

# RENMUN VII

*Peace in Permanence*



March 5-6, 2022

**Chair Report**

## Chair Introduction

Dear delegates of the Peacebuilding Commission,

We warmly welcome you to the UNPBC of the Renaissance College Model United Nations! Throughout these two days, we hope that you will all enjoy a fulfilling and thought-provoking experience as you engage in insightful debate, think of effective solutions and work together with your fellow delegates in order to address current, real-world issues.

The UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is an international advisory body to the United Nations, and is responsible for outlining and supporting peace efforts in countries affected by conflict and instability. As representatives of this committee, delegates will have to think of realistic, effective strategies to achieve post-conflict recovery, while laying the foundations for sustainable, long term developments in destabilized regions.

As chairs of the PC, we are looking forward to seeing how delegates tackle multifaceted, real-world issues while staying true to the stance of their represented countries. Each delegate is expected to do necessary preparation before the conference (using both the chair reports and individual research) in order to effectively participate in debate and unmoderated caucus.

Conflict continues to spread around the globe in the present day, so we hope that during this conference, all delegates can gain insightful perspective into how countries deal with the aftermath of these devastating situations. Most importantly, we hope that everyone can make experiences and have fun during the two days of RENMUN!

Warm regards,

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RENMUN 2021 Peacebuilding Committee

# Building Sustainable Peace and Security in and around the DR Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is located within Central Africa and is the second largest country in the continent. Despite the abundance of natural resources like diamond, gold and copper located within the region, the DR Congo suffers from extreme poverty, with it being the second poorest country in the world with an average annual income of 785\$ per capita. Furthermore, the Congo region has suffered from constant instability ever since the spillover effects of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and subsequent Second Congo War: Despite the end of the war in 2003 and formation of the Transitional Government, conflict continues to be caused by militias such as the ADF, with the following instability severely hampering the development of the Congo region.

As representatives of the Peacebuilding Commission, delegates must think of realistic and effective solutions in order to tackle the issue of destabilizing militia influence in the region, while outlining how to reduce ethnic tensions, lift millions of people out of poverty and begin sustainable development. Furthermore, delegates must suggest strategies on how to deal with the severe ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic within the vulnerable Congo region. Throughout this conference, representatives should determine what solutions would be most effective at building sustainable peace within the Congo while carefully considering the resources and stance of their own countries.

## Key Terms

Term	Definition
Congo Wars	Series of large-scale armed conflicts within the region of the DR Congo
Rwandan Genocide	A genocide occurring during 1994 where 800,000 Tutsis were killed by Hutu power groups within Rwanda, sparking events that led to the First Congo War
Hutu/Tutsi	Different ethnic groups within the Congo
Militia	A military force that engages in rebel/terrorist activity in opposition to the current government
ADF (Allied Democratic	A major terrorist group/militia active in the

Forces)	northeast region of the Congo. Has ties to the IS (Islamic State).
Kivu Conflict	Ongoing conflict in the DRC between the government and ADF
Conflict Minerals	Illegally exploited minerals often contested by various armed groups

## Background Information

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is the largest country in sub-saharan Africa, encompassing a large portion of the Congo basin/Central Africa and a population of 105 million people. Throughout its history, the DRC and its surrounding region has been subject to constant war, struggle, and instability, ranging from the First and Second Congo war to the ongoing Kivu conflict and civil discontent.



A large reason for instability within the Congo began with the 1994 genocide in the neighboring country of Rwanda, where 800,000 Tutsis were killed by Hutu power groups, resulting in millions of refugees fleeing into Congolese territory: Following a new Tutsi government established in Rwanda after the genocide, a further 2 million Hutu flooded across the DRC's (then known as Zaire) borders, with around 7% of these being perpetrators of the former genocide. Many of these genocidaires formed rebel militias such as ALIR (Army for the Liberation of Rwanda) that set up camps along the Eastern areas of the Congo, terrorizing the local population and aiming to overthrow the newly founded Tutsi Rwandan government. The weak and inept Congo dictatorship at the time could do little to control the situation. This ultimately resulted in Rwandan and Ugandan backed forces invading the Congo to root out

these rebel groups during 1996, sparking the First Congo War and worsening the already mounting humanitarian crisis in the region.

