

# RENMUN VIII

*The Restoration of Serenity*



March 4th & 5th 2023

**Chair Report**

**Addressing the humanitarian crisis in the  
Democratic Republic of the Congo**

## Chair Introduction

Greetings Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Human Rights Council (HRC) at the eighth edition of RENMUN in 2023. I am Adhit Ranjan, a sophomore from German Swiss International School, and am honored to be your head chair this year. Alongside me will be Korliss Cheung, a sophomore from St. Paul's Co-educational College.. We look forward to witnessing an engaging and immersive debate, as well as creating long-lasting memories and friendships. Furthermore, we aim to facilitate competitive debate, while ensuring that the spirit of diplomacy prevails.

The Human Rights Council was founded in 2006, with the prime mission and focus of promoting and safeguarding human rights around the world. Despite being what sounds like an unfortunate mission, it is necessary for the nations of the world to maintain inspection of the adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family", and the foundation of the Human Rights Council.

Being a beginner committee, HRC does not require prior Model UN experience, and aims to serve as a learning curve for participants. Nonetheless, all delegations are expected to participate in a high standard of debate, and hence it is advisable to come fully prepared. As HRC is a committee where a supermajority is required to pass resolutions, delegations should keep the spirit of diplomacy, trust-building and unanimity at heart throughout the conference. At the same time, the chairs look forward to seeing controversial, heated debate regarding the two issues at hand. Aside from reading the chair reports, which will serve as a useful starting point for your research, conduct thorough research via the internet and other sources. With that being said, the chair hopes that all the delegates thoroughly enjoy themselves during the conference. Should any enquiries arise, please feel free to contact Korliss or me via the email addresses below.

Best Wishes,

Adhit Ranjan ([17646@learning.gsis.edu.hk](mailto:17646@learning.gsis.edu.hk))  
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# Addressing the humanitarian crisis In the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Democratic Republic of the Congo has been engulfed In a complex humanitarian crisis for decades. The country Is home to Africa's highest number of Internally displaced people at over 5.6 million, with urgent needs In food, water and proper shelter after fleeing advances of armed groups. Over the last two years, the situation has massively deteriorated due to an Increase In scale and number of conflicts within the country, further exacerbated by Ebola and measles outbreaks, and the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2021, the President of the DRC declared a 'stage of siege' for the provinces of Ituri and North Kivu to address the deteriorating security situation. Despite being home to large reserves of mineral resources, weak Institutions and a lack of human capacity and basic Infrastructure have Impeded development.

Needs In the DRC are massive. An estimated 27 million people are In need of humanitarian assistance and protection In 2022. As of 30 June 2022, only 19 per cent of the US \$225 million budgeted at the start of the year has been secured, rendering It among the most underfunded of UNHCR's operations worldwide. Likewise, many crises in Africa have failed to attract sufficient attention, support and resources, unlike those in Syria, Afghanistan and most recently, Ukraine. Aside from funding, much more has to be done to support the country's future development. The situation requires a multi-faceted response on many fronts.

## Key Terms

Terms	Definitions
Food insecurity	Deprived regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. This can be due to unavailability of food and/or lack of resources to obtain food.
Human rights violations	Any action or Inaction, which deprives the person of any of their legal rights, as articulated In law or In other applicable department regulations such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Humanitarian crisis	a singular event or a series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or well-being of a community or large group of people. It may be an internal or external conflict and usually occurs throughout a large land area.
MONUSCO	Stands for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A UN peacekeeping operation launched on 1 July 2010, taking over an earlier operation (MONUC), authorized to use all necessary means to carry out mandate relating to the protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders under imminent threat of physical violence and to support the government of the DRC in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts.

**Background Information**

While the most recent humanitarian crisis was sparked by escalated conflict since 1994, the roots of the modern conflict and accompanying humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are rooted in the country's tumultuous history and its wealth of mineral deposits.

Previously under the colonization of Belgium, the path to independence of Congo was characterized by violent protests in response to increased bureaucratic constraints by the colonial administration. However, the gain of independence in 1960 only brought forth a national mutiny from the army and threats from a variety of secessionist movements, disrupting the newly formed government. Cold War tensions increasingly played into Congo's leadership struggle, leading to long term political turmoil and widespread rebellions.

Until today, rebel groups continue to fill the vacuum left by national armies seeking to gain control of the abundant mineral wealth available. Despite the presence of more than 16,000 United Nations peacekeepers, these armed groups continue to terrorize communities and control weakly governed areas. Climate-related hazards such as floods, drought and volcanic activity also pose serious challenges to the economic development of the DRC.

