

Forum: GA5

Issue: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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Introduction

Since 1996, over 6 million people have died as a result of the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). As of 2023, there are currently around 7 million displaced people (PBS NewsHour) 25 million people experiencing food insecurity in the DRC. MONUSCO's (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) purpose is to address the situation in the Congo by providing humanitarian aid, development aid, and preventing the cycle of violence that contributes to socio-economic unrest in the DRC. Even though the mission is focused on providing humanitarian aid, for this aid to be more effective, MONUSCO has to focus on the economic tensions in the DRC, and building better relationships among the Congolese population. In particular, focusing on stabilising the regions of South and North Kivu, where the rise of the mining industry along with extremist groups such as M '23 have led to the exploitation of women and children, is imperative.

The DRC is rich with natural materials, and for this reason, extremist groups seek to control the industry and exploit those living in the area to maximise the profit from these resources. In 2009, five task forces were created to fight this exploitation. Each focus on one of the following areas: "Sexual and gender based violence; Summary and arbitrary executions; Arbitrary arrests and illegal detentions/disappearances; Torture and deaths in detentions; Violation of economic rights /illegal mining"(MONUSCO). Additionally, tensions in mining areas are made worse by the presence of foreign owned mines protected by the Congolese army. This has resulted in heightened competition for the remaining resources, thus fueling the fire for extremist groups. The humanitarian crisis worsens, because of foreign exploitation of the mining industry. For these reasons, one of the UN's future focuses in the DRC has to be promoting more equitable economic growth in the DRC, where the Congolese can experience the benefits of the growing mining industry.

The negative public opinion of MONUSCO in the DRC has also led to the fueling of extremist groups in the Congo. This poor reputation has led to massive anti-UN protests that often results in violence and deaths (Chibelushi). These outbreaks only make the humanitarian crisis in the Congo worse, and for this reason, public opinion has to be addressed to make MONUSCO's humanitarian mission in the Congo successful.

Definition of Key Terms

Conflict Minerals

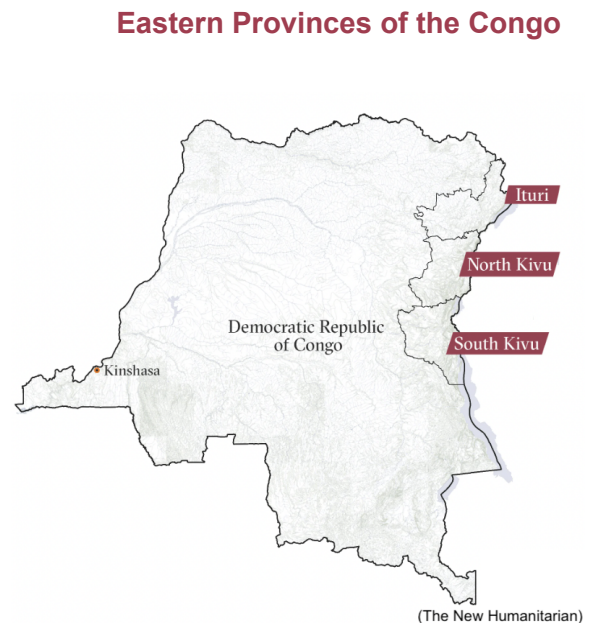
Minerals that are mined by armed groups and then sold in the market to fund militant campaigns.

Development Aid

Foreign aid that focuses on long term solutions to unrest, such as promoting economic growth, education, and political change.

Eastern Provinces of the Congo

Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu are the main areas of violence in the DRC and the focus of the MONUSCO mission and international discussion around the humanitarian crisis in the Congo.



Food Insecurity

A person is food insecure when they lack regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life.

Humanitarian Aid

Short-term assistance to developing nations, with the purpose of saving lives by providing food, medical assistance, and shelter.

Hutus

An ethnic group that lives in the Eastern part of the DRC and makes up most of Rwanda. Extremist Hutu groups are also focused on maintaining Congolese control of the border; the DRC is often accused of backing Hutu extremist groups.