The First Congo war eventually ended in May 1997 when the dictatorial government was overthrown by Congolese opposition leader Laurent Desire Kaliba, with Rwandan and Ugandan forces leaving the eastern DRC by 1998. Despite the change in governance, the Congo continued to suffer from severe corruption and disrepair, with ethnic tensions continuing to fester. This severe tension and instability resulted in Ugandan and Rwandan backed rebels rising up against the government by 1998, which marked the beginning of the Second Congo War just a year after the end of the first conflict.

The Second Congo War only exacerbated the already severe instability and suffering present in the DRC. Commonly known as the Great African War, the conflict saw 9 African countries involved, with over 5.4 million deaths and another 2 million being displaced from their homes by 2008 as a result of destruction, disease and death caused by the conflict and its aftermath. Eventually, peace talks were held in 2002, forming a transitional government and formally ending the 4-year war.

Despite the end of the Second Congo War, the DRC still faces a multitude of severe issues, including conflict caused by remaining militia groups, as well as widespread malnutrition and poverty caused by the aftermath of the Congo Wars. Despite the presence of almost 16000 UN peacekeepers within the DRC, more than 100 armed groups operate within the Eastern region, resulting in widespread displacement, casualties, and human rights abuses (with almost 4.5 million displaced internally, 800,000 refugees, and 1000 verified cases of child soldier recruitment). One example of such ongoing instability is the Kivu conflict between the Congolese military, ADF (Allied Democratic Forces) militia and other fragmented armed groups that continues to this very day.

Numerous reasons can account for this ongoing instability. One possible cause is conflict minerals, which are illegally exploited minerals: Since the DRC contains a high amount of valuable resources such as gold, rival military groups often attack each other to control such minerals, resulting in conflict over these contested regions. Ethnic and political tensions also contribute to the rising instability within the Congo region. Recent political protests over delays in the 2018 elections and conflict over various ethnic groups also add to the fraught situation.

All this constant conflict and instability results in the Congo being in a severe humanitarian and economic crisis without significant progress in development. The Congo is one of the world's poorest countries with 1 in 10 children dying before the age of 5, 2 million children at risk of starvation and over 40% of the population under risk of malnutrition. Therefore, the Congo region requires desperate assistance to

help utilize its vast natural resources to begin sustainable development in order to address the burgeoning humanitarian crisis. Delegates of the PC must form strategies on how to begin this development, while keeping in mind the different stakeholders of the situation and their countries own stance.

## Potential Clashes

### Ongoing conflict and civil unrest in the North Kivu, Ituri, and other Regions

Despite the end of the Second Congo War, constant conflict still occurs within some areas of the Congo. The province of North Kivu has seen little respite from conflict in more than two decades. Violence ensued as the First Congo War broke out and the defeat of the rebel group M23 has only fragmented the armed group landscape, with over 70 groups active in the region as of 2017. Following the Second Congo War, all belligerents were to join a transitional government. However, due to some countries not entirely committing to this initial goal, the region was once again plunged into turmoil, with an example of this being the transition from the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) to the Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP). Conflict within the Kivu region has been a result of scarce resources and unaligned/clashing interests. Generalizing the interests of nations in one transitional political body is hence not a viable solution.

Conflict in the Ituri Region has also been present between the agriculturalist Lendu and pastoralist Hema ethnic groups since 1972, with violence escalating during increasing ethnic tensions during the Rwandan Genocide, and the Second Congo War. This ethnic conflict continues to this day, with the Lendu group is mainly backed by the Islamic State, and the Hema group gains support from the DRC, UN, and the EU.

There may be clashes within the PC on how to suppress and eventually end this continuing conflict within the Congo. Some members may advocate for an increase in UN military intervention in order to bring order to the region, building upon the existing MONUSCO peacekeeping force in order to stamp out remaining militias like the ADF. This solution would require increased commitment and funding by members of the PC, and may result in a possible increase of UN casualties due to conflicts against rebel militias.

