR must be pursued to tackle sexual violence.
- Special measures must be applied to improve civil-military relations.
- Greater recognition should be granted to men and boys as victims of violence (including sexual violence).

### **Lord's Resistance Army**

**Hemmer, J., 2010, 'The Lord's Resistance Army: In Search of A New Approach', Experts Forum Report. Clingendael Conflict Research Centre, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2010.**

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2010.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/ASAZ-87AG97-full\\_report.pdf/\\$File/full\\_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2010.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/ASAZ-87AG97-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)

This meeting report documents a forum bringing together a number of leading researchers and practitioners working in Congo. It found that scholars and practitioners fundamentally disagreed about what the problem posed by the LRA actually was. UNMIS and MONUC are failing to live up to expectations that they will protect civilians. Past peacekeeping efforts have shown that there are no quick fixes or silver bullets to the problem. The report suggests that some form of dialogue will probably be necessary to ensure the surrender of the LRA.

**Human Rights Watch, 2010, 'Trail of Death: LRA Atrocities in North Eastern Congo', March 2010.**

<http://www.hrw.org/node/89324>

This report highlights a series of largely unreported attacks on civilians by the LRA in North Eastern Congo. In each of these attacks, the LRA rounded up civilians by pretending to be Congolese or Ugandan security forces, and abducted children, most of whom were aged between 10 and 15. Although the government claims that the LRA no longer poses a serious threat, the report argues that they clearly remain a threat to civilians. The report also highlights the ineffectiveness of MONUC's response to the attacks. The report documents a massacre in Makombo, where around 250 people were killed, but claims that this may not be the only large-scale attack in the region. The US government is currently preparing a regional strategy to protect civilians, which offers some hope.

<b>4. Political Issues</b>
----------------------------

#### **General**

**International Crisis Group, 2010, 'Congo: A Stalled Democratic Agenda', Africa Briefing 738 Apr 2010.** <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/b073-congo-a-stalled-democratic-agenda.aspx>

This report states that the consolidation of democracy in the DRC is stalled on almost all fronts, and the Congolese regime remains fragile. It highlights the fact that civil liberties are regularly threatened and that there has been no significant progress in security sector reform or decentralisation. The regime has undermined the independence of the judicial branch by running an anti-corruption campaign that is politically biased. The international community has remained mostly silent about this. The report argues that international actors must place 'democratisation and institutional reform at the centre of their dialogue with Kabila's government and link the provision of development aid to their progress' (no page number: online publication).

**Anten, L, 2010, 'Strengthening Governance in a Post-Conflict District: A Study of Ituri', Clingendael, July 2010. [http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2010/20100802\\_cru\\_publicatie\\_lanten.pdf](http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2010/20100802_cru_publicatie_lanten.pdf)**

This report explores the political economy of conflict in Ituri Province and its relationship to the national context. Ituri Province is rich in natural resources and customary governance has remained quite strong there. Local civil society initiatives have had some success in reducing violence but have been unable to resolve issues such as land conflicts and inequalities between ethnic groups which have involved national actors. Tensions are rising, caused by the prospect of MONUSCO's<sup>1</sup> withdrawal. Local elites remain strong, and if they were able to reduce tensions during this period, their legitimacy would be enhanced ahead of the next round of elections, and their position in relation to decentralisation of oil revenues would be strengthened. The paper presents a scenario where local elites use their influence over armed groups to check violence, initiate a participatory process to resolve local land conflicts, and work towards a managed decentralisation process.

### **State Resilience**

**Raeymaekers, T., 2007, 'Sharing the spoils: the reinvigoration of Congo's political system', Politorbis–Zeitschrift für Außenpolitik. <http://bit.ly/dejcbL>**

This article argues that rather than being seen as a straightforward case of state collapse, the DRC's political system has shown great resilience in recent years. These processes involve some 'interesting instances of system survival and state mediation' (p.1). Most accounts of the war in DRC have neglected the political drivers of conflict. During the war, people continued to seek and find practical responses to daily problems of political order. These quests sometimes led to violence but on other occasions also often led to different levels of public order. Privatised pockets of statehood have grown out of extortion rackets, leading to a return to patrimonialism in Congo. State agents must negotiate and mediate between various subsystems of power in order to maintain their own political legitimacy.