March 23 Movement (M'23)

A Tutsi-led extremist group in the northeast of the DRC. Their main goal is to take the provinces of Ituri, and North Kivu from the Congolese army. Rwanda is often accused of supporting M'23's campaigns.

Stakeholder

Anyone impacted by an economic change or choice made.

Rwandan Patriotic Front

The ruling political party in Rwanda. A Tutsi dominated party that fought back against the genocidal government during the Rwandan genocide where Tutsi and moderate Hutu people were killed.

Tutsi

An ethnic group living mainly in Rwanda, and Burundi. They were persecuted during the Rwandan genocide, and for that reason many also live on the border or within the DRC.

UN Peacekeeping Forces

Forces deployed in countries divided by conflict with the purpose of ensuring long lasting peace and assisting civilians affected by the violence with humanitarian aid. They are only supposed to use force in defence after being attacked or to support the Mandate of the mission.

MONUSCO Mandate

The goal of the MONUSCO mission is to protect civilians impacted by violence and ensure long-term economic, political, and social stability in the DRC.

Background Information

Historical context

The conflict in the DRC goes back to the Rwandan genocide of 1994, where the Hutu-led extremist government began persecuting the Tutsi population in Rwanda. This led to the mass migration of the Tutsi people, which fled across the border into the DRC. This set the stage for violence in the Eastern provinces of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu in the DRC. Hutu extremist groups also started forming along the border in response to this migration, which then resulted in Tutsi extremist groups forming. Tensions rose even more when the Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front won power over the previously Hutu-led genocidal government in Rwanda. The Tutsi groups on the border felt that they were still being threatened by the Hutu groups in the east, which were not being held back by the Congolese government. As a response, the Tutsi-led groups crossed the border and attacked these Hutu groups, thus resulting in the First Congo War in 1996.

First Congo War

Rwanda and the Tutsi-led groups won the war and successfully installed President Kabila in power. This was only meant for a short period of time. The DRC and Rwanda's relationship remained peaceful, because Kabila was only put in power because of Rwanda's attack. However, in 1998, this peace was shattered. As information about their brutal military techniques and treatment of non-extremists, Hutu public opinion began to turn against Rwanda and the Tutsi-led groups. In response, the DRC tried to distance itself from Rwanda, by ordering all Tutsi troops out of the DRC and allowing Hutu groups to form at the border. This warranted an invasion by Rwanda, which started the Second Congo War.

Second Congo War

Rwanda's goal was to create more distance within the Hutu groups at the border, but the goal of

the war was quickly muddled, as multiple militia groups were fighting at the same time. The leader of the DRC was assassinated by his own allies and the war was brought to an end in 2002. This started a series of peace talks in the region, but tensions still remained high.

MONUC

As a result of continued tensions MONUC (later renamed MONUSCO), which had been established in 2000, renewed its presence in the region despite the war ending. In 2003 The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) recommended a \$582(USD) million budget for MONUC, and also acknowledged the project would require a flexible budget. The project was funded with a separate account that is approved annually by GA5. Additionally from the beginning the peaceforce has been funded by individual countries such as India and Pakistan. This mission had the goal of providing humanitarian aid to those affected by the conflict and protecting civilians from violence in the DRC. The rise of Tutsi extremist group Movement 23 (M '23) in the DRC, resulted in the policy only allowing the defensive use of force changing in 2013. MONUSCO had authorised an offensive brigade against M '23, to support the Congolese army. Their mission was successful and the internal conflict stabilised in the DRC. In fact they were able to hold an election in 2018, marking the first peaceful transfer of power in the history of the Congo.

