

Democratic Republic of Congo

The UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) remains the UN's largest and most complex peacekeeping mission. MONUC has assisted in a transitional process as an outcome of a peace agreement, while conducting a low- to medium-intensity peace enforcement operation in the eastern parts of the country. In the meantime, a major humanitarian crisis has emerged in the southeastern province of Katanga. Despite the odds, the period from late 2005 to late 2006 was one of relative achievement for MONUC. Assistance with organizing a successful constitutional referendum of 25 million registered voters, and a registration drive that led to mostly orderly presidential and national (parliamentary) elections, were major accomplishments. While the presidential elections were peaceful, an outburst of violence between supporters of the two leading presidential contenders after the results were announced required MONUC and a standby force, the EU Force Democratic Republic of Congo (EUFOR RD Congo), to intervene on the streets of Kinshasa. Subsequent violence, both prior to and in the aftermath of the run-off at the end of October 2006, served to highlight the challenges ahead in consolidating peace, despite the achievement of the milestone the elections represented.

At the same time, MONUC has intensified its joint operations with the DRC's military forces, the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC), in the eastern part of the country. The robust campaign showed some important successes: Secretary-General Kofi Annan described the situation, by the end of September 2006, as being stable in the Kivus and relatively calm

in Katanga, but still volatile in Ituri. These joint operations have come at a significant price. Although partially achieving the goal of weakening militias and foreign armed groups that threaten local populations in the Kivus and Ituri, they have also tarnished MONUC's reputation by association with the FARDC—seen by many as no better than the marauding groups it is fighting. Security sector reform, and the accompanying extension of state authority, remain pressing concerns of MONUC, the EU, and bilateral partners.

Background

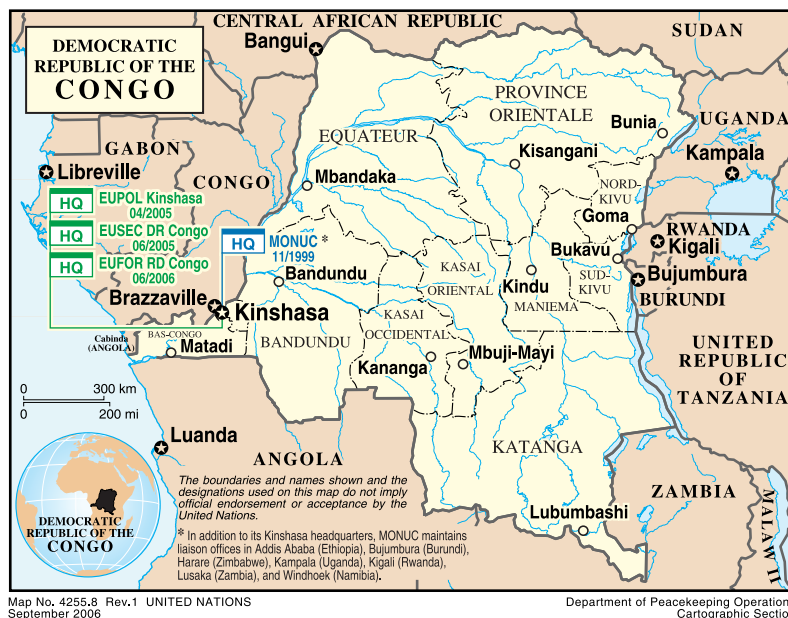
The war in the DRC formally ended in 2002 with the signing of the Global All-Inclusive Accord, after several years of intermittent fighting despite the signing of a cease-fire agreement in 1999. A transitional government was established, with Joseph Kabila as president, and with four vice presidents, representing the president's party (the People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy [PPRD]), the Congolese Rally for Democracy (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie [RCD-Goma]), the Movement for Liberation of the Congo (MLC), and the unarmed opposition and civil society. A government of national unity and transition was installed in June 2003, and a two-year timeline was agreed on for convening elections, involving a referendum on the constitution, followed by legislative and presidential ballots.