## **Recurring epidemics**

Aside from political instability, the DRC has suffered from multiple recurring epidemics, e.g. Ebola, cholera, and measles. Due to more than two decades of long-standing conflict and weak governance, government expenditure on health per capita remains one of the lowest in the world, creating a lethal health crisis. The world's largest measles epidemic has been ongoing within the country since 2019, exacerbated by delays and coordination issues with vaccination campaigns and hence yielding a heavy death toll.

## **Displaced persons and refugees**

In 2022, the DRC was host to over half a million refugees and asylum seekers, and over 5.6 million internally displaced people. Moreover, 82 percent of the country's internally displaced people will not receive adequate shelter support, rendering them vulnerable against violence by armed groups. These people also suffer from various diseases caused by malnutrition. Today, the problem of food insecurity affects nearly 27 million people in the country.

## **Human rights violations**

As in any crisis, children have been the most affected and most vulnerable targets in the DRC, being subject to sexual violence, physical abuse and becoming child soldiers. The country task force has verified rape and other forms of sexual violence against 944 children from 2020-2022, while a total of 3901 children were verified as recruited and used by armed groups, 42 per cent were under the age of 15. The overwhelming majority of violations, excluding those unreported, were attributed to armed groups, which remain a prevailing concern.

## **Potential Clashes**

### **Challenges for humanitarian response**

There has been growing donor fatigue to finance the constant emergency response where political and economic root causes are left unsolved. Despite the importance of humanitarian aid, multiple barriers have also hindered humanitarian access, such as the extremely poor infrastructure and security. Increasing instability caused by armed conflicts significantly reduces humanitarian access. Numerous cases of violence against humanitarian personnel have been reported, increasing the cost of assistance.

### **Lack of support for UN**

UN actions in the country have sparked widespread discontent among locals, creating an overwhelming desire for a complete and expeditious withdrawal of UN troops. Some locals accuse MONUSCO to be involved in human rights violations, justifying the climate of mistrust in Congo. This will complicate matters for

International support to be provided to Congo, begging the question of how to deliver these promises while maintaining the balance between reaching the most victims and ensuring local acceptability.

## Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Involvement with the Issue
Democratic Republic of the Congo	The government has attempted to take a more leading role in managing humanitarian situations, yet the underfunded state budget means it continues to rely on international aid for the majority of victims of conflicts and disasters.
European Union	The EU has mobilized a variety of development, democracy promotion and humanitarian assistance instruments in support of conflict management in the DRC, making the country the recipient of the largest number of EU CSDP missions in one single country.
Forces democratiques de liberation du Rwanda (FDLR)	Founded by some of the key perpetrators of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide who fled to eastern DRC, it is the largest illegal foreign armed group operating in the DRC. The group continues to be implicated in human rights violations and the illicit exploitations of natural resources over the last 15-20 years.
United States of America	The USA has been working with the DRC to strengthen the foundation for a durable peace in eastern DRC, including the implementation of the Country Development Cooperation Strategy of DRC. It has promised interventions to establish or solidify peace and provide humanitarian and protection services.

## Possible Solutions

Currently, the lack of funding is one of the major causes of the crisis, depriving millions of children from proper education and shelter, exacerbating displacement and food insecurity. International collaborations and cooperation with non-governmental organizations will undoubtedly alleviate the issue. Yet in spite of addressing the problem of underfunding, resolving this crisis demands addressing underlying problems within the government structure, which has been characterized by corruption and ineffective governance.

In addition, other factors of the economy should be explored and developed to strengthen the country's economy, such as its mining and service sectors, which has seen an over 4.5 per cent economic growth in the previous year.

However, with the progressive phase out of MONUSCO, maintaining stability will become increasingly difficult with the ongoing armed conflicts, restricting humanitarian access which may potentially escalate the crisis. As such, rather than relying on external forces, solutions may target leveling up the military capability of the government in curbing conflicts, which may simultaneously increase the level of acceptance of the locals.

## Past Actions

The UN has been involved in peacekeeping missions, 21 programmes, funds and specialized agencies working alongside the Congolese Government for the stabilization and development of the DRC. The United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) in Congo, launched from July 1960 until June 1964, marked the UN's first peacekeeping mission with significant military capabilities. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO) took over on 1 July 2010, done in accordance with the Security Council resolution 1925. Multiple agencies such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and UN World Food Programme (WFP) have also been actively involved in supporting the delivery of urgently needed humanitarian aid from international donors. However, these operations have been facing budget shortages which have reduced the efficiency of emergency assistance.

## Guiding Questions

1. Is adequate international awareness placed on the crisis?
2. How can other countries engage with the Congolese government to alleviate the problem?

3. Can this crisis draw parallel to similar crises in other countries? If so, how should these solutions be implemented? What additional changes should be made?
4. Are there any alternative concerns/solutions?
5. How may the United Nations respond to human right allegations?

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