Sub-topic 1: Ensuring transparency with local governments and populations regarding the goals, purpose and role of MONUSCO in order to strengthen confidence in the mission

In 2022, the fragile stability was shattered again as tensions rose between the DRC and Rwanda. The DRC accused Rwanda of supporting the resurging M '23, and Rwanda responded by accusing the Congolese of aiding Hutu led extremist groups. For this reason, the UN is wary of the violence that could result from the 2023 election in the Congo. In 2022, MONUSCO stated in its mandate the importance of working “toward peaceful, transparent, inclusive and credible processes for the presidential and legislative elections scheduled in 2023.” One of the main obstacles to MONUSCO’s mission is its unpopularity in the DRC, which has resulted in mass scale protests against the mission, causing even more unrest and violence in the region. The protests got a lot of attention in September 2023, where over 40 civilians were killed during an anti-UN protest in North Kivu. However, the resistance against MONUSCO has been building for a long time and many people in the DRC feel that despite MONUSCO’s presence for the last 20 years, security has not been amplified in the country . This unhappiness not only leads to violence but fuels it, through extremist groups like M’23 who exploit the public’s unhappiness with the UN to further their own agenda. MONUSCO recognised this was due to the public having unclear expectations for what the mission's job was in the DRC.

Sub-topic 2: Promoting Foreign Direct investment and economic collaboration in the Democratic Republic of Congo that respects potential and existing Congolese stakeholders in the area

One of the reasons the eastern region of the DRC is contested and of international interest is because of the abundance of natural resources in Ituri and North and South Kivu. The mining industry is vital to the DRC and has been the main factor in contributing to a projected 6.3% growth in GDP in 2023. However, despite its importance to the Congolese economy, the growth of the mining industry has also led to a worsening of the humanitarian crisis. Foreign interest in the minerals in the Congo has driven people from their homes, and meant that the native Congolese are not only exploited for cheap labour but also cheated out of experiencing the benefits of the growing mining sector for themselves. Foreign countries like China, use their aid of the DRC government against M '23 in exchange for protection of their Cobalt mines in the Congo(Global Conflict Tracker). Foreign own companies working for the Congolese army use forced eviction and violence to clear the way for new mines.

Entire villages are often cleared out and any civilians who object risk sexual violence, and inhumane treatments. Another problem is the buying of conflict minerals by foreign buyers that have been mined in mines controlled by extremist groups. From the Second Congo War, extremists groups have often relied on mining and selling valuable minerals to fund their campaigns. Despite the violent and militant nature of the groups, foreign buyers such as China continue to buy from these groups. This sets up a pattern in the DRC of extremist groups controlling mines, and then selling the harvested minerals to foreign buyers. According to the OHCHR, this pattern has led to an abundance of human rights abuses that could have not taken place on such a large scale if there had been no foreign buyers to sell to. These include the child labour practices used in mines owned by bigger mining companies, which are usually backed by militant groups, where over 40,000 children as young as six years old work for under 2 USD a day. The OHCHR points out that this scale of exploitation does not happen in smaller mines in the DRC, and for this reason bigger focus should be focused on taking the power away from extremist groups in the mining industry. For this reason, in 2022, the MONUSCO mandate called for more collaboration with regional economic communities to fight the “the continued illegal exploitation and trafficking of natural resources...which undermine lasting peace and development for the DRC.”

Sub-topic 3: Financing and increasing humanitarian aid in the DRC in order for MONUSCO to address the needs of both the residents and the refugees living in the area

One of the main focuses of MONUSCO is providing humanitarian aid and development aid to those affected by the conflict. Foreign aid to the DRC aims to provide shelter, food, water, protection against violence, and emergency health care, as well as build long-term solutions to gender-based violence, improving sanitary conditions, and ensure that all children can receive education. In the eastern provinces of the DRC, over 5.9 million people have been displaced due to the regional conflict. Within these groups, women and children are particularly vulnerable to inhumane treatment. In 2022,

more than 1,500 children were recruited into armed groups, and in the past 2 years, the rate of sexual and physical violence against children has also increased. As part of a long-term solution to child recruitment, the UN has tried to reach over 34 million children, encouraging them to attend school. Gender-based violence has also increased recently in the DRC, with over 90,000 women and girls in 2023 seeking assistance after incidents of sexual assault.

MONUSCO has worked to deliver humanitarian aid, but is still underfunded. The pandemic and the Russian-Ukraine conflict has taken a toll on the humanitarian mission in the DRC and has fallen down the UN's priority list. For these reasons, MONUSCO reinstated the importance of humanitarian aid in 2022, and called for "unhindered access of humanitarian personnel...and the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to populations in need, in particular to refugees and internally displaced persons."