However, insecurity in eastern parts of the country destabilized the transition from 2003 to 2006. A crisis in Bunia (Ituri) in the spring of 2003 led to the deployment by the

EU of a Security Council–mandated, French-led emergency force (Operation Artemis). The force had a mandate to provide security for a three-month period, pending reinforcement of MONUC’s presence in the area. An even more serious challenge to the DRC’s peace process came in May–June 2004, when dissidents overran the town of Bukavu in South Kivu. MONUC’s inability to prevent this takeover led to rioting and serious violence throughout the DRC, some of which was directed at MONUC. The dissidents withdrew in June, but only after a loss of credibility for the peace operation and the transitional government. Robust military action by the UN and the FARDC, starting in early 2005, combined with improved regional relations and political progress toward the constitutional referendum of 2005, brought the security situation under relative control.

MONUC and EUFOR RD Congo: Mandate and Functions

MONUC continued to operate under the robust mandate granted to it earlier in 2004 and 2005. On 6 September 2005, Security Council Resolution 1621 authorized MONUC to acquire 841 additional police personnel, including six formed police units of 125 officers each to train the Congolese police and provide security during the elections. Through Resolution 1635 (2005), the Council authorized a temporary increase of 300 military personnel in order to allow the deployment of an infantry battalion in Katanga. This was enhanced on 7 April 2006, through Resolution 1669, with the redeployment of an infantry battalion, a military hospital, and fifty military observers from the UN Mission in Burundi (ONUB). By the time of the July elections, MONUC’s strength had reached 17,416 troops and 1,119 police personnel, including five (out of the six authorized) formed police units. While these rather small enhancements were useful, it illustrated the unwillingness of the Security Council to significantly expand MONUC, despite the enormity of tasks required for the impending elections



UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC)	
• Authorization and start date	30 November 1999 (UNSC Res. 1279)
• SRSG	William Lacy Swing (United States)
• Force commander	Lieutenant-General Babacar Gaye (Senegal)
• Police commissioner	Daniel Curé (France)
• Budget	\$1.094 billion (1 July 2006–30 June 2007)
• Strength as of 30 September 2006	Troops: 16,627 Military observers: 763 Police: 1,107 International civilian staff: 959 Local civilian staff: 2,063 UN volunteers: 656

For detailed mission information see p. 222.

and the continuing insecurity in large parts of the country.

On 25 April 2006, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1671, authorizing the EU to deploy a standby force (EUFOR) to the DRC, for the four months following the first round of presidential and national parliamentary elections. Composed of about 2,000

mainly French and German troops and having a Chapter VII mandate, it was there to help MONUC provide security and protect civilians. Most of the troops were deployed “over the horizon” in Gabon, but some 800 were stationed at the airport in Kinshasa. Four hundred troops were rapidly deployed during the events of August 2006 to suppress the fighting that erupted between supporters of President Kabila and those of Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba. Joint patrols in the aftermath of those incidents, and EUFOR’s increased deployment in Kinshasa ahead of polling on 29 October, had significant political value, although its military impact should not be exaggerated.

The EU also has a police presence in the DRC, the first civil mission for crisis management the EU has sent to Africa within the framework of its European Security and Defense

Policy (ESDP). Established in April 2005, its mandate is to advise the Congolese Integrated Police Unit and to ensure its actions are consistent with democratic policing standards. Composed of about thirty people, it operates under the overall policy guidance of the EU Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, Aldo Ajello. The EU has also sent five experts to occupy posts in defense institutions in the DRC, including that of the Ministry of Defense and joint general staff. Called EUSEC DR Congo, the objective of the mission is to provide advice and assistance on security sector reform.