Other nations may advocate for a more conflict-averse method of dealing with the continuing instability by attempting to negotiate with remaining rebel militias and addressing cultural tensions by fostering communication between racial groups via the creation of UN education and integration programmes. This type of indirect solution may not be effective in the short-term, however, and continuation of UN peacekeeping presence in the Congo may still be required to maintain stability in

the region. PC members must decide on what combination of force and negotiation is used in order to form the best UN response to the ongoing conflict.

### **Lack of popular support for the Congolese government**

Over the history of the Congo region, Congolese governance has often been weak, inept and corrupt, resulting in little trust between the government and the population of the Congo. This mistrust was shown during rising political tension caused by the delays of the 2018 elections, with opposition groups accusing former incumbent Joseph Kaliba of delaying elections in order to hold onto power. While these tensions have eased somewhat in the present day, with newly elected president Felix Tshiekedi ousting corrupt members of his cabinet, trust in the Congolese government still remains shaky among the populace.

Some PC members may advocate for providing assistance and support towards the Congolese government, such as increased funding for government campaigns and statements of confidence in the Congolese government. This would help to continue easing political tensions, improve stability of the region and allow for more effective policies and easier development within the Congo.

Other PC countries may argue that the UN supporting and intervening in the government of the DRC may be a breach of Congolese sovereignty and unnecessarily interfere in the Congo's politics, which could be counterproductive to upholding trust in the region. Delegates of the PC must decide on the best approach towards the Congolese government, and the extent of UN intervention and assistance with the DRC's government.

### **Lack of development, food insecurity and humanitarian crisis**

Due to the constant instability and conflict throughout the history of the Congo, poverty and starvation is an enormous problem - over 40% of people within the DRC suffer from food security issues, with 2 million children at danger of starvation. Addressing the humanitarian crisis and beginning sustainable development within the Congo is therefore imperative for the PC.

Some countries of the PC already have investment into the Congo, with China investing in the DRC as part of its Belt and Road programme and the US upholding bilateral trade agreements - these international agreements may help foster development, which could contribute to solving food-insecurity in the long-term. While some may advocate for individual nations to continue large-scale investment into the region, there may be concerns over the indirect nature of these programmes, as they do not directly address issues of starvation and malnutrition. Furthermore, there are concerns about developed countries exerting undue influence on the DRC through these investments (such as influencing decisions of

the Congolese government or engaging in debt trapping), which could result in infringement on the sovereignty of the Congo.

Many nations may advocate for an direct, united and impartial UN response in order to stem food instability while contributing to infrastructure development. This would involve increasing funding towards existing UN programmes, which could cause concerns among LEDCs that may not have the resources to contribute to an increase in commitment. Some may also advocate for financial aid directly to the Congolese government, allowing them to expand humanitarian and infrastructure policies - however, with a history of corruption within the Congolese government, monitoring may be required to ensure the effective usage of said funds.

Representatives of the PC must consider all benefits and concerns of each solution to decide upon the best strategy to foster development and uphold food security within the DRC.

### Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Involvement with the Issue
Democratic Republic of the Congo	As the country focused on within the committee topic, the DR Congo is consequently the central stakeholder, as it desperately needs the assistance of fellow PC nations in order to begin it's sustainable recovery and growth. The DR Congo's aim is therefore convincing PC countries to provide the most effective assistance possible towards the Congo region while preserving its own sovereignty, as it requires key subsidies and international aid in order to address it's key issues.
China	China is a key investor in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the DRC joining the Belt and Road Initiative in 2021. Through investments in multiple infrastructure projects and aid donations, as well as military cooperation with the FARDC and a vital trade relationship (with China accepting 50% of the Congo's raw material exports), China has grown to have a vested interest in accelerating the economic development of the Congo. Due to

	the large amounts of valuable raw material within the DR Congo, China may also aim to increase its influence within the region by providing further investment and financial aid.
USA	The US and the DRC have strong foreign relations, with the US aiming to help create a stable, democratic and peaceful Congolese nation. The US has strong bilateral trade relationships with the Congo, with the US importing large amounts of oil into the region. In the long term, the US aims to utilize investment and aid to build a stable and peaceful Congo in line with Western democratic values.
Kenya	As one of the largest partners of the DR Congo within Africa, Kenya is another key stakeholder within this topic: However, as a developing country itself, Kenya may be concerned about how aid to the DR Congo is funded and supplied, and may call upon MEDCs to provide a majority of funding for UN projects in the region.