**Vlassenroot, K., Raeymaekers, T., 2008, 'New political order in the DR Congo? The transformation of regulation', Afrika Focus, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp.39-52. <http://www.gap.ugent.be/index.php?id=155&type=file>**

In contrast to the common view that the DRC represents a case of state failure or collapse, this article emphasises that the country has demonstrated 'a remarkable propensity for resilience'. Its administrative and regulatory frameworks have remained largely intact throughout the latest period of war. The article provides details of a number of instances where 'rebels and economic agents operating in the "informal" transborder trade connecting eastern DRC with its eastern neighbours, entered into a process of negotiation and cooperation to safeguard their own interests' (p.46). It argues that 'the constant undermining and reinterpretation of state power within the context of crisis and violent conflict has apparently given life to a more commodified, indirect form of statehood that drives the middle ground between formal and informal, state and non-state spheres of authority and regulation' (p.51).

**Trefon, T, 2009, 'Public Service Provision in a Failed State: Looking Beyond Predation in the Democratic Republic of Congo', Review of African Political Economy, No. 119, pp. 9-21 [http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/679347\\_915549307\\_911134162.pdf](http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/679347_915549307_911134162.pdf)**

This article examines the paradox of why the Congolese government is, on the one hand, often seen as weak and on the verge of collapse, yet on the other hand also retains such a powerful and omnipresent influence over the daily lives of the population of DRC. It examines how the state manifests itself, and

---

<sup>1</sup> MONUSCO is the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in Congo, a new UN mission which replaced MONUC.

questions whether its *raison d'être* goes beyond the violence of exploitation and predation, focusing on the relationship between people and public services.

The article argues that ordinary people find it difficult to avoid negotiations and interactions with the state over tax. The numerous crises of legitimacy experienced by the state in Congo have led to a change in its objectives. A number of competing theories exist for why the state has persisted. The most common is that administration continues for the purposes of predation. State elites use the administration to extract resources. Government staff also have an interest in the state's continued functioning. The state's persistence can also be explained by the volume of demands made on it by the population: parents, for example, will pay bonuses to teachers to encourage them to keep public schools open.

The article argues that in Congo, individual state employees pursue their own strategies, ignoring central policies. It describes the Congolese state as 'ambiguous, arbitrary and hybrid' (p.14). Interactions between state and the public are characterized by negotiation at all levels.

### **Decentralisation**

**Kaiser, K., 2008, 'Decentralization in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Opportunities and Risks', International Studies Program, Working Paper 08-31, December 2008, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies.**

<http://aysps.gsu.edu/isp/files/ispwp0831.pdf>

This report examines the ongoing decentralisation process in DRC, focusing on the provincial level. It highlights the technical complexity of the process as well as its associated risks and opportunities. It stresses the practical difficulties attached to the '40% rule', which stipulates that provinces should keep 40 per cent of revenues. The report argues that sequencing is important and that resolving the allocation of competencies needs to precede the transfer of budgets. Another important issue highlighted by the report is accountability: the transfer of resources should be accompanied by the strengthening of accountability mechanisms to reduce scope for corruption. It is important that accountability in all directions is strengthened (between sub-national government and central government, amongst sub-national government officials and elected representatives, and between elected officials in provinces and their voters).

### **International Intervention**

**Beswick, D., 2009, 'The Challenge of Warlordism to Post-Conflict State-Building: The Case of Laurent Nkunda in Eastern Congo', The Round Table, vol. 98, no. 402, pp. 333-346.**

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a912306683>

This article argues that the presence of warlords and the influence of their international supporters is not adequately addressed by current international approaches to post-conflict statebuilding. Existing approaches have tended to emphasise the transition to electoral democracy and the need to create a state monopoly on force. Based on evidence from the Kivus, the article makes the case that 'an approach recognising multiple sovereignties or emphasising significant decentralisation may be more appropriate. Without such a shift in emphasis the notion that Congo is, or will soon become, an empirically functional state is perhaps wishful thinking' (p.333).

## 5. Economic Issues

### Role of China

**Marysse, S. and Geenen, S., 2009, 'Win-win or unequal exchange? The case of the Sino-Congolese cooperation agreements', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 47, no. 3, pp. 371-396.**

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=5982272>

This article analyses the agreements between the Congolese government and a number of Chinese state-owned enterprises. In return for funding a number of public infrastructure works (at an estimated cost of \$6 billion), a Congolese/Chinese joint venture will be created to extract and sell copper, cobalt and gold. The infrastructural development programme includes the construction of 3 railways, 13 connecting roads and the road system in Kinshasa and in some other towns, 1 hospital in every province, and 1 health centre in every district, 2 universities and 5,000 housing units.

The article notes that these are the most significant trade/investment agreements that China has signed so far in Africa. The article assesses the heated debates in the literature about Chinese engagement in Congo, between those who argue that they are providing a much needed source of state revenue and investment, and those that see their involvement as signalling the rise of a new imperial power on the continent and worry that this engagement may encourage more repressive forms of governance.