Key Developments

Elections

MONUC achieved a significant milestone with the successful organization of the constitutional referendum in December 2005. Of the more than 25 million voters who were registered, more than 15 million participated—voting in favor of the constitution. While MONUC acknowledged irregularities in certain areas, and low turnout in key opposition strongholds, the result was nonetheless groundbreaking. The people of the DRC had never experienced such an intensive registration exercise, nor gone to the polls in such numbers.

This was followed by the passing in parliament of an electoral law, in March 2006, that established 169 electoral constituencies and provided for two rounds of presidential elections (if required), as well as national parliamentary elections. It was clear throughout this process that MONUC needed to play a leading role together with members of the International Committee in Support of the Transition (CIAT) in pushing the process along. MONUC, together with UNDP and other international and local partners, including the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), prepared an integrated operational plan. Two hundred thirteen parties and groupings registered candidates for the legislative elections, while thirty-three candidates did so for

EU Force in the Democratic Republic of Congo (EUFOR RD Congo)

- Authorization date 27 April 2006 (Joint Action 2006/319/CFSP)
- Start date July 2006
- Head of mission Lieutenant-General Karlheinz Viereck (Germany)
- Budget \$21.2 million (October 2005–September 2006)
- Strength as of 30 September 2006 Troops: 2,370

For detailed mission information see p. 379.

EU Security Reform Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (EUSEC DR Congo)

- Authorization date 2 May 2005 (Joint Action 2005/355/CFSP)
- Start date June 2005
- Head of mission General Pierre-Michel Joana (France)
- Budget \$4.8 million (October 2005–September 2006)
- Strength as of 30 September 2006 Military advisers: 24
Local staff: 10

the presidential elections. The leader of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), Etienne Tshisekedi, remained out of the race, despite repeated interventions by local and international actors and belated resolution of the UDPS's demands.

The national legislative and presidential elections, held on 30 July 2006, suffered only minor episodes of violence and boycotts, none of which were deemed to have had a significant impact on the results. MONUC, together with other international partners, deployed to about a hundred territorial capitals and cities. Hundreds of monitors were deployed, with finalization of the electoral list and the establishment of polling stations (numbering some 50,000) taking place until the last day. One hundred seventy different types of ballots, printed with the assistance of the government of South Africa, were distributed throughout the country by MONUC, from designated regional hubs. Concurrently, MONUC trained several thousand national police officers, and certified over a thousand police instructors. The preliminary electoral results put the overall turnout at 71 percent, with 17.9 million registered voters (out of 25.4 million) casting their votes. President Kabila emerged as the leading candidate, with 44.81 percent, followed by Jean-Pierre Bemba, with 20.03 percent, as the runner-up. The results of the parliamentary elections were roughly the same, which means that Kabila's presidential victory in October enables him to command a majority in the National Assembly.

The announcement of the first-round results was marred by three days of violence and exchanges of fire between elements loyal to President Kabila and those loyal to Bemba. With the intervention of MONUC and EUFOR, and mediation by the SRSG of MONUC and the CIAT, the violence was quelled. It was nonetheless a sign of the extreme tensions underlying the political process in the DRC. A second round of presidential elections was held on 29 October. The lead-up to the run-off was tense, with some violence, but the polls were

conducted in relative peace. A turnout of 65 percent resulted in a victory for Kabila, with 58 percent of the votes, 2.5 million more than his rival Jean-Pierre Bemba. However, the voting showed a sharp east-west divide, with Kabila losing badly in Kinshasa. Bemba challenged the results, and his supporters purportedly set fire to the Supreme Court building, where the allegations of fraud were being considered. The outcome of the elections stood and—following an ultimatum delivered by Kabila—Bemba began withdrawing his forces from Kinshasa on 24 November. In late November, Bemba formally conceded defeat and vowed to go into political opposition “to preserve peace and save the country from chaos and violence.” This quite remarkable outcome gives President Kabila the opportunity to demonstrate that he can be the unifying leader that the country needs. The job was not made easier by a serious outburst of violence in eastern DRC by dissidents loyal to Laurent Nkunda, a former general in the Congolese army. UN and FARDC troops managed to restore a degree of calm, but the situation remained very tense until representatives of Kabila and Nkunda held talks hosted by Rwanda in early January 2007. It was hoped that a Great Lakes security and development pact, signed by eleven countries, would help stabilize the region following the landmark DRC elections.