Major Countries and Organisations Involved

The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda

These two countries are the ones immediately affected by the violence in the Eastern provinces. The DRC clearly deals with the violence, social unrest, and humanitarian crisis. At the same time Rwanda also hosts over 81,000 Congolese refugees. As of May 2023, the Rwandan president has refused to take any more refugees from the DRC, arguing that it is not Rwanda's responsibility. This has not only fueled tensions in the region but also made MONUSCO's job more difficult, as more displaced people gather in the eastern provinces of the DRC. Despite MONUSCO's being deployed against M '23, which was allegedly backed by the Rwandan government, the Rwandan government has not made its position clear on the mission as a whole. But, it has denied the allegations of supporting the extremist groups on the eastern border, and has simply claimed that Rwanda is not responsible for the humanitarian crisis. On the other hand, the DRC has clearly called for an end to MONUSCO. The President of the DRC said that the mission in the region had failed and the withdrawal of MONUSCO had become "an imperative necessity."

China

As mentioned before, China is one of the many countries with foreign assets in the mining industry in the DRC. The economic relationship between China and DRC is often seen as exploitive as the Chinese government trades military support for the DRC's resources. The Congolese government protects the Chinese investment in the Congo in exchange for Chinese technology such as drones that can be used to fight M '23 forces. The extended control of the Chinese government in mines has not only

resulted in increased violence with extremist groups robbing mines, but has also contributed to the humanitarian crisis as child labour is a commonplace practice in these Chinese-owned mines. China's extended control has also raised questions about the morality of foreign assets in the DRC. Many feel that foreign control takes away the natural resources from the Congolese themselves, and continues the pattern of foreign exploitation of the African land and people.

India

India is the main military contributor to MONUSCO, and also has investments in the DRC's economy. However, as opposed to China, India has strayed away from bargaining military aid for economic resources. Instead, India has invested in the DRC's economy. For example, it has loaned the DRC 42 million USD for a new hydroelectric plant, a project that will be led by an Indian firm. This more balanced relationship could set up a new pattern of partnership in the DRC, instead of a transactional relationship that exploits the violence within the DRC. Furthermore, foreign direct investment could promote peace and sustainability long term in the DRC, which the humanitarian aid centred in MONUSCO has failed to do.

Belgium

The DRC is a former colony of King Leopold the 2nd, a Belgian king. It was a Belgian colony from 1908 and 1960, for this reason the modern Belgium government stays involved in MONUSCO. The country has contributed both police and military personnel. Most notably, in 2023 the Belgian government signed a memorandum of understanding to support the Congolese National Police (PNC) reform. This means Belgium will also gain support from MONUSCO when training personnel at the police academy they have in Kinshasa. This will benefit the DRC by providing a professionally trained police force in the capital.

Timeline of Events

Date	Name	Description
1996	Rwandan Genocide	The Hutu led extremist government began targeting the Tutsi, the minority ethnic group living in Rwanda. Over 800,000 were killed in just 100 days, known as the "100 days of slaughter." The genocide resulted in thousands of Tutsi fleeing Rwanda into the DRC, setting up the stage for conflict.

1996-1997	First Congo War	The war broke out when Tutsi-led groups in Rwanda crossed the border and attacked the Hutu extremist groups forming on the border. It ended when Rwanda and the Tutsi-led groups successfully installed President Kabila in power.
1998-2002	Second Congo War	The DRC tried to distance themselves from Rwanda by ordering all Tutsi troops out of the DRC and allowing Hutu groups to form at the border. This warranted an invasion by Rwanda, whose goal was to create more distance with the Hutu groups at the border. It ended with the assassination of the DRC's president.
2000	MONUC established	The Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) was established in 2000 as a response to growing violence of the Second Congo War and the rise of many extremist and violent groups.
2002-2003	Peace Talks	Peace talks facilitated by the United Nations start between Rwanda and the DRC following the end of the Second Congo War. Rwanda agreed to withdraw all forces from the DRC.
2012-13	Rise of M'23	The extremist group started to gain power in the 2010s. Rwanda was accused of backing the Tutsi extremist group, which resulted in the breach of the peace talks in 2003. This fueled tensions between Hutu and Tutsi groups in the eastern provinces of the DRC.
2013-2020	Intervention Brigade	As a response to M'23 gaining traction in the region, the UN approved an offensive brigade in aid of the Congolese army's efforts to rid the eastern provinces of M'23(USIP).
2013-2023	"Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework"	The role of MONUSCO expanded from dealing with violence and its consequences. The mission also focused on addressing the underlying economic and social issues leading to unrest in the DRC.
2018	Exit planned called for by security council	For the first time since the mission began, the Security Council issued a resolution calling for a comprehensive exit strategy.
September 2023	DRC president calls for "the acceleration of the	The president of the DRC called for an end to MONUSCO. In response, the UN started gradually