The report concludes that Chinese involvement will have a positive impact on the Congolese economy in the short term and will probably have a positive impact in the long term as well. It also notes, however, that the agreement will lead to the depletion of Congo's copper and cobalt reserves. The Chinese should easily recoup their investments through revenues from mineral resources and are likely to make a considerable profit from these ventures, although these profits will be shared with the Congolese government (62 per cent to 38 per cent). In the long run, the Congolese government will miss out on mineral revenues, but will gain considerably in the short run. The infrastructure development programme will also help to connect mining areas to other important areas. The Congolese government negotiated badly as the Chinese have received tax exemptions and the Congolese will lose a considerable source of revenues through taxes. There is some evidence that the Chinese are working through multi-lateral institutions in Congo – a new World Bank road project has been designed to complement Chinese infrastructure works.

See also '**Contracts between China and the Congo (DRC): A textbook case: for better or worse**', **The Courier, Issue N° XVIII (N.S.) - July/August 2010** (Available from: <http://www.acp-eucourier.info/Contracts-between-Ch.1208.0.html>)

In this interview Marysse argues that in contrast to development support from Europeans, which has focused on a range of activities, China has focused on infrastructure.

**Matti, S., 2010, 'Resources and Rent Seeking in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 3, 2010, pp 401–413.**

[http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/35700\\_915549307\\_923293215.pdf](http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/35700_915549307_923293215.pdf)

This article examines the effects of resource rents, foreign aid and the potential effects of Chinese investment. It argues that a political tradition of patrimonialism based on easily corruptible resource rents was established during the Mobutu era. The source of revenue shifted in the post-conflict period (after 2002) from resource rents to foreign aid, while the political structure remained unchanged. The article argues that the Sicomines deal between China and the Congolese government is 'unlikely to perpetuate the "resource curse" condition' (p.401), although it also states that it is less clear whether or not it will be able to break the resource curse pattern or change trends in governance. It also emphasises the speculative nature of these arguments. The quantity of future inflows is assured by the deal and

opportunities for corruption are limited. The article argues that by investing in infrastructure, health and education, the Sicomines deal is likely to benefit the Congolese people.

### **Mineral Resources and Trade**

**Sunman, H. and N. Bates, 2009, 'Trading for Peace: Achieving security and poverty reduction through trade in natural resources in the Great Lakes area', Research Report, DFID / COMESA / USAID. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/tradeforpeace.pdf>**

This report seeks to provide a detailed analysis of trade flows of natural resources from the DRC, through the Great Lakes region and beyond. It focuses on understanding why natural resource exploitation has become so highly informalised. At least 50 per cent of exports from DRC are not recorded 'partly because traders and officials under-declare exports in order to avoid paying taxes and charges, partly because of bureaucratic weaknesses and poor governance among government organisations' (p.4). The report argues that 'reform of the trading system is made more difficult by weak financial and banking systems, very poor infrastructure, continuing security problems and low capacity levels in both government and civil society institutions' (p.5). High levels of corruption make the trading system vulnerable to abuse from armed groups. Lack of accurate trade data undermines the state's capacity to generate revenue through taxes and 'undermines macro-economic analysis and policy formulation' (p.5). The Congolese government has recognised and begun to address many of these issues. 'There is a window of opportunity for improving governance in trade and natural resources exploitation, with relative peace in the area, successful elections and constitutional reform, and buoyant markets for exports products' (p.5)

**Global Witness, 2009, "'Faced With A Gun, What Can You Do?": War and The Militarisation of Mining in Eastern Congo', July 2009. <http://bit.ly/bhorGy>**

The breakdown of law and order in Eastern Congo has led the trade in minerals such as cassiterite, gold, tin and coltan to fall under the control of armed groups, who use profits from mines to survive. In order to seize control of economic and political power, these groups have committed horrific human rights abuses. Soldiers and commanders from the Congolese national security forces are also involved in the mineral trade. In the course of plundering minerals, armed groups and the Congolese army have used forced labour, carried out systematic extortion and imposed illegal 'taxes' on local populations. The report makes a number of important findings:

- The FDLR have become big players in the mineral trade in South Kivu and take a 30 per cent cut of all mining proceeds. The FADRC also control mines and impose taxes on civilian miners.
- The FDLR and the FADRC often act in collaboration, sharing spoils and carving up territory.
- The majority of the minerals produced in North and South Kivu leave the DRC through Rwanda or Burundi.
- The fact that the main trading houses are officially registered and licensed by the Congolese government acts as a cover for laundering the minerals which are fuelling the conflict. Foreign companies also contribute by turning a blind eye to the impact of their trade and by failing to monitor the origin of these minerals.
- International dialogue and agreements have not addressed the economic dimensions of conflict. Most donors continue to neglect these economic drivers of conflict in their strategies.
- The report recommends setting up a tighter system of controlling the mineral trade, providing more precise information on the origin of minerals. Its recommendations are directed towards the UN, the ICC, international governments, the Congolese government and companies trading in minerals from the Eastern DRC.