Security

The FARDC, composed of units of the former combatants, has a reputation as one of the worst human rights violators in the DRC. At the same time, it represents the only local instrument of force to extend state authority in the country. While joint operations by MONUC and the FARDC have been necessary, they have tarnished MONUC's reputation by association. During 2006, MONUC continued and intensified its cooperation with the FARDC. In Ituri, joint operations were conducted in the Djugu and Fataki areas between March and May, and in Tchei in May. A joint operation in Irumu was postponed due

to a mutiny in a unit of the FARDC, highlighting the tenuous discipline in the Congolese army. Owing to the weak state of the FARDC, MONUC launched a sensitive and high-risk operation by its Guatemalan special forces against militias of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the Garamba national park in January 2006. The Guatemalans sustained heavy casualties: eight soldiers were killed. The operation cast into relief the dangerous conditions under which MONUC personnel have been fighting, and underlined the need for continued assessment of their preparedness for battle.

In May 2006, seven Nepalese peacekeepers were taken hostage (and one killed) by militia members loyal to Ituri warlord Peter Karim. The hostages were eventually released in June and July 2006, after protracted negotiations and a deal with the Kinshasa authorities to reward Karim with a position in the FARDC military command.

In continuing action against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) operating in North Kivu, over a hundred fighters in the Beni area were killed during a joint MONUC-FARDC operation, which resulted in the disintegration of this group and the surrender of almost a hundred combatants. However, elsewhere in North Kivu, MONUC had to launch operations to clear Rwindi and Kibrizi of rebels allied with the Laurent Nkunda militia, with which many FARDC elements had earlier been cooperating, after several towns fell to the Nkunda-allied forces in January 2006.

In Bunyakiri in South Kivu, the FARDC and MONUC continued their joint campaign against the Democratic Forces for Liberation of the Congo (Forces Démocratiques de la Libération du Rwanda [FDLR]), causing the displacement of over a thousand of its combatants and their dependents from South to North Kivu. Meanwhile, instability and violence in Katanga continued. Fighting between the FARDC and the Mayi Mayi caused massive displacement in central Katanga (up to 350,000 internally displaced persons). MONUC tried to defuse this situation by seeking the agreement of the FARDC com-

mand and the Kinshasa authorities to obtain the surrender of the Mayi Mayi leader, Kyungu Mutanga Gédéon. One positive development was that Fidele Ntumbi and his associated groups, as well as other Mayi Mayi militias, surrendered their weapons to MONUC. As the end of the year approached, MONUC was formulating a strategy on how to deal with the crisis in Katanga, which would focus on the largely ineffective DDR process.

Thus, MONUC was able to substantially disrupt the operations of the various armed groups, especially in the Kivus. The scale of the threat posed by foreign armed groups had declined considerably by the end of the year. However, a major weakness has been the lack of political follow-up to these operations. While MONUC can be faulted for a lack of political strategy, it is primarily the responsibility of the political leaders of the DRC.

Security Sector Reform

Despite pronouncements by the international community and DRC authorities, not much progress occurred in security sector reform in 2006. The Joint Commission on Security Sector Reform convened, but was unable to address the structural changes required to overhaul the weak and undisciplined FARDC. Deficiencies in the brassage process were highlighted by two episodes (mentioned above) in the eastern DRC: in January in North Kivu, FARDC elements joined up with those loyal to Nkunda; and in February near Irumu, Ituri, the FARDC caved in prior to combat. These were not isolated events. Similar incidents were accompanied by harassment of local civilians and widespread looting and pillaging. While much of this ill-discipline can be attributed to the lack of payment of salaries and an inadequate chain of command, there is also a prevailing culture of corruption within the higher command of the FARDC.