	withdrawal of the MONUSCO... to ease tensions between fellow citizens”	removing forces from the DRC with plans to have all peacekeeping forces out of the DRC by 2024.
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Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Security Council Resolution : The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 30th of November 1999 (Resolution 1279)
- Security Council Resolution, 27th of May 2018 (2409)
- Financing of MONUSCO, 30th of June 2021(A/RES/75/300)
- Security Council Resolution, 20th of December 2022 (2666)
- MONUSCO prepares peace force for Presidential and Parliamentary DRC elections (December 2023)

Please be aware that by THIMUN 2024 these elections will have already taken place. Delegates should keep themselves informed on the situation in the DRC following the election on December 20th, 2023.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

MONUSCO peacekeeping forces have been in the DRC since 2000, and have worked to better the humanitarian crisis, and lessen the violence in the eastern provinces. The mission was approved with an initial 55,000 budgets between 1999 and 2000. Between 2000 and 2010 MUNOC had an estimated 8.73 USD billion budget. Financed with a Special account reviewed annually by the 5th General Assembly. The mission also gained military and police contributors, the top contributors being India and Pakistan throughout the mission history. The financing model of the mission stayed the same for the mission after being remanded to MONUSCO. Additionally the World Bank approved a 250 million budget for the stabilisation mission in the Congo. Additionally throughout the mission's history key financial partners of the mission include the European Union, The Netherlands, Norway, United States, Sweden and Germany, and The United Kingdom.

Possible Solutions

Sub-topic 1: Ensuring transparency with local governments and populations regarding the goals, purpose and role of MONUSCO in order to strengthen confidence in the mission:

One of the reasons the project of MONUSCO has faced such opposition from the local population is the use of social media and news outlets by extremist groups to turn public opinion against the peacekeeping forces. This has led to an increase in violence in the area, which only makes MONUSCO's

job harder. A possible solution is to expand the funding of a communication strategy that works to build trust with local populations, and deepen their understanding on the purpose of the mission. This could be done through wide-spread media campaigns, or organised talks with local populations.

Sub-topic 2: Financing and increasing humanitarian aid in the DRC in order for MONUSCO to address the needs of both the residents and the refugees living in the area:

As a result of global crises such as the Covid 19 pandemic and the crisis in Ukraine, global attention has been turned away from the DRC, and as a result, MONUSCO has been left underfunded. As of 2023, the General Assembly recommended a budget of around 1.02 billion for MONUSCO. This means MONUSCO cannot address the crisis plaguing the refugees and local population in the DRC. Strengthening MONUSCO's relationship with local NGOs would shift the fiscal responsibility to organisations working within the DRC. An efficient exit strategy could also help the DRC itself take on more responsibility for humanitarian aid and gradually reduce UN funding.

Sub-topic 3: Promoting Foreign Direct investment and economic collaboration in the Democratic Republic of Congo that respects potential and existing Congolese stakeholders in the area:

In the DRC, countries such as China have leveraged their contribution to humanitarian aid in exchange for the protection of their mines. This relationship has worsened the situation in the Congo because it has led to the exploitation of the local population in mines, and has increased competition between Congolese investors. This increase in competition has led to even more conflict and violence. The donation of more long-term development aid by countries with interests in the DRC, as well as direct investment by foreign countries, would positively support the Congolese economy and could allow the DRC's government to take on MONUSCO's responsibility.

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