**Global Witness, 2010, 'Congo mining ban: a first step towards ending 'conflict mineral' trade?', Press Release**

[http://www.globalwitness.org/media\\_library\\_detail.php/1045/en/congo\\_mining\\_ban\\_a\\_first\\_step\\_towards\\_ending\\_conf](http://www.globalwitness.org/media_library_detail.php/1045/en/congo_mining_ban_a_first_step_towards_ending_conf)

This press release addresses the recent mining ban imposed in September 2010 by the Congolese President, Joseph Kabila. The ban will cover the provinces of North and South Kivu and Maniema, areas rich in coltan and cassiterite. The press release sees the ban as signalling a 'welcome increase in engagement with mining-related problems at the highest political level' (no page number: online publication). The press release states that there are fears that the mining ban may be accompanied by a military crackdown. It also welcomes a recent law passed by the US Congress, which will make it compulsory for US-registered companies sourcing from Congo to 'state the measures they have taken to exclude conflict minerals from their supply chains' (no page number). It urges other governments to follow suit.

**Custers, R., Cuvelier, J, Verbruggen, D., 2009, 'Culprits or Scapegoats? Revisiting the Role of Belgian Mineral Traders in Eastern DRC, IPIS. <http://www.ipisresearch.be/natural-resources.php>**

This report examines the role of Belgian mineral traders in Eastern DRC, providing a profile of all of the key players. It is critical of the continued lack of transparency of these traders, despite considerable international efforts to increase transparency. It provides a number of recommendations for enhancing transparency and accountability.

**Provincial and Local Economic Dynamics**

**Cuvelier, J, 2009, 'The impact of the global financial crisis on mining in Katanga', IPIS.**

<http://www.ipisresearch.be/natural-resources.php>

This report examines the impact of the global financial crisis on mining in the Katanga Province, Eastern DRC. This has led to a decline in artisanal mining and increased uncertainty amongst mining companies. Many individuals or groups previously engaged in artisanal mining have now taken up criminal activities in order to survive.

**Garrett, N., Sergiou, S., Vlassenroot, K., 2009, 'Negotiated Peace For Extortion: The Case of Walikale Territory in Eastern DR Congo', Journal of East African Studies, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 1-21.**

[http://www.resourceglobal.co.uk/documents/RCS\\_Garrett\\_Negotiated\\_Peace\\_JEAS.pdf](http://www.resourceglobal.co.uk/documents/RCS_Garrett_Negotiated_Peace_JEAS.pdf)

Most accounts of war in DRC underestimate the complexity of war economies. One neglected aspect is the continuation of systems of economic exploitation into the post-conflict context. Through its analysis of a militia group that has been incorporated into the FADRC (the 85<sup>th</sup> Brigade in Walikale territory), this article suggests that in 'the present situation of no-war-no-peace, a negotiated, mutual accommodation of economic and political interests linked with security provision can be found' (p.1). Fearing instability, the government is reluctant to dislodge the 85<sup>th</sup> Brigade from Walikale territory. These pockets of 'parallel economic and political control' undermine the DRC's reconstruction process.

## 6. Social Issues

### **Impact of Recent Military Operations on Civilians**

**Oxfam, 2010, 'Women and children first: on the frontline of war in the Kivus', Oxfam briefing on the protection of civilians in the Kivus – June 2010.** <http://bit.ly/d9zopE>

An estimated 900,000 civilians were displaced by the government military operations against the FDLR in 2009. While some areas have become safer as a result of the latest military operation (Amani Leo, launched in 2010), human rights violations had increased by 246 per cent in South Kivu during January and February. A survey conducted by Oxfam and its partners in North and South Kivu in April 2010 found that 60 per cent of respondents felt that things were worse than in 2010. Most of this insecurity was blamed on Amani Leo. Human rights abuses were reported in all villages: in 80 per cent of communities the FDLR and other militias had committed them, in 96 per cent of communities undisciplined soldiers had. Sexual violence was reported to be on the increase in 20 out of 24 communities consulted. Considerable stigma is attached to women who are raped (particularly those raped by FDLR fighters), and the children of raped women are often shunned by communities. While a third of men surveyed saw an improvement in personal security in the last year, three-quarters of women felt less safe than before. There were widespread reports from civilians of extortion by soldiers at checkpoints.