MONUC and the EU were in discussions to produce a joint program for long-term reform of the military and the police in the DRC. It is unclear how active a role the newly elected DRC government will allow the international community to play. Part of

the difficulty with security sector reform (SSR) to date was that a weak transitional government could not take the lead or even serve as an effective partner. The DRC lacks a “patron” in the process, like the United Kingdom in Sierra Leone. The result was brassage of different units of the FARDC by different states and organizations on the basis of their own varying standards. By the end of October 2006, the DRC government had created fourteen integrated brigades, at least in name, with the aim of raising this number to eighteen. Six were functioning at the time, and six more were in the process of being made functional, although, judging by the varying quality of the first six (which range from effective to dismal), mere establishment of integrated brigades may not be enough. These integrated brigades represent the first step in SSR and must be accompanied by the adequate and timely payment of salaries to all ranks, as well as better oversight of the military.

Fight Against Impunity

Due to the lack of a properly functioning military and police, coupled with a weak justice

and prison system, insecurity in the DRC has continued, with very limited attempts at punitive action against those who engage in human rights abuses, let alone commit everyday crimes. Military justice is becoming a priority and, in fact, the FARDC has made some progress by bringing blatant violators to court through the military justice system.

MONUC reached a significant milestone in 2006 by being the first UN peacekeeping operation to actively facilitate the transfer of a suspect, warlord Thomas Lubanga, to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. Nonetheless, the fight against impunity has been an uphill battle in the face of continued bad news throughout the year, including the transfer of senior military commanders responsible for violations to other positions in the FARDC, the discovery of a mass grave in North Kivu, the excessive and frequent use of force by state authorities, and harassment of political opponents by those authorities. Displacement of civilians in Katanga, Ituri, and elsewhere continued with abuses committed by both FARDC and rebel personnel. Meanwhile, discussions continued



(UN Photo/Martine Perret)

MONUC peacekeepers patrol on Lake Albert, 8 October 2006.

Box 3.3.1 From ONUC to MONUC

When the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) reached its highest strength, 18,536 troops, in August 2006, it was still below the peak of 19,898 soldiers achieved by the UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC), in July 1961. The expansion of MONUC has invited comparisons with the earlier operation, deployed from 1960 to 1964, which was the UN's first in sub-Saharan Africa and by far its biggest during the Cold War. In both cases, the UN has made robust use of force: while MONUC is mandated to use "all necessary means" against militias in the country's east, and has lost 98 soldiers to date, ONUC launched three campaigns in the secessionist province of Katanga, suffering 249 fatalities over four years. Both missions have also had ambitious state-building tasks: ONUC staff were in part intended to replace the departing Belgian colonial administration, and even included agronomists; MONUC supported a complex transitional process leading to elections in 2006.

A comparison of ONUC and MONUC is made possible by a 1966 study of the former published by the Brookings Institution. It reveals distinct differences

between the two forces. The first is in their deployment: whereas MONUC's mandated and actual size has grown gradually since 1999, ONUC deployed extremely quickly in its first month. The mission was mandated on 14 July 1960 and by 20 August had fielded 14,295 troops, a number that rose to 19,443 by the end of the year. This rapid deployment was facilitated by US airlift, on which the mission relied heavily; during the entire four years the United States transported 118,091 troops and 18,569 tons of cargo within the Congo.

ONUC relied not only on US planes, but also on US funding. The United States paid 41.5 percent of the mission's total cost, \$411 million, in contrast to its current contribution of 26 percent of the peacekeeping budget. But ONUC was a much cheaper mission than MONUC: its annual cost of roughly \$100 million is the equivalent of \$650 million today, whereas MONUC's projected requirements for the 2005–2006 financial year were \$1,094 million.