## Possible Solutions

### Prioritizing Humanitarian Implications

Although funding has already been established by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, steps have to be taken when addressing the short-term humanitarian crisis and long-term economy and infrastructure of the region.

While direct UN action in the form of humanitarian and economic projects may prove to be a viable solution, they may be put into danger due to internal conflicts, and these risks should be considered and prioritized before taking action towards negotiation. The essential idea is that along with a resolve to the humanitarian crisis, the general public would be more willing to conform with social reform.

Solutions to the mounting crisis could include placing camps into areas of conflict, in an attempt to bring food and shelter to those in need. Member nations should not

only address the funding of basic necessities, but also debate on the security and continuation of these camps for victims of conflict.

### **Non-Violent Solutions to Re-establish government**

Since 2017, conflict particularly in Ituri has resulted in over 1,000 deaths. In order to shift the matter of conflict into discussion rather than violence, the local governments should be perpetuating agreements with members of both regions to discuss possible solutions in establishing peace. For instance, there have already been talks with militia in Ituri regarding a complete surrender under the right conditions. In order to reach a broad consensus on disarmament methods (including on the issue of amnesty), the government should support the mediation efforts of Ituri deputies' caucus in the National Assembly. Delegates should also consider the re-integration of past military men into civilian life, potentially with a rehabilitation program.

In order for more member nations to be involved in this matter, DR Congo could potentially entertain discussions regarding conflict (such as in Ituri and Kivu) on the agenda for the next Quadripartite summit, involving Angola, DRC, Rwanda, and Uganda. Peace talks locally could also be branched out to other smaller parties, so that politicians have a best-fit view of the general needs of the people. Funding for the region could also be an alternative to improve infrastructure and foster societal development.

## **Past Actions**

### **Humanitarian Relief Against Food Insecurity**

The UN has provided humanitarian and financial assistance to the Congo in the past, with 21 UN programmes contributing to the protection of human rights and humanitarian relief in the region. Furthermore, the Congo receives international financial support to help address the humanitarian crisis, with 3 billion dollars being contributed to the DRC during 2019 alone.

Members of the PC like China and the US have existing trade relations and investment into the DRC, with a key example being the Congo's involvement in the Belt and Road programme: the resulting economic development caused by this has helped relieve some pressure caused by food insecurity.

Furthermore, NGOs have also contributed towards aid against food insecurity - for example, in 2020, the People In Need (PIN) organization funded by the DRC Humanitarian Fund launched a project to improve the living conditions of 8,000 vulnerable people by providing them with basic necessities.

Despite the assistance provided by the UN and the international community, food insecurity and poverty continues to plague the region, with the DRC being the second poorest country in the world and over 27 million people facing food security issues within the Congo.

### **UN Peacekeeping Forces within the Congo Region**

MONUSCO ( United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) is a currently active UN peacekeeping force in the Congo. Since 1999, approximately 8.74 billion USD has been invested into the force, with total strength being 18,300 troops within the DRC during 2017

Helped monitor the ceasefire, withdrawal of Ugandan and Rwandan forces, observe human rights violations, stabilize situations against militias. Peacekeepers became targets of militias, 93 casualties. Currently, the ADF have been the largest threat to the peacekeeping force, attacking convoys

Despite the presence of these forces, however, periodic conflict is still ongoing within the Congo Region, with rebel militias like the ADF continuing to undermine the government and perpetuate instability within the region. Furthermore, some of the largest contributors to MONUSCO, such as India, plan to begin scaling back military commitment to the programme

### **Guiding Questions**

- Is it more effective to utilize direct force or indirect methods in order to reduce militia-based violence within the Congo region?
- What is the most effective way of reducing poverty and malnutrition within the poorly developed Congo region?
- How can the UN help stem racial and political tensions within the DRC?
- What is the best way to utilize precious resources like gold within the DRC to help sustainably develop the region while avoiding the creation of conflict minerals?
- How should funding be acquired in order to support UN efforts within the Congo region?

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