**Oxfam, 2009, 'Waking the devil: the impact of forced disarmament on civilians in the Kivus', Oxfam report.** <http://bit.ly/djO0ro>

This report highlights the heavy civilian costs associated with the recent military operations (Kimia II) launched by the Congolese government against the FDLR in the Kivus. The report finds that the military operations have resulted in increased violence against civilians and have created new opportunities for abuse by a range of actors. Violence is often a direct result of the operations, 'with widespread reprisal attacks on communities from both sides' (p.1). The report argues that the increase in violence is 'compounded by problems linked to the fast-track integration of militia fighters into the army which has run parallel to FARDC deployment for the operations, and by the failure of justice and protection mechanisms' (p.1). The report found that both sides (FADRC and FDLR) were guilty of widespread abuses and that there was 'no difference between them' (p.2).

**HRW, 2010, 'Always on the Run: The Vicious Cycle of Displacement in Eastern Congo', September 14<sup>th</sup> 2010.** <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/92770/section/4>

In April 2010, at least 1.8 million people were displaced in Eastern Congo, 1.4 million of whom were in the volatile provinces of North and South Kivu. Some have been 'on the run' since 1993. Much of the recent displacement was caused by successive military operations which began in January 2009. Displacement has been caused by the threat of punishment for suspected collaboration with enemy groups and retaliation for military losses. Cases of assault, robbery, forced labour and rape are common. The report notes that while the new response strategy is more flexible, more assistance needs to reach the estimated 1 million displaced people living with host families in the Kivus.

The report describes how recent displacement coincided with a dramatic shift in alliances when the Rwandan-backed Congolese-Tutsi armed group, the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) announced its integration into the Congolese army. Together these forces began military operations against the FDLR. Although these military operations are ongoing, Congolese government officials and UN planners have begun to plan and implement stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction programmes. Although the government has claimed that security has improved since 2009, this view has been challenged by Congolese civil society groups. Integrating the numerous armed groups that previously fought the government and targeted civilians presents considerable challenges.

## 7. Table Summarising New Literature

This table provides a rough overview of where the new literature identified in this report fits in relation to the thematic / spatial structure outlined in the 2007 Strategic Conflict Assessment. Many of these articles straddle a number of themes and levels. Where this is the case, they have been placed in the category where they are most focused.

	<b>Security</b>	<b>Political</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Social</b>
<b>International</b>	UNSC 2010	Reyntjens 2010, Lemarchand 2010	Marysse & Geenan 2009, Matti 2010, Sunman & Bates 2009	
<b>National</b>		ICG 2010, Raeymaekers 2010, Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers 2008, Trefon 2009		
<b>Provincial</b>		Anten 2010; Kaiser 2008; Spittaels & Hilgert 2008, 2008a, 2010	Global Witness 2009, Custers et al 2009, Cuvelier 2009	Turner 2007
<b>Local</b>	Auteserre 2009, Baaz & Stern 2008, HRW 2009, Marriage 2007, Kelly 2010, Baaz & Stern 2010, HRW 2010	Auteserre 2009	Garrett et al 2009	Oxfam 2010, Oxfam 2009, HRW 2010

## 8. Additional information

### Author:

This query response was prepared by Oliver Walton, [oliver@gsdrc.org](mailto:oliver@gsdrc.org)

### Contributors:

S  verine Auteserre, Columbia University  
 Filip Retyens, University of Antwerp  
 Stefaan Marysse, University of Antwerp  
 Kasper Hoffman, DIIS  
 Stephanie Matti, Graduate Institute, Geneva; La Trobe University

### Selected websites visited:

Cambridge Journals Online, Clingendael (Netherlands Institute for International Relations), DFID, Georgia State University, Global Witness, Google, Google Books, Google Scholar, Human Rights Watch, Informaworld, International Alert, International Crisis Group, IPIS, Oxfam, Oxford Journals, Refugees International, The Courier, United States Institute for Peace, University of Ghent

**About Helpdesk research reports:** Helpdesk reports are based on two days of desk-based research. They are designed to provide a brief overview of the key issues; and a summary of some of the best literature available. Experts are contacted during the course of the research, and those able to provide input within the short time-frame are acknowledged.

**Need help finding consultants?** If you need to commission more in-depth research, or need help finding and contracting consultants for additional work, please contact [consultants@gsdrc.org](mailto:consultants@gsdrc.org) (further details at [www.gsdrc.org/go.cfm?path=/go/helpdesk/find-a-consultant](http://www.gsdrc.org/go.cfm?path=/go/helpdesk/find-a-consultant))