The missions also differ markedly in terms of force origin: in 1960, UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld prioritized involving African troops, and in December 1960, 75 percent of ONUC

forces (14,700 soldiers) were from African states. This percentage would decline due to disputes over the mission, but the African contribution never fell below a third of the total deployment. By contrast, African troops currently represent just 20 percent of MONUC soldiers. ONUC was important as the first mission in which South Asian personnel proved crucial to the UN. From 1961 to 1963, India was the largest troop contributor to ONUC—as it would be forty-five years later to MONUC.

One problem common to both missions has been sustaining command and control across a vast territory. ONUC maintained a multinational headquarters in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa), while single-nation commands were responsible for specific provinces. But as the UN launched antimercenary operations in Katanga in 1961, it created a stand-alone multinational command in the region. MONUC likewise formed a divisional headquarters in the east when it began antimilitia operations there in February 2005. If ONUC left this precedent for MONUC, it remains to be seen whether MONUC will follow a similar exit pattern: ONUC drew down from 19,782 to 0 in sixteen months, in 1963–1964.

Source: "United Nations Peacekeeping in the Congo, 1960–1964: An Analysis of Political and Military Control," The Brookings Institution, 1966.

about operationalizing the nascent Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Challenges Ahead

As noted above, MONUC was in the rare position of supporting implementation of a peace agreement and organizing elections in a massive country, while at the same time conducting fairly intense military operations. MONUC plays a major, sometimes leading, role in these "joint"

operations, but it lacks the mandate and capacity to engage in the fighting by itself. Ultimately, the Congolese government is responsible for extending its authority throughout the country. This, of course, has to be done in a manner that does not alienate a local populace who already view the FARDC as the poorly assembled composite of the former rebel armies. MONUC's dilemma is clear: endeavor to extend state authority via cooperation with the FARDC, the sole means of doing so, or allow the eastern part

of the country to continue to exist in lawlessness, thereby causing untold suffering for hundreds of thousands of civilians. In this context, real restructuring and reform of the FARDC is essential.

Another significant challenge for MONUC concerns the manner with which it employs force during combat. Compared to two years ago, when MONUC ignominiously allowed itself to be faced down by the Nkunda-Mutebutsi forces in Bukavu in June 2004, the mission has acted far more robustly. This began in 2005, culminating in a change in the rules of engagement in early 2006. However, MONUC's greater willingness to take risks, sometimes imperils the lives of its own personnel. The botched military operation involving Guatemalan special forces demonstrates one of the dilemmas inherent in the use of force in modern peace operations: mandates that are not matched by capacity, because of lack of experience, lack of equipment, or poor chain of command.

Conclusion

Undeniably, the DRC is more peaceful today than it was several years ago. The most evident sign of this is the relative ease with which trade, commerce, and traffic now flow across the country. Despite MONUC's mixed performance, some of this improvement is attributable to its efforts. While the mission

simply muddled along in many areas, the emerging, more robust military approach diminished the justifications of neighbors to intervene. From the perspective of today, the three-year power-sharing arrangement leading to successful elections confounded the skeptics.

This better state of affairs was not due to a comprehensive, overarching strategy on the part of the international community; a host of factors, including less meddling by neighbors, helped. The relative inattention of the international community, other than in response to major episodes like in Ituri in May 2003, Bukavu in June 2004, and perhaps Katanga in early 2006, has allowed the Congolese political class to act with impunity and little regard for the well-being of the country. The elections are likely to be seen as a turning point, but the political culture in the DRC will not change overnight, especially given the regional divide and Kabila's limited support in the western part of the country, including Kinshasa. The year drew to a close with MONUC and UN headquarters developing a postelection strategy that would focus on good governance and the rule of law (including in the management of resources), while helping the new government to maintain security and increasing the pace of security sector reform. Pressure on MONUC to militarily draw down should be resisted if the DRC's highly tenuous peace is to be irreversible.